

“

I don't focus on what I'm up against.
I focus on my goals and I try to ignore the rest.
—Venus Williams

”

Notes

When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't
adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.
—Confucius

Goals Booklet



Where are you headed and how do you know when you've arrived? Answering these two questions is the idea behind effective goal setting.



Goals can be long term or short term. They can apply to the "big picture" such as what you would like to accomplish in your life or they can help you to focus on more day to day concerns such as planning effective language classes. For example, goals can help you consider:

- Where would you like to be in 5 years? In 10 or 20 years?
- Where do you want your students to be after one or two semesters of study?
- What would you like to accomplish at the end of an hour of teaching?

Likewise, being able to know if you have met your goals is the other important part of goal setting. That is, how do you know that you accomplished what you set out to accomplish—whether this is a personal goal or a teaching one? Let's say that the goal for your students after two semesters of study of your language is to be at the intermediate Low level on the ACTFL scale, how will you know if they are there? Appropriate assessments are necessary for determining if your (or your students') goals are reached.

There should also be a **rationale** for your goals. You should ask yourself not only what you want to accomplish something, but why. This is particularly important to teaching. Your teaching goals should be tied to pedagogically sound reasoning.

Institutional/Program Goals

You should wait to go over these program goals with your supervisor at your host institution.

Setting goals is the first step in turning the invisible into the visible. —Tony Robbins



Goals are pure fantasy unless you have a specific plan to achieve them.
—Stephen Covey



Professional/Job Related Goals

Effective Goal Setting

A goal without a plan is just a wish. Your goals should be **SMART**. That is, your goals should be:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime Based

Put your goals in writing. When you write things down, you make them tangible, or more **real**. They now exist in a time and place and you can refer back to them. Writing down goals also allows you to craft them so that they are SMART. You can use to-do lists to make your goals **measurable** and **time-based** but also to make them more **specific** by being able to visualize if a goal is just too broad. Checking off items on a list results in a positive feeling of having **achieved** something.

Goal Domains

In which areas of our lives does goal-making pertain? Certainly we make goals that will guide our **personal** lives. These will include areas like our own educational objectives, career goals, and family goals as well as goals we have in order to live a fulfilling life. As an FLTA, you should consider what your personal goals will be during your stay in the US this year. Of course, this is just one aspect of personal goal-setting.

Professional (or job related) goals will focus on both long-term and short-term planning as it relates to our jobs. In teaching, this type of goal-setting is related to how you plan out a semester, a unit, a lesson,

“
 What keeps me going is goals.
 —*Muhammad Ali*”

Personal Goals

or an activity. As language teachers, we may ask: What do I need and what do my students need to attain proficiency at a given level? What are the communicative goals of a particular lesson or unit?

In addition to personal and professional, you will also encounter **institutional** or **program** goals. These are goals that are set by your university, your department, or your program and may include things like:

- all undergraduates must take two semesters of a foreign language
- after four semesters, 80% of students in Japanese must perform at the Intermediate-Mid level on the ACTFL scale in Speaking and Listening
- at the end of the semester, students in Arabic 201 will be able to write a 75 word plot summary of a short story we will read in the course

For these goals, you as the teacher may not have a say in creating them, but you will have to align your teaching—that is, your daily, weekly, and semester-long goals—with these institutional or program goals.

Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of a plan, in which we must fervently believe, and upon which we must vigorously act. There is no other route to success.
 —*Pablo Picasso*