

Many students need help setting appropriate goals for their academic performance. This skill station defines goals and asks students to think about their short- and long-term goals.

Goal Setting



Setting goals for yourself motivates and allows you to monitor your performance. In addition, goals can serve as a way of helping you make decisions. If an opportunity arises that conflicts with your goals, it becomes easier to recognize the conflict and decide to not participate if you are serious about achieving your goals.

Answer the following questions individually and share your answers with your group.

1. What is a goal?
2. Define and give 3 examples of
 - a. Long-term goals
 - b. Short-term goals
3. Why are you in college?
4. Why are you in this class?
5. What goals do you have for this class?
6. What goals do you have for your time in college?
7. What goals do you have after college?

As a group, set one academic goal for this class period.

Group Processing:

1. What goal did your group decide to accomplish?
2. Rate how well you achieved your group academic goal.

Skill	1 Excellent	2 Good	3 OK	4 Poor
Professionalism				

3. What will you do to achieve your personal academic goals?

Setting Goals Teaching Notes



Approximate Time Required
Skill Station: ~15 min class time
Group processing: 5 min max.

- A. Explain the Need:** This activity is designed to get students thinking about the reasons they are in college and in your class. Too often, students come to college because it is the thing to do after high school. Their appearance in your class reflects their dependence upon a program plan rather than explicit interest in the topic.

Goals have several characteristics. They need to be:

- ☐ Specific
- ☐ Measurable
- ☐ Achievable but challenging
- ☐ Relevant
- ☐ Transferable

Students may need to be reminded of this while they are answering the questions.

- B. Define and Model:** Students should be told that there are no right answers to the questions. They may feel like the instructor is looking for a particular response, especially to question #5. Remind them that the exercise is for them rather than you and that they need to provide answers only to show they have thought about the questions. After students have completed the questions, follow-up discussion could include the following questions:

How are your answers to #4, 5, and 6 related?

How do your goals from #4, 5, and 6 affect your behavior and the choices you make?

Which are greater daily motivators, short- or long-term goals?

- C. Practice:** This skill station links to others in the motivation/time management category. Once students set goals, they also need to think about how their behaviors affect accomplishing the goals (see [Time Management](#)). Also, students must establish a reward system consistent with their goals (see [Rewards](#)).
- D. Evaluate:** Time at the end of class is allocated to evaluating progress toward a group goal.
- E. Feedback/Reflection:** Suggest that students write down one short-term and one long-term goal on an index card and tape it to the inside cover of their class notebook as a reminder.