



TriMetrix®HD Realistic Personal Goal Setting

Realistic Personal Goal Setting

The ability to set goals for yourself that can be achieved using available resources and operating within a projected timeframe.

Why is this skill important?

Realistic Personal Goal Setting deals with a person's ability to accurately evaluate his or her own strengths and weaknesses, and to use this information to set achievable goals for him or herself.

People who are good at Realistic Personal Goal Setting can clearly judge their own individual strengths and weaknesses, and, by weighing those against the task at hand, set realistic and attainable goals for themselves to pursue. In contrast, people who are NOT good at Realistic Personal Goal Setting may not have enough confidence or understanding of their own abilities to set goals where they should be. They may not have an accurate picture of what their own capabilities are, and as a result, they will set their own goals either unrealistically high or unrealistically low.

A major part of Realistic Personal Goal Setting is recognizing the limits of your own resources so that you focus energy on the most critical goals while still having enough energy left to move creatively beyond obstacles. At the same time, it is essential that you set high standards for yourself and efficiently devote your time and resources to reaching ambitious, but clearly defined goals.

There are two components here: recognizing your own limitations and knowing your strengths. Let's talk about the first—recognizing your own limitations. How much time do you think you spend doing tasks that someone else could do OR that someone else could do better—time that would have been better spent working toward your goals? Now, we're not saying to shove tasks that you don't want onto other people. But we are saying that:

1. If you have employees, take advantage of their strengths. It will reward them and make your job easier.
2. If you work on committees, don't take on more work than you can reasonably handle. Let someone else play a role, too.
3. Don't duplicate work—see if someone else has done a similar project before and is willing to share insights, forms, data, etc.

Now for the second part—the most important aspect of Realistic Personal Goal Setting. What are your strengths? How can you use them to achieve the highest goals you can set for yourself? Getting results is important for your career AND your organization's bottom line. But you will not be able to achieve the results your company expects and the goals that you want yourself to achieve if you aren't:

1. Defining your goals clearly, including specific expectations for results.
2. Confident enough to set goals high.
3. Managing the time you spend toward achieving goals.
4. Using your best attributes to achieve goals within the timeframe you want or need to achieve them.

Remember: Self-set goals are more likely to be achieved than those set by others because they're infinitely more personal than if they were someone else's bright idea.

What are skills associated with Realistic Personal Goal Setting?

Someone who has mastered skills associated with Realistic Personal Goal Setting:

- Is self-confident and ambitious, but not too proud to ask other people for assistance.
- Is a good time manager who is able to delegate effectively to employees or team members.
- Has set extremely high standards for his or her own performance—but not so high that he or she is set up for failure.
- Checks in with him or herself regularly to maintain progress toward goals.

How do you develop your own skills in Realistic Personal Goal Setting?

- Develop your own goals. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you!
- Make sure the goals you set are precise. Don't say, "I want to be successful enough to have a home on the French Riviera." That's not specific enough—there's no specific way for you to get to that goal. But what about, "My goal is to earn a million dollars a year so I can own a home on the French Riviera." Now you have a specific goal to work toward!
- Make sure each goal you set has a timetable for achievement.
- Check your progress toward goals by giving yourself informal and non-judgmental daily or weekly performance reviews about your progress.
- Don't let daily interruptions distract you from your goals.

- Make sure your goals are compatible with organizational or corporate missions or plans—if they aren't, you will constantly be struggling to keep your priorities set.
- Place a numerical value on your goal—whether it's achieving a certain income level or setting a date to paint the shutters at your house.
- Remember that there's nothing wrong with trying your hand at work or a pastime that is totally new to you—IF IT CAPITALIZES ON YOUR STRENGTHS.
- Take aptitude and interest inventory tests from a vocational training specialist. By spending a few hours and a few dollars to take the tests, you may prevent yourself from setting goals you aren't likely to accomplish or arriving at a destination where you don't really want to be.
- Change your goals as your values, knowledge, and experience evolve.
- Try three, four, or as many approaches to a goal as necessary—then, if nothing works, don't be too proud to go back and reassess the goal. It may truly not be achievable in its current form.
- Make sure your goals are compatible with one another—they shouldn't have conflicting aims!
- Write down your goals. Think of your goals as promises to yourself. You wouldn't break a promise to someone you cared about, so why break one to yourself?
- PLAN for achieving your goals. Whether it's a goal of completing a report by 5:00 p.m. today, or a goal for becoming CEO of your own company by the time you're 45.
- For each goal you set, have a list of concrete action steps you must take to achieve it.
- If you don't have the expertise to do everything it takes to reach your goal, ask for help. Find someone who can teach you what you don't know or help you fill in the blanks.
- Be an effective delegator. This is especially important in achieving immediate goals related to your job.
- Establish a weekly and daily work plan that incorporates all of your goals and gives you key action items you must complete toward each one.

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Activities

Activity 1: Matching Skills to Assignments

For a project you are currently the "lead" on, make a careful list of tasks you believe will be part of accomplishing the goal. Next to each task, write the name of the person or people whom you think should take responsibility for the task. Then, write a brief explanation of why you chose that person (or people) to accomplish each particular task. Don't forget to include yourself!!

After you have completed this exercise for several projects, you will find that the process becomes more instinctive to you.

Project/Goal Title: _____

Task	Assigned to	Rationale

Using the table on the next page as a guide, make a list of your top goals. Once you have listed your goals, figure out how to measure your success at reaching that goal. Will you have succeeded when the annual report gets published? Will you have succeeded when an existing client comes to you for a new project? Will you have succeeded when you set up a committee to work on a new initiative?

Do your best to determine how to measure your success. Then, give yourself a reasonable deadline for accomplishing the goals you set. Some may have a deadline in the next few days; others may not be completed until a year from now.

Goal	What is Success?	Date to Accomplish
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		
8		
9		
10		

After you have completed Activity 2, defining your goals clearly, you're ready to complete your first weekly work plan. You should revise this weekly work plan EVERY week!

1. What tasks should be done to achieve my goals?
2. What's the priority of each one?
3. How long will each activity take?
4. When should I start each task?

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