

Successful Goal Setting

Successful people from all works of life, business, sports, science etc, understand the importance of goal setting.

Goal setting is the formal process of identifying what you want to achieve, and then how to move progressively towards these goals.

There are many books and guides to setting goals readily available. This exercise will present some of the common guidelines to defining goals, and used in the WIT career coaching.

Guidelines for defining your Goals.

Use the **SMART** Principle.

- **Specific** – be specific. This has been covered in the guidelines above.
- **Measurable** - ensure that you include timeframes, quantities etc in your goal. Think about how you will know when you have been successful. Measure can be used to monitor your progress.
- **Achievable** – is your goal achievable? Setting unachievable goals will impact upon your progress and your motivation.
- **Realistic** – is your goal realistic? Are the timeframes realistic? Do you have all of the resources available? What obstacles are likely to be in your way? Do you need specialised skills in order for the goal to be realistic and achievable?
- **Timeframe** – always include a timeframe in which to complete the goal by. Without a timeframe there is very little motivation to achieve the goal.
- **Enjoyable**
- **Rewarding**

Some other considerations

- *State each goal as a positive statement:* Express your goals positively - 'Execute this technique well' is a much better goal than 'Don't make this stupid mistake'
- *Set priorities:* When you have several goals, give each a priority. This helps you to avoid feeling overwhelmed by too many goals, and helps to direct your attention to the most important ones.
- *Write goals down:* this crystallizes them and gives them more force.

Action Planning

An Action Plan is a list of tasks that you have to carry out to achieve an objective. It differs from a To Do List in that it focuses on the achievement of a single goal.

To draw up an Action Plan, simply list the tasks that you need to carry out to achieve your goal. Action Plans can be very individual.

When creating your Action Plan, it is important to include at least the following headings.

- Goal Description
- Goal Target End Date
- Action Steps
- Action Target End Date
- Action Actual End Date
- Status

You may also like to include celebration targets in your action planning. Regularly celebrating your successes will motivate you to keep working towards your goal.

Remember also that the process of achieving goals is also a journey. Enjoy the process as well as the end result. And celebrate your successes.