

Motivation and Goal Setting

First things first: Accept Responsibility

What you achieve in life is completely up to you. It is determined by your beliefs, attitude, and ability to take action in the face of fear, and on the back of failure.

Notice that “circumstances” weren’t listed? That’s because

Life is:

10% Circumstances

90% Attitude

No matter what your circumstances, your beliefs, your attitude, and your ability to take action can override any circumstance.

Cycles of achievement

Attitude, achievement, motivation, and effort are all interconnected. As any one part increases, so do all the rest. This can work positively, like this:



Or negatively, like this:



Effort and action are results of your attitude, which increases your motivation and gives you enthusiasm.

Finding your values and priorities

Becoming motivated begins when you discover your priorities and values. Yes, you can skip right to the goal setting if you want to; but your goals will be a lot more fulfilling and purposeful - and you'll be a lot more likely to achieve them - when you they are unified with your values and priorities in life.

To create your own personal mission statement, use the mission statement tool in Campus ToolKit.

"If you don't set your goals based upon your Mission Statement, you may be climbing the ladder of success only to realize, when you get to the top, you're on the WRONG BUILDING."

- Steven Covey, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

3 Golden Rules of Goal-Setting

"I always knew I wanted to be someone. I realize now I should have been more specific." —Lily Tomlin's Bag Lady

You can create any goals you want – but to make them work they need to be specific, measurable and they need to have deadlines.

1. Give yourself deadlines

Deadlines are critical to goals. They enable you to create an action plan, and sub-goals.

Not so effective: I'm going to try sushi

More effective: I'm going to eat sushi tonight for dinner!

No so effective: I'm going to learn to play piano

More effective: I'm going to learn to play piano by June 15th by practicing three times a week and hiring a tutor.

2. Get specific!

"Figure out what you want. I don't mean generally... specifically. Super specifically. And then go do it. That's my motto." —Jack Black

Try this multiple-choice question:

Getting specific allows you to:

- (a) Envision more clearly what you want
- (b) Determine when you're getting closer to what you want
- (c) Easily identify opportunities when they come your way
- (d) All of the above

The answer should be pretty obvious: it's (d) all of the above.

Here's how it works:

Let's say you currently have this goal:

Get a degree and get a good job.

It's hard to find something to focus on, or look for opportunities with a goal that vague. By spending some time thinking about what you *really* want, you can come up with a more specific goal, like this one:

Get my degree in Marine Biology by (date) and start a career working with marine mammals.

Now you have something to grab a hold of!

With a goal this specific, you can do many things in college to bring yourself closer to success:

- Use every paper you write, every report, oral presentation, and dissertation as an excuse to learn more about this field.
- Use your research as a great excuse to make connections with those working in the field. These are the people who may eventually hire you! Aim high!
- Having a *specific goal* allows you to verbalize and share your goal. If your friends, family, and instructors know what you want, they can help you.
- Any opportunity in this field that is offered to students at your college will be immediately reported to you, or will **stand out** when you see it.
- You'll be the best candidate because you've focused so specifically on this subject.
- When it's time to apply for a job, you'll be able to reference all your research, and demonstrate a commitment that will put you ahead of other applicants.

"People with goals succeed because they know where they are going. It's as simple as that." - Zig Ziglar

3. Make your goals measurable

Having measurable goals means that you know when you're finished.

For example:

If you had a goal to "Get better grades", when would you know you had achieved your goal?

Bringing an F to a D is "better", but is it what you had in mind?