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# GOAL SETTING

Goals are the vehicles successful people use to reach their ultimate destination. Goal setting provides *direction*, *purpose*, and *motivation*.

**Direction** is helpful when you need to meet with an advisor to discuss your course selection. **Purpose** is essential when you are studying late in the library but you would rather be with your friends at home watching TV. A little extra **motivation** may be needed on cold, rainy Friday mornings when you are due in class but the warmth of your bed is so inviting.

A successful student must learn to be proactive. Rather than waiting for things to happen and reacting, proactive persons *make* things happen; they identify what they want to accomplish and they do it! What do *you* want to accomplish? Are you going through the motions or do you have an ultimate destination in sight? Assuming you have a destination in sight, how are you going to get there?

Most students are aware of the effectiveness of setting goals, but not necessarily effective at setting goals. Effective goals have three important qualities. They are realistic, measurable, and reviewed.

**Remember: Meeting pre-set goals is a great way to boost confidence.**

<i>Goal Setting Tips</i>
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A goal must be **REALISTIC**. Challenging yourself is an important part of goal setting. You want to aim high; however, you also need to be realistic. For example, *I will study at least 3 hours EVERY night* may be pushing it. Are you honestly going to study on Friday after a long week? Be honest with yourself. Instead, maybe your goal should be *Study at least 3hours a night Sunday through Thursday*.

Here are five questions that can help you assess if your goal is realistic. You will have a higher chance of achieving your goal if you can answer “yes” to all five questions:

1. Am I doing this for myself? (Is this really my goal?)
2. Is this a fair and realistic goal for me to accomplish?
3. Does this single goal directly help me accomplish my long range life goals?
4. Am I capable of supporting this goal emotionally and physically?
5. Can I close my eyes and mentally visualize myself reaching this goal?

**A goal must be MEASURABLE.** It should have concrete facts. You should be able to answer very specifically, when and how you will know you attained your goal. For example, rather than “*Go to class*”, a goal may be “*Go to all my classes this semester.*” See the difference? Rather than “*Study hard*”, a goal may be “*Always re-copy my class notes within 24 hours of my last class.*”

**Finally, a goal must be REVIEWED.** Share your goals with friends and family members who care about your success. Pick one of these persons who will hold you accountable in addition to yourself. In the meantime, remind yourself regularly of the goals you have set for yourself. You can write them in your calendar, on a mirror, or a desk—wherever you will see them often. Check your progress regularly. Ask a friend or a family member to check your progress. They might even offer you some additional incentive for accomplishing your goal.