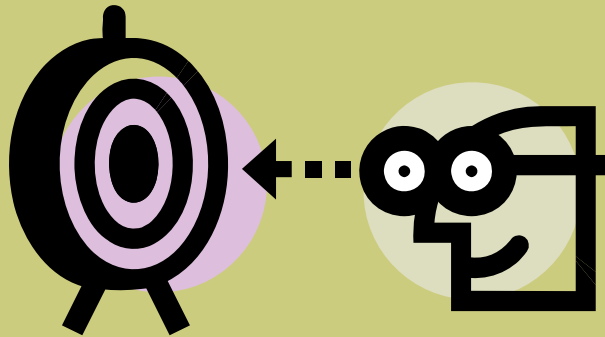


Setting Realistic Goals



DePaul CDM
Academic Success Center
(312) 362-8633
243 S. Wabash Ave
Mezzanine Floor

S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting

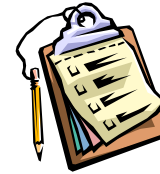
Realistic Expectations

Do you ever find yourself saying “I am going to spend all weekend studying for my exam” or “I need to spend more time keeping up with my class reading” only to find yourself coming short on your goals?

Students often set vague and unclear goals for themselves that make them impossible to achieve.

Being SMART when setting goals

When setting goals, it is important to be as clear and detailed as possible. The more specific the plan is, the more realistic it is that the goals will be achieved.



Specific

Provide enough detail so that there is no indecision as to what exactly you should be doing when the time comes to do it. A goal of: "Study math" is poor because it is vague. Should you be reading your text? If so, what pages? Or should you be looking over your lecture notes? A much better goal would be: "Read pp. 12 - 35 in math text, complete 3 of the problems at the end of the chapter"

Measurable

Make it clear how you will know when the goal has been accomplished. You want to be able to prove to yourself that you were successful and time wasn't wasted.

Saying that “When chapter is complete I will have reached my goal” may not be a true indication that your goal is achieved. The goal is did you fully understand the words when you looked at the pages. A much better goal would be, “Read chapter 3 and complete self-test”. The self-test would indicate that you indeed read the chapter and would allow you to evaluate your degree of understanding.

Attainable

Is this a goal that you can reasonable achieve? You know your strengths and weaknesses best and can use this to maximize your chances of success. Is this goal relevant to you? Make sure to set goals that you believe are important, not just what others want you to achieve.

Realistic

Don't plan to do things that you are unlikely to follow through on. Better to plan only a few things and be successful rather than many things and be unsuccessful. Start small, with what you can do, and once you reach your goals, increase the amount of work that you ask of yourself. Remember to give yourself some flexibility when unexpected things pop up.

Time-Framed

Be clear on when you complete your goal and how much time it will take you. If it is a large project, break it down to smaller, manageable blocks of time.

S.M.A.R.T Checklist

✓ **S**pecify a clear cut goal you want to accomplish

✓ **M**easure your achievements!
How will you know that your goal has been achieved?

✓ **A**ttainable: Set goals that are reasonable to achieve. Be in check with your limitations and know what you are possible of.

✓ **R**ealize that unexpected things happen and you may not always stay on track with your goals. But persevere! Minor setbacks don't mean you have to give up!

✓ **T**iming is important! Have a definite plan on when you what to accomplish your goal.