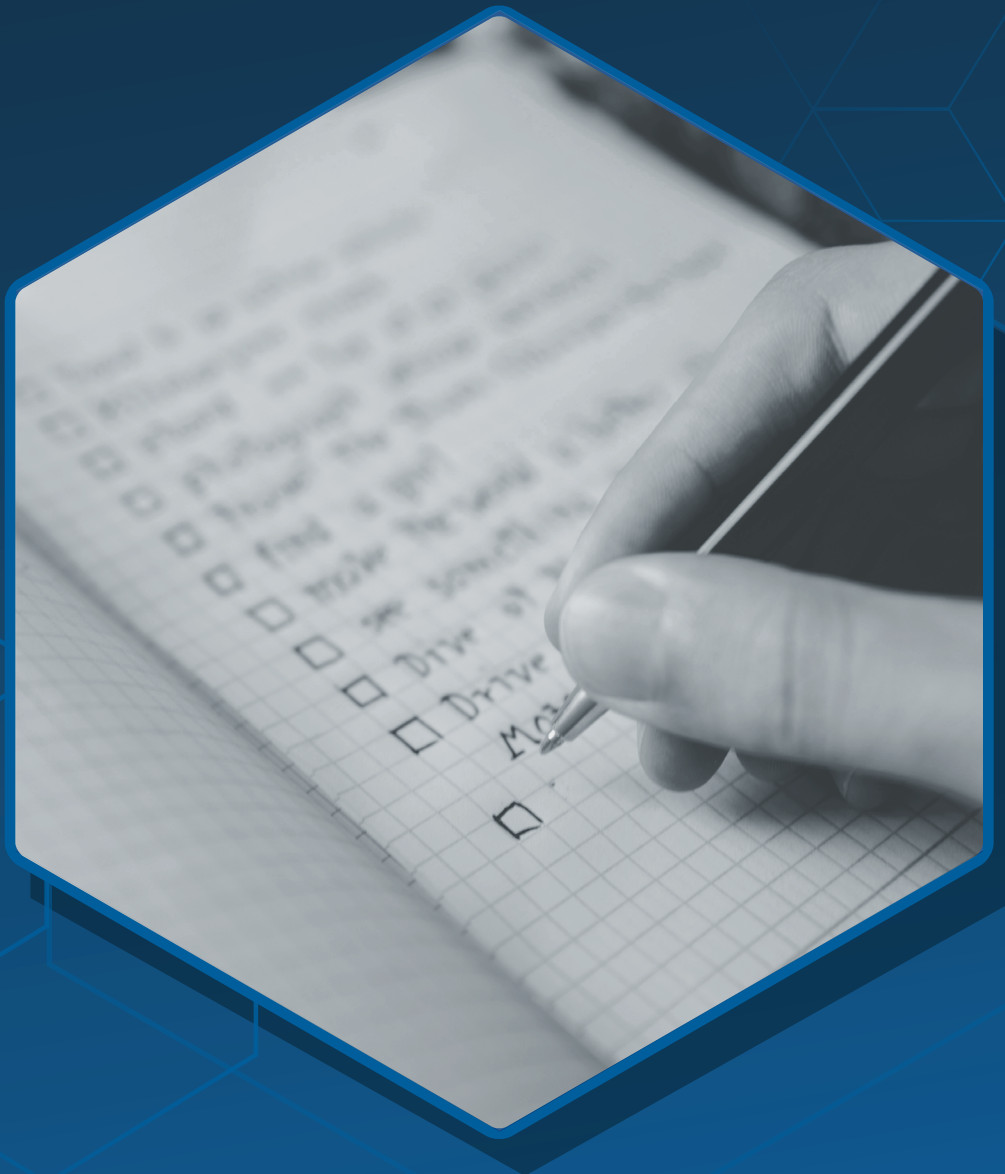




The College for
Adult Learning

Guide to Goal Setting

RESOURCES GUIDE



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The importance of goal setting

Goal setting. It's a term that's thrown around in self-help programs and books time and time again. What is often confused is the difference between having goals and setting out your action plan to achieve them.

WHY SET GOALS?

The measure of an effective goal-setter is your ability to put these plans into action and reflect on the level to which you achieve them. Goal setting is an important exercise as it forces us to look inwards on what we personally desire and aspire to achieve, and then be able to translate that into external actions.

USING GOAL MAPPING

Splitting your life into sections, such as life, career, and daily goals can help you differentiate between the kinds of achievements you want. Mapping your life out in this way can help your ability to interchange what goals you prioritise and give greater clarity on what you're focusing on and when.

Example template of how to lay out your goal sections:

DAILY GOALS	CAREER GOALS	LIFE GOALS
Example: "Walk 10,000 steps a day."	Example: "Be offered an internal promotion in the next six months."	Example: "Travel to three new countries in the next three years."

While you may prioritise career over life or vice versa at different points in your life, the action of separating these goals makes you mindful of keeping at least a few dot points in each area.

If we don't give our goals a context, we risk over prioritising some areas or completely neglecting others. Separating goals in this way keeps you accountable to each aspect of your life.



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14% of the people who have properly set goals are 10x more successful than those who do not have goals.

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BEING MINDFUL ABOUT WHEN YOU SET GOALS

One of the most common ways people set goals is New Year's resolutions. We all seem to make them on some scale. Some people want to eat better, others want to exercise more, or even to gain a promotion by year's end. However, the trouble with resolutions is we often make them hastily and then have limited time to implement any lifestyle changes before the working calendar resumes.

By setting end-of-year resolutions instead of New Year resolutions, you'll hit the new year with productive momentum, and you'll be getting a jump on others who are waiting for the clock to strike midnight.

There is a direct correlation between goal setting and success. A Harvard Business study found that 14% of the people who have goals are 10 times more successful than those who do not have goals. By setting your goals even earlier than others, you'll ensure you are in an elite group who are ready to tackle whatever the year brings.

How to set SMARTER goals

SMART goals are a familiar concept, but have you heard of SMARTER goals? Let's look at how applying this formula to your goal setting can make a difference to your journey and your destination.

SMART goal setting is a technique that helps ensure that you set useful goals in a scaffolded way. While using SMART goals ensures personal success, SMARTER goals include yourself, the people around you, and the planet.

SPECIFIC

You have a clear goal.

Take time to brainstorm, list or collaborate with a friend on what your personal goals are. By putting your desires onto a page or into words, it allows you to gain clarity on what it is you are trying to achieve and how important it is to you to achieve it.

S

MEASURABLE

You know what success looks like.

Identify all the steps that you need to fulfil your goals. What does success look like for you, and how will you know when you've achieved it?

Backwards planning is an excellent strategy for measuring the steps you need to take to achieve long term goals. Start with your end goal and identify each milestone checkpoint back to your starting point. This helps us understand that there isn't always a straight line between the setting and achieving of a goal.

M

ACHIEVABLE

The goal is challenging yet within your limitations.

When you think you've got a clear vision, pause for a moment to decide whether these goals are achievable. If you're worried that they're not, that's completely fine and recognising this is one of the key skills in setting meaningful goals. Simply reassess and reimagine your goals, perhaps by breaking them down into smaller pieces until they feel like something you can accomplish.

A

REALISTIC

Be honest with yourself and others.

Understanding your limitations can be one of the best tools for achieving your goals. Be honest about what you have and haven't achieved and wear the consequences for better or worse.

R

TIME-BOUND

You know your deadlines.

Being clear on deadlines is the best way to hold yourself accountable. Put goals on a calendar or a wall planner or in your digital diary. This visual anchor will act as a useful authority at later times, as well as allowing you to stay on top of checkpoint goals.

Schedule time each week or month to reflect on your progress and check how you're tracking on your latest goals, and just as importantly, time to reward and congratulate yourself on your progress.

T

ECOLOGICAL

How will this goal impact the people around you?

When we commit time to something new or put more effort into anything new, it's sometimes at the sacrifice of other aspects of our life. Especially when taking on something as regimental as a career change, promotion or study. This step will help you understand how our own ecosystems can be affected by our choices, Make sure you check in with the people in your life to gain support for your goals and be open to accommodating their feedback if it aligns to your values. On a broader scale, this step can also motivate you by defining how your goals will benefit your community and the planet.

E

REWARDING

How does the goal fulfil your values?

Value assessment is a step that is important to keep in mind during the entire goal setting and planning process. When setting goals, be sure that your actions are fulfilling your core values and not conforming to others expectations. The book 'Dare to Lead' by Brene Brown has an excellent section on defining your core values.

R

Using resilience to achieve goals

Another great way to implement resilience in goal setting is to adopt the “Making-Of” Model which encourages reflection at the end of the goal-setting timeline.

Amid the COVID-19 climate, the realisation that goal achievement is not always linear is comforting in maintaining focus after a period where best-laid plans were disrupted.

THE “MAKING-OF” MODEL

The “Making-Of” Model is inspired by a visual planning system developed by The Grove consulting agency and is explained in the ‘The Decision Book’ by Krogerus and Tschäppeler. The model views achieving goals as a ‘one foot in front of the other’ process.

Sometimes we focus too much on the future, thinking we can determine what is ahead. However, every future has a past and it’s important to reflect upon the existing foundation before building ahead. By adopting this approach, goal setting becomes a ‘cause and effect’ process in which the achievement process is a fluid one that does not have abrupt endings or hasty conclusions.

Adopt the “Making-Of” Model by:

- 1** **SETTING A TIMELINE FOR REVIEW**
Just because you didn’t reach a goal in time doesn’t mean you should abandon it. Look back in time to when you set the goal and why.
- 2** **LISTING THE PEOPLE INVOLVED**
List anyone who played an important role in your goal-questing.
- 3** **NOTING YOUR SUCCESSES**
What successes occurred along the way since you set your goal up until now?
- 4** **IDENTIFYING ANY OBSTACLES YOU OVERCAME**
What challenges and unexpected curveballs did you face? Which ones did you overcome? Which ones are still unresolved?
- 5** **CELEBRATING WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED**
Take time to reflect on how you grew as a person in pursuit of your goals.