



GOAL DIRECTED BEHAVIOR

Stepping Stones

When it is obvious that the goals cannot be reached, don't adjust the goals, adjust the action steps.

- Confucius



TEACHER NOTES

Harvard Business School professor Teresa Amabile's research on the "Progress Principle" says that of all the things that drive people, and make them feel good about their work, the most powerful is simply making progress. She writes about how important it is to make even incremental progress each day on meaningful work, and to be able to extract some learning and some value from the setbacks we encounter.

Her research drew on business managers from around the world, reporting on what they felt were the most effective motivators. 95% got it wrong. Recognition, incentives, clear goals, and personal support all are important, but are not the key factor. Making progress toward something that is personally meaningful made the biggest impact on being able to stick with projects and sustain positive feelings about work.

The most effective managers she studied supported their employees in four ways:

- Catalyst: supporting clear goals, with autonomy in how to reach them
- Removing obstacles: taking action that helps keep the work environment optimal for getting the job done
- Nourishment: coming into the work area to encourage and expressed appreciation for the workers and their work
- Camaraderie: finding ways to help employees bond interpersonally as a team

The parallel to classrooms or groups of young people outside of school is a strong one. How can teachers and facilitators play those same four crucial roles, as our students learn to grapple with and achieve their goals?



DURATION: 45 minute

[Teacher/Facilitator and Student/Participant Goals](#)

MATERIALS

- [Student goal setting video](#) (2 minutes)
- [Stepping Stones handout](#)

OPTIONAL:

- Oprah Inspirational Video
- Persistence Video



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MAIN POINTS Introduce Goal Setting Strategies (10 minutes)

- Introduce the importance of setting goals, of having a clear idea of what you want to learn or achieve, and a specific plan for getting there within a particular amount of time.
- Show students the 2 minute “SMART goals” for students video and review (Specific; Measurable; Attainable; Relevant; Time Sensitive)



GUIDING LANGUAGE

“I think about what I want to accomplish or learn, and how I can make that happen.” That’s pretty much goal-setting in a nutshell! Today our lesson focus is on a strategy to help each of us stick to the goals we identify as important.

You’ve probably heard other people talk about goals they have in life, and you very likely have goals of your own. Sometimes they are big life goals, like graduating from high school, going to college, getting a great job, becoming a professional at a sport or as a musician. Sometimes they are smaller goals, like improving your free throw average, or getting your homework or chores done without being reminded, or learning the names of all the bones in the human foot.

What really matters about a goal is that it’s something you truly care about. To stay motivated even when it gets tough, our goals have to be meaningful. That’s what helps us keep on track, and willing to be creative and thoughtful when making plans and sticking to them. The author Earl Nightingale put it this way: “People with goals succeed because they know where they are going.”

Then we need to keep making progress, even if it’s in small steps. It really helps people to see that they’re making progress, getting at least a little bit closer to their dreams, step by step. (Optional: Show 2 minute video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cCiqbSJ9fg>) highlighting the necessity of persistence in achieving goals. No voiceover, so your students may benefit from you reading the captions as they’re drawn.)

We’re going to watch a very short, two-minute video clip with students talking about their own goals and how they reached them. You’re going to hear them talking about personal goals that are important to them. You’ll also hear them talking about “SMART” goals. We’re going to watch it twice. The first time, just relax and watch carefully, to see what you notice, for a partner share. The second time, I’ll ask you to listen especially for examples of what “SMART” goals mean.

Show the video clip once. Ask students to turn to a partner and talk about something they noticed that interested them about the goals the students in the video had set for themselves. Debrief as a group. Show the video clip again, asking students to pay special attention to the explanations of what “SMART” goals are. Debrief to confirm student understanding.



MAIN POINT: Personal Goal Setting (25 minutes)

- Support individual students in brainstorming and then choosing an authentic personal goal
- Create a Stepping Stones map (3-5 measurable action steps)
- Design assessment & timeline (Keep it simple and doable, within your schedule)
- Confirm with an Intention Partner (or “Accountabili-Buddy”, as an inspirational Memphis high school teacher calls them!)



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GUIDING LANGUAGE

You're going to have some time now to think about some things you really care about learning or achieving. For today, let's start with a small goal that you will be able to achieve in the relatively near future, which is the "A" in "SMART" goals. Please turn your handout over to the blank side. For the next couple of minutes, we'll have some private think time to quietly brainstorm your list of possible goals. Be creative, be open, be thoughtful. Make a list of things you truly care about learning or achieving. (Silent Writing time 2-3 minutes, as is appropriate to your group. Play quiet instrumental music if helpful to your group.)

In a moment you'll turn to a partner and share your lists. When it's your turn to listen, support your partner by being respectful and caring about their ideas. When it's your turn to talk, be proud and confident about your ideas. Your dreams are important! (If desired, show the two-minute inspirational video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mo1JXmi7U) (3-4 minutes)

Now, turn your handout over to the printed side. Take a moment to read the quote at the top to yourself and think about what it might mean. (PAUSE) (Read quote aloud or have a student volunteer read it to the group.) What are some things this might mean? Turn to a neighbor and take one minute each to say what you think Goethe was trying to say here. (Partner Share. Group debrief: hear from several volunteers. Add your own comments as appropriate.) (4 minutes)

Write your personal goal at the top. Fill in the section that describes why this is important to you. That's what is going to help you stay motivated, if following through on your plan to reach your goal gets tough. As you design your goal, check off each SMART goals section, when you can clearly see that piece is in place. (PAUSE and circulate, assisting students as needed.) (5 minutes)

Your next task is to design three action steps – 'stepping stones to success'. If you were trying to cross a river without getting wet, you'd be appreciative if there were big stones you could use as your personal bridge. In the same way, a plan of action steps can help you keep moving forward to reach your goal. Think about the SMART steps and make your stepping stones practical and helpful. I'll be here to think with you and give ideas, and you can talk with one another as well. As you think about the support you'll need and want to help you stick to your plan, list that on your paper, too.

For each stepping stone, fill in the date you're going to have accomplished that step. Notice there's a place there for your intention partner (or whatever term you are using for their accountability partner) to sign when you meet to check in. I'll give you a few minutes a couple of times each week (or the timing that is appropriate for your group) to check in with your partner on how you're doing, sticking to your goal and making progress.

We'll have about ten minutes for this, so concentrate and let me know what help you need in defining your action steps. (10 minutes)

✓ Main Point: Reflection (3 minutes)

Recap main learning points for students

Provide encouragement and enthusiasm for their venture into goal setting



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Guiding Language

(PAUSE) Close your eyes, or let them rest on a spot on the floor, and picture, for a few quiet moments, yourself having achieved that goal. (PAUSE) See yourself proud, and happy, and surrounded by people you respect, who are all so pleased and impressed by your persistence and steady work toward your goal. (PAUSE)

CLOSURE (2 minutes)

Turn to someone near you, and offer them some encouraging words for working towards their new goal. When it's your turn to talk, be sincere. When it's your turn to listen, believe in the support your partner is offering. Be appreciative.



GOAL DIRECTED BEHAVIOR

Teacher / Student Goals

Goal-Directed Behavior: A child's initiation of, and persistence in completing, tasks of varying difficulty.

My students are able to:

- Identify an academic, social skill, or personal goal
- Plan action steps for reaching their goal
- Evaluate personal progress
- Create new action steps or adjust timeline as appropriate

I am aware of my individual student's abilities to:

- Set and work toward effective learning goals
- Verbally share personal and/or team progress toward meeting goals

The environment I create supports my students' growth related to:

- Understand how their efforts contribute to success with learning goals
- Building a collaborative community that supports setting and achieving goals

Student / Participant Goals: Goal Directed Behavior

Students will:

- Identify an authentic goal that is meaningful to them
- Create an action plan (stepping stones)
- Engage in peer coaching and mutual support strategies
- Reflect on personal level of successive approximations of goal achievement
- (notice and name ways they are getting closer and closer to their goal)

DESSA GOAL DIRECTED BEHAVIOR INDICATORS

(Highlighted indicators are directly addressed in this lesson.)

I can:

Keep trying when unsuccessful
Take steps to achieve goals
Try to do her/his best
Seek out additional knowledge or information
Take an active role in learning
Do things independently
Ask to take on additional work or responsibilities
Show creativity in completing a task
Seek out challenging tasks
Work hard on projects

Name _____ Due Date _____

"SMART Goals"

*It is not enough to take steps which may some day lead to a goal;
each step must be itself a goal and a step likewise.*

- Goethe

Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Time Sensitive

To set a goal, I think about what I want to accomplish or learn, and how I can accomplish it...

My goal is _____

Because _____

Supports and Helpers: _____

My Action Plan:

Stepping Stone #1

By when:

Buddy Check _____



My Action Plan:

Stepping Stone #2

By when:

Buddy Check _____



My Action Plan:

Stepping Stone #3

By when:

Buddy Check _____

