



Goal Setting

Goal setting is an essential tool for turning your ideal future into reality. By setting goals, you develop a “path” to success, because you know what you want to achieve, what you need to focus on, and what could be distracting you (Mind Tools Ltd, 2011).

Achievable goals are:

1. Realistic:

✓ Realistic: I want to get an A on my next test in Economics.

✗ Unrealistic: I want to get 100% on every test this year.

Why? If your expectations are unrealistic or include ‘all or nothing’ approaches, it may be difficult to reach your goal which could be discouraging.

2. Specific:

✓ Specific: I’d like to finish this chapter and understand the concepts thoroughly.

✗ General: My goal is to be smarter.

Why? If goals are too broad, it is often difficult to measure progress and evaluate areas of weakness.

3. Positive:

✓ Positive: My goal is to take notes on the reading homework for English class.

✗ Negative: I want to stop forgetting to take notes when I read.

Why? Focusing on what you want to achieve, rather than avoid, is more motivating and focuses on the result—not the problem.

What is one of your goals?

Achieving goals can be a challenge. Give yourself the best possible odds by:

1. **Commit:** Making a mental commitment to achieve is critical.

2. **Plan:** Write out the activities you need to complete to achieve your goal, and schedule time to complete these steps.

3. **Evaluate:** If things aren’t going well, sit down and revise. Ask yourself if you need support, a schedule change, or a more realistic/specific goal? Don’t abandon your efforts—changing is better than quitting!

4. **Get Support:** Use your campus’ resources! Tutors, librarians, and writing centers are always happy to help. Don’t forget to ask your friends and family too.

What do you need to do?