

Setting Goals

Setting goals is an important task to complete as you make your career plans. Your goals will help you determine the kind of work you seek, the wage level you will need, and the kind of network you will build for yourself. Think of your goals as a map you can use as you move ahead with your life in all its different aspects. With your map in hand, you can concentrate on achieving your goals, one small step at a time. And with ongoing attention to goals, you can adjust them as your interest or needs change. They reflect the dynamic nature of your life.

Tips:

- **Be passionate** - Make sure the goals you choose for yourself are what you really want and not something that looks or sounds good. Your goals will suggest the values you hold and the direction you want your life to go.
- **Choose carefully** - Your goals should work well together to provide you with an integrated map. Goals that are in conflict with each other will be more difficult to reach.
- **Be proactive** - Write your goals in the positive. Project ahead with what you want as a way of teaching your mind to carry out your instructions.
- **Be clear** - Use details in describing your goals. Make a vivid picture of your outcome, again to help you reach your desired outcome.
- **Be accountable** - Keep a list of your goals that you can review often. Identify obstacles and ask others to help you come up with solutions. Make a habit of picturing your goals to reinforce bringing them to life.
- **Stay flexible** - As you and your circumstances change, so will your goals. Make adjustments to your goals when needed.
- **Ask for support** - Throughout the process of defining and achieving your goals, call on others to help you. They can assist with ideas for solutions and moral support.

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Much as a map (either written or in your mind) can help you get to your destination, goals can help you attain your desired situation. Here's a chance to put those dreams, hopes, and visions on paper. Your goals may change with time and with your different experiences. Talking about them with others or writing them down may help you to make them reality.

In each section below, include goals for all areas of your life: **education** (What knowledge do you want to acquire? What information and skills will you need to achieve other goals?), **career** (What level do you want to reach in your career?), **financial security** (How much do you want to earn by what stage), **relationships and family** (How do you want to be seen by family and friends? How are you going to be a good parent or friend?), **spiritual** (How do you want to express yourself spiritually or through your religion?), **community** (What do you want to do for your specific community?), and **personal growth** (How do you want to enjoy yourself?). Use additional paper if you want.

1. Lifetime Goals - Take some time now and think about some goals you want to accomplish over your lifetime.

2. Mid-range Goals – Keeping in mind what you’ve written above, list goals you’d like to accomplish in the next five years that will get you closer to your lifetime goals.

3. Short-Term Goals – List goals you want to complete in the next year that will help you achieve your five year goals.

4. Semester goals

List some goals you can complete this semester that will help you accomplish some of your one year goals.

More on goals:

SMART Goals is a way of thinking about your goals that will make them more manageable and in the end, achievable. Below is information about what makes a goal smart – make sure yours pass the test!

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time limited

Specific - A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

Who: Who is involved?

What: What do I want to accomplish?

Where: Identify a location.

When: Establish a time frame.

Which: Identify requirements and constraints.

Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

A general goal would be, "Get in shape." But a specific goal would say, "Walk 3 days a week."

Measurable - Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goal. To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as.....How much? How often? How will I know when it is accomplished?

Achievable - When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable because you grow and expand to match them. Does your goal fit this description?

Relevant - To be relevant, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both *willing* and *able* to work. Be sure that every goal represents substantial progress. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal demands low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplished actually seem easy because you enjoyed doing them. Your goal is probably relevant if you truly *believe* that it can be accomplished.

Time limited – Set time limits on your goals. Many of us procrastinate especially if our goals are big or long lasting. Make your goals manageable by taking smaller steps, creating shorter term goals and by giving your self a realistic deadline.