Goal Setting Guidelines

Setting goals is very important in life. When people set goals, they map out their next actions. Goal setting helps people see what they want and how to achieve it. One good way of setting goals is to use the S.M.A.R.T. mnemonic. This technique suggests that your goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-related:

S = specific
M = measurable
A = achievable
R = relevant
T = time-related

Specific
Specific goals should suggest a behavior or action that is as specific as possible and define the parameters of that action or behavior. They should be concrete: “I plan on saving $4000 for a down payment for a new car.”

Measurable
You need to be able to measure the goal in order to gauge your success. If your goal is “to pay $250 per month toward reducing credit card debt”, it is easy to know if you are achieving this. If your goal is “to pay a lot each month toward credit card debt” it’s less clear when you are achieving this.

Achievable
To stay motivated and on course your goal needs to be realistic. It would be nice to be a millionaire by the time you are 25, but if you are working as an elementary education teacher this probably isn’t an achievable goal.

Relevant
The goals you set must also be relevant to your profession, interest and your course in life. Setting a goal in which you are not interested will likely not work out for you. Setting up a goal you are not motivated to obtain can lead to frustration and decrease the likelihood that you may achieve other goals that are important to you.

Time-related
This really has two components: 1) your goal should have a date by which you plan to achieve it. You are more likely to be successful if your goal has an end date; it gives you a target. Having an end date for your goal allows you to make sure you are on track and taking the necessary steps; which brings us to the second component. 2) Goals need to be monitored. It is important to have plans and timelines for achieving your goal. You need to check your progress, recognizing your successes and adjusting were you need to.
Goal Setting Worksheet

What are your goals?

List some of your goals for each of the categories below. In some categories you may have more than five goals; in others you may have fewer. Try to come up with at least one goal for each category. Remember to make your goals S.M.A.R.T. goals!

My educational goals include:
1. ___________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________

My social goals include:
1. ___________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________

My financial goals include:
1. ___________________________________________________________________
2. ___________________________________________________________________
3. ___________________________________________________________________
4. ___________________________________________________________________
5. ___________________________________________________________________

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My family goals include:
1. __________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________________________

My health/physical goals include:
1. __________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________________________

My recreational goals include:
1. __________________________________________________________________________
2. __________________________________________________________________________
3. __________________________________________________________________________
4. __________________________________________________________________________
5. __________________________________________________________________________
Moving from Goals to Actions Worksheet

Goals on paper are a great first step. However, turning those goals into action is really the key to success. To do this you need to prioritize your goals and begin to develop action plans for those that you want to implement.

Prioritizing your goals:
Choose the two goals from each category on the previous worksheet that are most important to you. Identify each goal as short-term (this semester), medium-term (within the year), or long-term (beyond this year).

1. __________________________
2. __________________________
3. __________________________
4. __________________________
5. __________________________
6. __________________________
7. __________________________
8. __________________________
9. __________________________
10. __________________________
11. __________________________
12. __________________________

Acting on your goals:
From the list above select your six most important goals. Use the spaces below to begin to plot out a course of action for these six goals.

Goal #1 ______________________________________________________________________
What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

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Goal #2

What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Goal #3

What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Goal #4

What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

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Goal #5

What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Goal #6

What I can be doing now to work toward this goal:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

Additional future steps I can take, or resources I need to achieve this goal are:

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

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