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GOAL SETTING

"Your goals are the road maps that guide you and show you what is possible for your life."

Les Brown





Goal-setting checklist

1. Do you set goals?
2. Do you write your goals down?
2. Do you reach your goals?
3. Do you break your goals into manageable parts?
4. Does each of your goals have an action plan?
5. Do you believe you have the ability to reach your goals?

“Are you travelling the road of life without a map, or have you plotted a course for your future?”
J.A. Beatrice

Introduction

Goal setting helps you decide what is important for you to achieve in your life, it helps motivate you and can build your self-confidence.

A goal is more specific than a dream. It is an outcome that you try to achieve through a detailed and realistic course of action. Goal-setting involves pro-active, short and long-term planning, which includes taking stock of your life and takes into account your values, abilities, interests, and priorities.

Studying is a process that can be under your direct control. Setting goals forms an important part of this process.

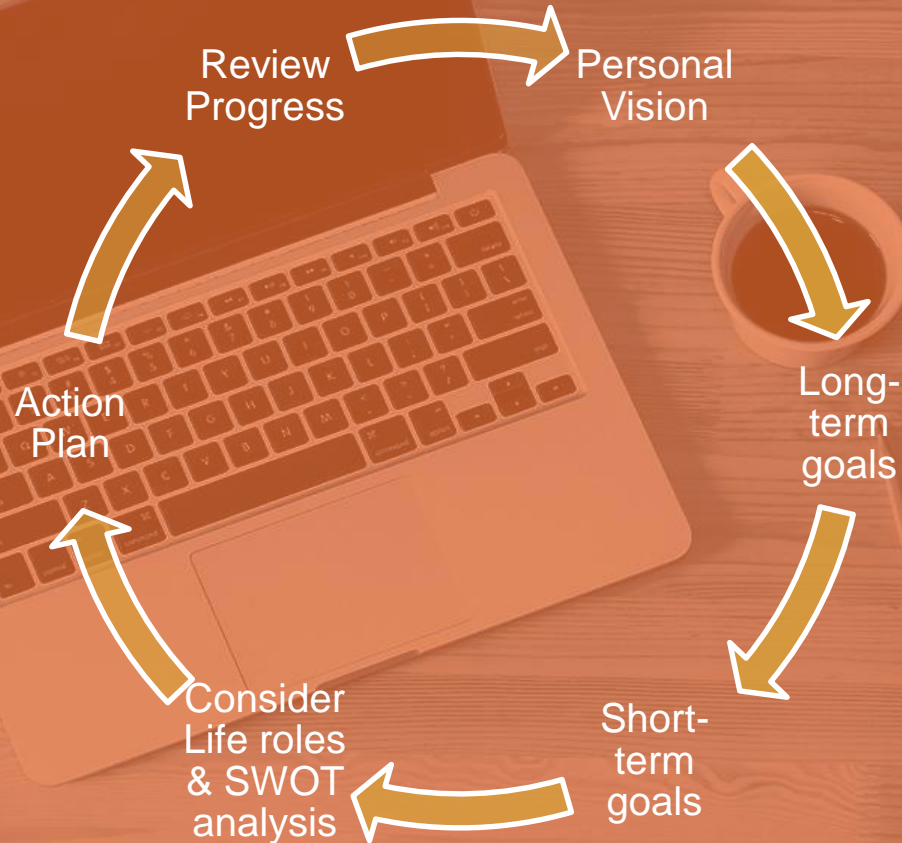
Motivation is affected by the following factors:

- **Having clear, social, career and academic goals**
- **Taking responsibility for you own success or failure**
- **Believing in yourself**
- **Being able to look to yourself for rewards**

(www.mindquestacademy.org/success)



2. Process of goal-setting



2.1 Your personal vision



Before you set goals, establish a personal vision, a mental picture of what you want to achieve in life –
a vision that can serve as a strong motivating force throughout your university career.

What do you hope to achieve in the following areas of your life:

Health / fitness
Social / friends
Community involvement
Spiritual

Educational / academic
Career / work
Financial
Family

“The future depends on what we do in the present.”

Mahatma Gandhi

2.2 Long-term goal



A long-term goal is the plan you are making for your future.

A long-term goal:

- helps you see the bigger picture
- focuses on the future
- directs your efforts
- needs to be challenging
- needs to be directed by a target date.

E.g. of a long-term goal: Being able to fund my studies so that I can graduate in 4 years.

What is your long-term academic goal (5-10 years)?

2.3 Short-term goals



Breaking long-term goals down into short-term goals.

Short-term goals:

- are smaller steps leading towards the long-term goal
- need to be specific
- need to be relevant and realistic
- need to be time-bound.

E.g. of a short-term goal: Finding part-time work before the end of the month.

What is your academic goal for this year?



2.4 Factors that may influence the achievement of your academic goals

2.4.1 SWOT analysis: strengths and weaknesses, opportunities & threats

To accomplish your goals, you need to know what factors can **help** you and what factors may **hinder** (prevent) you.

You can use this information to assist you in setting relevant and realistic goals.



When formulating your goals, try to:

1. Use your strengths to overcome weaknesses & threats
2. Avoid or strengthen your weaknesses
3. Use the opportunities in the environment
4. Minimize the impact of possible threats

2.4.2 Life-roles

There are five major life roles namely:

1. Student
2. Worker
3. Citizen
4. Homemaker
5. Leisurite

Each with its own responsibilities and activities that need to be taken into account when setting goals.



Action Plans

Translating goals into action

Each goal requires an **action plan** to make the goal a reality. Refer to SWOT analysis. Action plans need to be **SMART**:

S

Be expressed in terms of specific behavior

M

Be measurable - in terms of time taken, work done or money earned

A

Be attainable - i.e. realistic for you to achieve

R

Be relevant - it should be related to your short-term goal, but still contribute towards your long-term goal and overall vision

T

Be time-bound, i.e. directed by a target date.

S – Strength

W – Weakness

O – Opportunity

T - Threats



Internal Factors

Under your control



External Factors

Not always under your control

Your personal SWOT Analysis

S



O

T

STRENGTHS

What (e.g. strong motivation, good language skills, self-confidence, liking challenges, hard worker)

- *advantages do you have?*
- *What do you do well?*
- *What do other people see as your strengths?*

WEAKNESSES

(e.g. unsure of course choice, poor study skills, low self-esteem, do not manage time well)

- *What could you improve?*
- *What should you avoid?*

OPPORTUNITIES

(e.g. resources on campus: library, Student Counselling & Supplemental Instruction)

- *What are the good opportunities facing you?*
- *What are the interesting trends you are aware of?*
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THREATS

(e.g. transport difficulties, family demands, financial problems, alcohol use by family)

- *What obstacles do you face?*
- *What is your competition doing?*
- *Is technology (e.g. computers) threatening you?*

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