

**Goal Setting and Time Management
By Interactive Measurement Group at
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas**

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Lesson 1: Creating and Achieving SMART Goals

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach you what a SMART goal is and how to create your own SMART goals.

Prerequisites

No prerequisites are required to start this lesson.

Part 1: What is a SMART goal?

Introduction to SMART Goals

SMART goals are goals that are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. This section will take you through what these words mean in relation to setting your goals.

1. **Specific:** You need to decide what you truly want to accomplish. A vague goal, such as “I want to be in shape,” can take on several different meanings. It could mean that you want to bench press 200 pounds or that you want to run a marathon. You need to specifically know what you want in order to know how to achieve it. In our example, training to bench press 200 pounds is very different than training to run a marathon. The following are some examples to consider:
 - a. Bad Example: I want to get a good score on my GRE.
 - b. Good Example: I want to get at least a score of 1500 on my GRE.
 - c. Bad Example: I want to take more time for myself.
 - d. Good Example: I want to take more bubble baths.
 - e. Bad Example: I want to be healthier.
 - f. Good Example: I want to meditate in order to reduce my stress.
2. **Measurable:** Your goals need to be measurable. It is great if you simply state that you want to study more often, but how do you define “often”? How will you know when you have reached “often”? You need to specifically state what you want to do. Using our studying example, a better-defined and measurable goal would be the following: “I want to study for 3 hours a day 5 days a week.” The following are some examples to consider:
 - a. Bad Example: I want to lose weight.
 - b. Good Example: I want to lose 12 pounds.
 - c. Bad Example: I want to be more active in my community.
 - d. Good Example: I want to do 10 hours of community service a month.

- e. Bad Example: I want to spend more time with my child/friend/family/significant other.
 - f. Good Example: I want to do 4 special activities a month with my child/friend/family/significant other.
3. Attainable: You should not set yourself up to fail. There are just some things that you know you cannot do. However, you also should not sell yourself short. You should be logical. One of your goals should not be meeting a dead president, or climbing a mountain next month if you cannot climb a flight of stairs today. Attainability is different for everyone; thus, specific examples are difficult to establish. Apply common sense and logic to your goals, and you will be able to come up with what you can do.
4. Realistic: This principle is very similar to attainability but is slightly different. The nuance is the difference between what you can do and what you are willing to do. "Realistic" is what you are willing to do. For instance, you could strive to lose 20 pounds in 12 weeks, but are you really going to put in all that work at the gym, change your eating habits, and change your lifestyle? Before establishing your goal, understand how much effort you are willing to put into it. Again, specific examples are difficult to establish since only you know what you are willing to put towards achieving your goal.
5. Timely: Your goals need an end date, regardless of what the goal is. Even if the goal is something that you want to do for the rest of your life, such as developing or stopping a habit, you need to pick a date to end your focus on this specific goal. If your goal is to meditate for 30 minutes every day, you need to specify an end date. Therefore, your goal may resemble the following: "I want to meditate for 30 minutes a day for one month." If your goal involves developing or stopping a habit and is one that you wish to continue for a lifetime, such as stopping procrastination, it should resemble the following: "I want to finish all of my assigned research papers 3 days before they are due, for the remainder of the fall semester." Selecting an end date for your goal is important because you need to pick a point in time at which to congratulate yourself, to consider why and how you succeeded or failed, and to evaluate what did and did not work. The following are some examples to consider:
- a. Bad Example: I want to be able to run a mile in less than 10 minutes.
 - b. Good Example: By my birthday, I want to be able to run a mile in less than 10 minutes.
 - c. Bad Example: I want to do 3 special activities with my wife.
 - d. Good Example: I want to do 3 special activities with my wife in July.
 - e. Bad Example: I want to do 200 hours of community service.
 - f. Good Example: I want to do 200 hours of community service by August 1, 2009.

Lesson 2: Creating Action Plans

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to teach you how to create action plans, teach you how to dissect long term goals, and give you tips on how to actually achieve your goals.

Prerequisites

You should have successfully completed Lesson 1: Creating a SMART Goal before attempting this lesson.

Part 1: Creating an Action Plan

This section will teach you, through the processes of making to-do lists and mini-goals, how to create an action plan in order to achieve your SMART goals.

1. Focus on one SMART goal at a time.
2. Make a list of things that you need to do in order to accomplish this goal. For example, if your goal is to work out for 30 minutes, 3 days a week, and 3 months straight, you may need to do the following: buy training shoes, buy a gym membership, find appropriate clothes, learn how to use the equipment, schedule time to go to the gym, find a friend to hold you accountable, and set up a time to talk about your progress with your friend.
3. Look at this list and organize it into two categories: one-time tasks and ongoing tasks. One-time tasks may involve such activities as purchasing shoes and finding a friend to help hold you accountable. Ongoing tasks may involve such activities as scheduling time to go to the gym, bringing gym clothes with you to work, and remembering to renew your gym membership. The distinction between one-time tasks and ongoing tasks are not always definite; use your best judgment to decide.
4. Looking at the list again, prioritize the items in order from most to least important. Most important items should be at the top of the list, and least important at the bottom. You may also find it helpful to consider the order of the items that you want to accomplish. For example, if you do not have shoes in which to train, purchasing a gym membership may not be valuable, since you cannot actually work out yet. If you need help deciding what is most important, ask a friend to help you decide.
5. Now, take action! Do with this list whatever you have to do in order to accomplish the items on it. Some people like to hang it in a noticeable place by their desk, place it in a planner, or give a copy to their friends in order to enhance their accountability. Everyone is different, and it may take some trial-and-error to determine what works best, but the most important principle is to take action, no matter how small.

Part 2: Managing Long Term Goals

This section will teach you how to handle long term goals. These are goals that are over 3-5 months into the future. These goals can become overwhelming and may cause someone to feel that they are not accomplishing anything. Examples of long term goals include the following: getting accepted to a graduate school when you are a year away from applying, losing significant amounts of weight, starting a family when you are not dating anyone, and running a marathon when you have difficulty running 5 minutes straight.

1. Turn your long term goal into a SMART goal. For example, if you want to be admitted to graduate school, your goal should resemble the following: "I want to get into graduate school by May 1 of next year."
2. Now, make a list of everything you need to do in order to achieve that goal. For example, in order to apply and be admitted to graduate school, you may need to do the following: obtain 3 letters of recommendation, take the GRE's (or any other relevant academic tests), and graduate from your current program.
3. Transform these components into SMART goals. An example of this is the following: "I will get three professors to agree to write me a letter of recommendation by November 20 of this year."
4. Continue the previous steps until you have a list of SMART goals that are accomplishable within the next 3-4 months. Do not disregard any goals that require more time to accomplish; simply store them until they are achievable within a 3-5 month time window.
5. By following the above steps, you should be able to give yourself goals that will keep you moving forward, motivated, and on course to achieving your important life goals.

Part 3: Creating Accountability

Accountability drives people to work very diligently and finish tasks. Accountability is woven into all aspects of our lives. Professors pass or fail students based on their work in class. Managers promote, dismiss, or increase the wages of their employees based on their performance. Family and friends may praise or punish individuals based on their interactions with them. Accountability is such a significant part of what motivates us and is a very important aspect of achieving any goal. Some people are naturally good at being accountable, while others need outside help. Everyone is different, and trial and error may be needed in order to determine what methods work for you and for your different goals. The following is a list of ideas of what to try.

Ideas

1. Give yourself a treat for crossing items off your list of things to do. For example, the following is an illustration of this idea: "For every 5 things I cross off my list, I will earn

dinner out with my husband to a restaurant of my choice.” Ensure that anyone who is involved in your reward agrees to the terms, such as the husband in the above example.

2. Give a very trusted friend a significant sum of money, informing them to hold onto the money until you prove to them that you have successfully achieved your goal by your designated date. If you do not achieve it by that date, you may decide to allow them to keep the money.
3. Place a dollar or spare change into a jar every time that you make progress in accomplishing your goal. When your goal is achieved and the jar is full, reward yourself by spending the money on anything that you would like.
4. Start a competition with friends and family members who have the same or similar goals. For example, in the lab, we often have a number of students who take academic entrance exams (i.e., GRE, MCAT, LSAT) at the same time. You could make a bet that the person in the group that achieves the highest score gains a reward, such as a free dinner, free movie, or certain amount of money, which will be provided by those who lost.
5. Meet with friends or family members, who are striving to accomplish similar goals, every week or month in order to motivate each other and talk about everyone's individual successes.
6. Create a bulletin board that displays pictures of your goals. For example, if one of your goals is to visit California, you could place a photograph of one of your favorite locations in California on the board as a reminder. You could also create one board for your goals and a second one for the goals that you have achieved. When you have accomplished one goal, you can move the picture of that goal from your first board to your second board.
7. Place inspirational notes for yourself that congratulate you on your progress in places at which you will easily see them, such as around your house or apartment or on your notebooks. You could ask a trusted loved one to do this as well. For example, a significant other could write motivating notes and place them on your kitchen's refrigerator door, or a friend could send you encouraging emails weekly.

Lesson 3: Prioritizing

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to allow you to start thinking about what is truly important in your life, which is a very important step in creating an effective and motivating schedule.

Prerequisites

You should have successfully completed Lesson 1: Creating a SMART Goal and Lesson 2: Creating an Action Plan before attempting this lesson.

Part 1: Brainstorming Your Values and What is Important

Values are always changing. Although some values last a lifetime, others are constantly evolving. What you valued 10 years ago is not the same as what you value now, and what you value today will not be what you value 10 years in the future. In order to prioritize your life, it is important to at least consider what is most important to you. Having a basic guide upon which to reflect will help you make better and more efficient decisions. The following is an activity to help you in brainstorming your values and determining what is important to you.

1. Without deliberation, write down the 3 things that are most important to you.
2. Look at the 3 things that you wrote down, and think about why they are important to you. Often, what we write is not what we value, but simply a representation of the value. For example, if you wrote, "My car," think about what your car represents. Is it the physical car that is important, or is it the independence or freedom that the car provides you? Is it a memory that is attached to the car, such as a first kiss, a 16th birthday gift from your parents, or a simpler time in your life? Once you identify these 3 values, consider how they relate to your life as a whole.

Part 2: Brainstorming Values and What is Important with the Wellness Wheel

The following is a second activity to help you in brainstorming your values and determining what is important to you using the Wellness Wheel worksheet.

1. The 7 areas of focus in our lives are the following: Spiritual, Intellectual, Psychological, Social, Professional, Recreational, and Physical. These areas are all interconnected and should remain in balance, so that they all can function properly. Any imbalance may cause stress, frustration, chaos, illness, and may cause you to feel unhappy and unfulfilled.
2. Consider these 7 areas of your life. On your Wellness Wheel worksheet, write down, in the appropriate pieces of the wheel, all of your current activities. If you cannot decide where a specific item should go, write it outside of the wheel.

- Look at your wheel. Consider the following questions: Does one piece have a lot more activities than another? Is one piece completely empty? How does looking at your wheel make you feel?

Part 3: What is Really Important?

Many activities are brought up in our daily lives. All of them can be classified as urgent or not urgent and as important or not important. The key to figuring out the best way to prioritize and create your schedule is to organize your current activities into these groups. Consider the following chart and activity.

The Time Management Matrix

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	Urgent & Important Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis • Pressing Problems • Deadline-Driven Projects These will happen	Not Urgent & Important: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention (Doctor's, Dentist, Back-up Computer Files, & Car maintenance) • Relationship building (Friends, Family, Significant other, Community) • Exploring Life • Planning (Time Management, Goal Setting, & Scheduling) • Recreation Do these things first so they get done
NOT IMPORTANT	Urgent & Not Important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interruptions • Some calls, reports, meetings, emails, etc. (Optional things & not important to you) • Popular Activities (apathetic compliance) • Other people's bad planning is not your crisis! Say NO to these activities	Not Urgent & Not Important <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trivia • Busy Work • Some emails • Some phone calls • Time wasters • Leisure activities Save these for your new found free time

1. In the proper categories of your blank Time Management Matrix worksheet, write down your daily activities. Do not analyze them as you write them. If you do not know where an activity should be placed, write it off to the side.
2. Now, look at your matrix. Consider the following questions: Are there a lot of things in the “Urgent” and “Not Important” category? How did you feel when you wrote down your activities? How does looking at your matrix make you feel?

Part 4: Review Your Schedule

This section will help prepare you to prioritize and create a new, final schedule by looking over your current weekly schedule. Consider the following activity.

1. On your Blank Schedule worksheet, fill out the activities of a normal week. Write down all of your activities, including driving, eating, sleeping, and studying.
2. With your Time Management Matrix and Wellness Wheel worksheets, place your completed schedule in front of you. Consider the following questions: How do these pieces fit together? Do you notice anything good or bad when you look at these papers? How do you feel considering these items?
3. Looking at your life in three simple pieces of paper may be overwhelming, frustrating, or aggravating. You may have noticed or realized where things may have gone wrong. Or, you may see where some things are going right. It is important to find a balance that is right for you in all areas of your life.
4. Take five minutes to write down some reflections that you had during the previous exercises in this workshop. On a piece of paper, write down everything, regardless of whether it is big or small, that is in your mind. It is fine if some of your reflections do not relate to this workshop at all; write these down too. This activity is called a brain dump, which is an excellent exercise that clears your mind and allows you to undertake a project with a clear, aware, and focused mind.

Lesson 4: Final Schedule

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to allow you to create a final schedule that will help you balance and organize your life. This lesson ties together all of the previous lessons and may be repeated as many times as necessary.

Prerequisites

You should have successfully completed Lesson 1: Creating a SMART Goal, Lesson 2: Creating an Action Plan, and Lesson 3: Prioritizing before attempting this lesson.

Part 1: Creating a final schedule

This section will help you create a new, final schedule that will assist you in efficiently managing your time and achieving your goals, based upon the previous exercises in this workshop.

Consider the following activity.

1. Collect your Goals worksheet, Values worksheet, Wellness Wheel worksheet, Time Management Matrix worksheet, and Brain Dump worksheet from the previous lessons.
2. Acquire a blank Wellness Wheel and a blank Schedule worksheet.
3. Look at all of your previous pieces of paper, and revise any of your goals or items that need to be revised.
4. Underline any important ideas, revelations, or thoughts written on your Brain Dump worksheet.
5. Reflect on your goals and values. While holding these thoughts in your mind, create a new Wellness Wheel worksheet. This is your ideal chart. This chart will include all the important, valuable, and good activities that you already do, as well as those that you want to do. Pay careful attention in order to balance your wheel. Do not worry if you are completing your new wheel correctly or incorrectly; do what feels right to you, and fill it out until you are satisfied with it.
6. After you have completed your wheel, obtain your blank Schedule worksheet.
7. On your blank schedule, write down the activities that you know you must do and that you cannot change. This may include your current work or class schedule. Be realistic and truthful; there may be some tasks that you can change, move, or delete, even though it may initially appear that you cannot.
8. Look at your Time Management Matrix, and schedule the activities that are in your “Not Urgent” but “Important” category.

9. Schedule time for any activities that are in your “Urgent” and “Important” categories that you may already have.
10. Schedule free time. This time will be spent doing the activities in your life that are in your “Not Important” and “Not Urgent” categories. You may use this time however you would like. For example, you may decide to read a book, doodle, listen to music, or write poetry. You may also use blocks of free time in the middle of your day to recollect, organize, and give yourself time in case any interruptions arise or any appointments run late. Do not think of this time as wasted; instead, think of it as your opportunity to calm, unwind, and focus. Look at your new schedule. Consider the following questions: What do you think? How does it make you feel? Take a moment to reflect upon the entire process.
11. The final step is the most difficult step: adhering to your schedule. Similar to creating goals, creating accountability is a personal process that will need to be explored and tested in order to determine what works best for you. Do not give up. Remember that all of your diligent efforts are worth all of the happiness and peace that you will receive from a balanced and well-organized schedule and life.

Lesson 5: Additional Resources

Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to provide a list of supplementary resources that may help you to effectively create your goals and manage your time.

Prerequisites

You should have successfully completed Lesson 1: Creating a SMART Goal, Lesson 2: Creating an Action Plan, Lesson 3: Prioritizing, and Lesson 4: Final Schedule before attempting this lesson.

Part 1: Electronic Resources we have

1. Ten Ways to Manage Your Time, in the folder S:\BarchardsLab\Workshops\01 Do not put on website\Goals and Time Management

Part 2: Online Resources

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wGbmAH4mBPA>
2. <http://www.zenhabits.net>
3. <http://www.lifehacker.com>
4. <http://www.lifehack.org>

Part 3: Print Resources

1. Successful Time Management for Dummies by Dirk Zeller
2. Successful Time Management by Patrick Forsyth
3. Time Management by Marc Mancini
4. Concise Time Management and Personal Development by John Adair
5. Creative Time Management for the New Millennium: Become More Productive and Still Have Time for Fun by Jan Yager
6. Time Management by Robert M. Hochheiser
7. Time Management from the Inside Out: The Foolproof System for Taking Control of your Schedule and your Life by Julie Morgenstern
8. Motivation and Goal-setting: How to Set and Achieve Goals and Inspire Others by Jim Cairo
9. Goals and Goal Setting by Larrie Rouillard
10. Goal Setting by Susan B. Wilson

Goals and Strategies Survey

Version 1

Written by Kim Barchard, April 16, 2009

The purpose of this survey is to assist students in achieving their goals, by encouraging students to identify their goals and create strategies for achieving those goals, and by sharing those goals and strategies with other lab members. My intention is that each student will complete this survey every semester, so that they can track their progress towards their goals, and update their goals and strategies appropriately.

Your goals and strategies are yours. You may share them with whomever you wish. I recommend that you share them with me, with the lab manager, and with

Who you are

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Where you are

Today's date _____

Current major(s) _____

Current minor(s) _____

Number of credits completed at all post-secondary institutions _____

Number of credits currently in progress _____

Degrees completed at all post-secondary institutions _____

Current paid job(s) _____

Current volunteer job(s) (include all research assistant positions and all volunteer clinical work)

Academic and Career Goals

Please identify your current major academic or career goal. For most students, it will be one of the following:

- selecting a major
- deciding what to do after you graduate (e.g., do you want to work, continue your education, or do something else? If you want to work, what kind of work do you want? If you want to continue your education, what kind of program do you want to go into? If you want to do something else, what do you want to do?)

- applying to graduate school / medical school / law school / a job
- interviewing for graduate school / medical school / law school / a job
- starting graduate school / medical school / law school / a job
- completing your masters thesis
- completing your qualifying paper
- completing your dissertation

Current major goal _____

When do you plan to accomplish this goal? (e.g., when do you plan to apply to graduate school, or start graduate school?) _____

Please identify your next major academic or career goal, after you have accomplished your current goal. For example, if you current goal is to apply to graduate school this coming fall, the next goal might be to start graduate school the next fall.

Next major goal _____

When do you plan to accomplish this goal? _____

Personal and Social Goals

Academic and career goals are important, but they are not the only goals and often are not the most important goals. List your most important personal and social goals. These might include goals such as raising a child, learning to play the guitar, spending one day a week with your family, keeping in touch with friends in another city, taking a vacation next summer, or whatever else is important to you. Some of these goals might be on-going. If some of these goals will occur by certain dates, list the dates.

Personal and social goals (and dates where appropriate) _____

Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes

What knowledge, skills, and attitudes do you need to improve, in order to accomplish your current academic or career goal and your next academic or career goal? If you do not know what skills you need, then one thing you need is the knowledge of what skills you need. If you do not know what your goal is (for example, you are trying to pick a major), then one thing you need is to know what you like and know what is important to you.

Necessary or desirable knowledge _____

Necessary or desirable skills _____

Necessary or desirable attitudes _____

Priorities

Which of these improvements are your priorities for this upcoming semester? You may pick up to TWO of these knowledge, skills, or attitudes to focus on. _____

Strategies

What is your plan for improving the knowledge, skills, or attitudes that you want to focus on? For example, you might say there are specific activities you want to get involved in (such as completing more computer workshops, administering a study, or being more involved in leadership activities), or you might say you will tell people your goals and ask for their help in achieving them. List at least three strategies for each of your priority areas.

First priority

Strategy 1 _____

Strategy 2 _____

Strategy 3 _____

Second priority

Strategy 1 _____

Strategy 2 _____

Strategy 3 _____

Sharing

Who will you share your goals and strategies with? I recommend that you share your academic and career goals with myself, the lab manager, and one other lab member. I recommend you share all your goals with a friend or family member who you trust. If you feel comfortable doing so, I recommend that you share your personal goals with lab members, too, so that we can support you in all the things that are important to you, not just academics.

I will share my academic and career goals with the following people _____

I will share my personal and social goals with the following people _____