



***Enhanced Learning  
Educational Services***  
*“the study skills specialist”*

# GOAL SETTING



**Goals give us clarity and direction. They help us to focus on what is important to us and what we want to achieve.**

- You should read each point and **highlight the key phrases** in that point.
- Discuss with a friend or parent as you read through the handout.
- You may like to work through this over a number of sessions.

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# 1. WHY SET GOALS?

If you do not think about what you might like to achieve, if you have no direction or focus for your energies, it becomes a matter of luck as to where you end up in life and what you achieve along the way. Setting goals gets you to think about possibilities. Here are some more reasons why we should set goals. Which of these has been a reason for you to set goals?

- Goals give you a direction to work towards.
- Goals give you a clear picture of where you want to go.
- Goals help you to push yourself just that little bit more.
- Goals help you have a more fun and fulfilled life.
- Goals can give you motivation and focus.
- Setting goals helps you do all the things you want to do in life!
- Goals give us the motivation to do things that are difficult and challenging in order to reach a particular desired state.
- Goals help us achieve our dreams, hopes and desires.
- Goals help us look for an achievable balance between the different areas of our life.
- Goals make us feel good about ourselves and our achievements and help us to increase our self-esteem and sense of self-worth.
- Goals give us a greater feeling of control over our lives and experiences.
- Goals allow us to prioritise and create action plans.



Research has shown that people who set goals (and use them effectively) not only perform better, but suffer from less stress and anxiety and are happier and more satisfied with life. You have probably set many goals already without even realising it – not every goal has to be written down but it certainly helps you to stay on track if you do write it out. Remember, if you don't set goals you'll find that life just sort of 'happens' to you rather than you actually deciding what you want out of life then making what you really want happen!

*So get in the driver's seat of your life and take control with goals.*

Your brain is incredible. Give your subconscious a direction and focus and it will immediately start to work towards making that focus become a reality. If you do not consciously direct the power of your mind towards making things happen for you, you'll go through life and things will just happen to you. The more clearly defined you can make your goals, the easier it is for your brain to look for ways to turn the images in your head into reality. Goal setting helps you to take the random thoughts floating in your head and give your mind a purposeful direction on which to focus.



*a. Think about when you have set goals in the past. What were the reasons you set goals? What was your motivation?*

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## 2. TYPES OF GOALS

There are lots of different types of goals, but one of the most common ways of categorising goals is to break them down into short-term, medium-term and long-term goals.



- **SHORT-TERM** goals are things you want to do today, tomorrow or within the next few weeks and sometimes months.
- **MEDIUM-TERM** goals are things you want to achieve in the next few months or sometime even within the next year.
- **LONG-TERM** goals are things you want to do later on in life, whether it is next year, two years' time, ten years' time or even longer.

There is no hard and fast rule to define these different types of goals. A good way to think of them is that short-term means soon, medium-term means a bit later and long-term means much later.

Often these different goals are linked. The short-term goals are what you need to do to achieve the medium-term goals which are what you need to do to achieve the long-term goals.



*b. Can you think of examples of goals you have set in the past that would fit into each of these 3 categories?*

## 3. RULES FOR GOAL SETTING

Make Your Goal : "Smarties"

- **SPECIFIC:** Make goals very detailed and specific. Exactly what do you want to achieve?
- **MEASURABLE:** You want to be able to know when you have achieved your goal so make sure there is some way to measure your success.
- **ACTION-ORIENTED:** Your short-term goals should really be the action steps you need to take to achieve the medium and longer term goals.
- **RELEVANT & REALISTIC:** Goals change, so if your goal is no longer relevant, you need to change it.



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