

## Realistic Goal Setting

---

It's fairly simple to state a goal but actually achieving it isn't quite as easy. Of course, your actions are the biggest factor in determining whether or not you will succeed but how you formulate your goals is almost as important. Make sure they meet these criteria:

1. **Your goals must be specific.** One might say, "I want to be successful." Well, who doesn't? But can you define what success means to you? Success to one person may mean becoming CEO of a company while to another person it can mean getting home from work by 6 o'clock every night.
2. **You must be able to measure the outcome of your goals.** When you set a goal you must include a time frame for achieving it. You can also specify amounts. For example, one can say "in three years I want to be halfway through graduate school."
3. **Don't be negative.** Make sure your goal is something you want rather than something you want to avoid. For instance instead of saying "I don't want to be stuck in this job for another four years," say "I want to improve my skills over the next four years so that I qualify for a better job."
4. **Keep your goals realistic.** Make sure your abilities and skills are compatible with your long-term goals. Your goal shouldn't be "I want to win a Grammy Award next year" if you don't have a recording contract, haven't made a record and can't even carry a tune.
5. **Is your goal reachable within your time frame?** Don't set yourself up to fail. If you have one big goal then you have to break it down into smaller parts, or short term goals. Remember, you will do better if you take baby steps than one big giant leap.
6. **There must be an action tied to each goal.** For instance, if your goal is to graduate from [college](#) three years from now, the action tied to it would be to complete the remaining 94 credits you need to complete your bachelor's degree.
7. **Be flexible about your goals.** If you encounter barriers that seem like they might impede your progress, don't give up. Instead, modify your goals accordingly. Let's say you have to work and can't complete a bachelor's degree in four years. You can enroll in school part-time and adjust your time frame. However, if a particular goal becomes something that is no longer important to you, then you should consider letting it go. That will allow you to put your energy into pursuing objectives that are important to you.



A GOAL WITHOUT A  
PLAN IS JUST A WISH.

ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPERY