



ECSU Student Center and Student Activities Office *Co-curricular education for student organizational leadership*

SETTING GOALS

Goals are statements describing what your organization wishes to accomplish. Remember to review your goals from semester to semester or year to year, depending on your organization.

WHY SET GOALS?

There are many reasons to set goals. Goals can:

- ◆ Give direction; help avoid chaos.
- ◆ Motivate members.
- ◆ Clarify and communicate what you are striving to accomplish.
- ◆ Define your organization.
- ◆ Act as a basis for recognition and measuring accomplishments.
- ◆ Save time (you will become more aware of problems in time to develop solutions and be better able to prepare and plan ahead).

It is best to set goals as a group. This will create many positive results, including:

- ◆ better commitment (people support what they help create),
- ◆ more motivation among members and officers,
- ◆ clarity of goals (better understanding of goals and the rationale for selecting them), and
- ◆ better goals (more ideas and opinions in the decision making process).

STEPS FOR SETTING AND ACHIEVING GOALS

Following are steps for setting and achieving goals with your organization:

- 1 Brainstorm goals as a group.
- 2 Choose from the brainstormed list those you want to accomplish.
- 3 Prioritize the goals as a group.
- 4 Determine objectives for each goal. Objectives are descriptions of how exactly you will reach your goals. They are short-term, have deadlines, and are intended as steps toward reaching your goals.
- 5 Determine a plan of action for each objective:
 - ◆ What is to be done (your objective)?
 - ◆ How will it be accomplished?
 - ◆ What are the resources (people, money, material)?
 - ◆ Who will carry it through?
 - ◆ When will it be accomplished?
 - ◆ What are the expected results and how will they be measured?
- 6 Move into action, follow through. It is very important to accomplish this step. Many groups fail to reach their goals because they stop at step #4.
- 7 Continually evaluate your progress.
- 8 Be flexible; allow your objectives to change to meet new circumstances.

ACTION PLAN

Objective: Develop a committee structure to increase member involvement by at least 40% by next term.


How: Discuss ideas with the executive board; delegate setting up the system to one or two executive officers.

Resources: Members, officers, consultants (e.g. advisor).

Who: Executive board and key members.

When: By next term.

Results: *Not acceptable* - membership involvement increases by less than 40%; *Acceptable* - membership involvement increases 40-70%; *Better than Expected* - membership involvement



GUIDELINES FOR SETTING GOALS

Learning how to establish goals is at the root of our system of motivation. Remember when establishing one that a goal should be:

- ◆ **Conceivable**

Conceptualize the goal so that it is understandable and then be able to identify clearly what the first step or two should be.

- ◆ **Believable**

Believe you can reach the goal. Bear in mind that few people can believe a goal that they have never seen achieved by someone else.

- ◆ **Achievable**

You must be able to accomplish your goals with your given strengths and abilities. For example, if you were an obese, fifty year old man, it would be foolish for you to set the goal of running a four-minute mile in the next four months.

- ◆ **Controllable**

If your goal includes the involvement of anyone else, first obtain the permission of the other person or persons involved; or the goal may be stated as an invitation. For example, if one's goal were to take his girlfriend to a movie on a Saturday night, the goal would not be acceptable as stated because it involves the possibility that she might say no. However, if he said his goal was to merely invite the girl to the movie, it would be acceptable.

- ◆ **Desirable**

Your goal should be something you really want to do. Whatever your ambition, have desire to fulfill it. It should not be something you feel you should do.

- ◆ **Stated with No Alternative**

Set one goal at a time. A person who says they want to do one thing or another (giving an alternative) seldom gets beyond the "or." They do neither. At the same time, however, there should be flexibility. Flexibility implies an ability to judge whether the action you are involved in is either inappropriate, unnecessary, or the result of a bad decision.

- ◆ **Growth-Facilitating**

Never be destructive to yourself, to others, or to society. Some of the most simple uncomplicated experiences are the ones most meaningful in building positive relationships and enhancing growth.

A firm belief in the importance of goals as the cornerstone of an organization's success is the vital first step in putting those goals to work for you.

RELATED SAO RESOURCES

- ◆ Goal Setting Worksheet

REFERENCE

Adapted from: St. Norbert College, Department of Leadership, Service & Involvement

*Additional resource handouts are available as well as consultation services.
For more information, contact the Student Activities Office in the Student Center at 465-4450.*