

A Guide To Goal Setting

Understanding the importance of goal setting and how to set goals is vital for learning and growth in your academic schooling and beyond. Use this fact sheet to review the principles of setting goals and create a SMART goal to initiate the goal setting process.

Why Set Goals?

- Helps you to realize what's important
- Reminds you of what you need to accomplish
- Keeps you motivated
- Makes you accountable for your learning
- Builds confidence and helps you to believe in yourself

The Process of Goal Setting

1. **Reflect:** Analyze your strengths and weaknesses, and determine what you would like to accomplish. If you're having difficulty, start by brainstorming all potential long-term and short-term goals you hope to achieve.
2. **Set Goals:** There are various parameters to keep in mind while setting goals, and they are best remembered with the simple acronym SMART. The principles of SMART goals are as follows:
 - **Specific:** Objectives that are defined and unambiguous. They should state what you hope to accomplish, how you will achieve your goal, and why it is important to you.
 - **Measurable:** Objectives that are quantifiable and have an end result that can be measured.
 - **Attainable:** Objectives that can be accomplished with effort. It is important that you set goals that are realistic and achievable.
 - **Relevant:** Objectives that have personal importance and are consistent with long-term goals.
 - **Time-bound:** Objectives that are bound by a set time frame.

Different goals will require different amounts of time for completion. A short-term goal is something you'd like to achieve within days, weeks, or months. Long-term goals are goals you work to achieve over a longer period of time such as a semester, year, or many years.

3. **Re-evaluate:** Review the progress of your goals throughout the set time frame and re-evaluate your goals at the deadline. If you have accomplished your goal, do something for yourself to celebrate your success! If results were not achieved, determine why and what you can do to move forward. Also set a new deadline for your goal.

Reflect: Use the space below to brainstorm any short-term or long-term goals you have.

Short-Term Goals	Long-Term Goals
Ex) Obtain a mark of 75% or above in Sociology 112.	Ex) Complete a Biology degree in four years.

Set Goals: Choose one short-term goal from the list above and transform it into a SMART goal.

S	Specific: What am I trying to accomplish? Why is this goal important to me? How will I achieve this goal?
M	Measurable: How will I know when I've achieved this goal?
A	Attainable: What potential challenges may I need to overcome?
R	Relevant: How does this relate to my long-term goals?
T	Time-bound: What is the target date for completing this goal?

Re-evaluate: On _____ I will evaluate my SMART goal and complete the checklist below.
 (target completion date or before)

- I have accomplished this goal!
- I need to make some adjustments to accomplish this goal:
 - Reasons why my goal was not accomplished _____
 - _____
 - The following people or things can help me to accomplish this goal _____
 - _____
 - New target completion date _____

Goal Setting Tips

- **Stay focused:** Be attentive, flexible and adaptable with your goals. If you are feeling overwhelmed by a goal, break the goal down into smaller objectives, and set a goal to achieve each part.
- **Celebrate!** Find a way to reward yourself when you accomplish a goal. It will encourage you to set more goals and work hard to achieve them.

Reflect, Set, and Re-Evaluate!