



Rowan University

SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Goal Setting

Why Set Goals?

- Effective goals help us to keep up motivation and make forward progress.
- They allow us to keep track of what we've done, and how close we are to being finished.
- They set us up to successfully allocate our time and resources to reach them.

SMART Goals: What Makes a Good Goal?

Your goals should be:

Specific - Your goal can be stated simply, without caveats or vagueness.

Measurable - Your goal has a definite end product.

Achievable - Your goal is possible to complete and you will know when it is completed.

Relevant - Your goal is actively helpful to your eventual desired outcome.

Timely - Your goal has a definite time limit, and that time limit makes sense.

Goals, Milestones, and Tasks

We can think of “Goals” as long-term expectations for the outcomes of our work. If that’s the case, then our Goals are made up of Milestones, which are themselves made up of Tasks.

GOAL: I want to walk ten miles.

MILESTONE: I need to walk one mile.

TASK: I will take a step.

GOAL: I want to complete chapter 5 this month.

MILESTONE: I need to write the chapter introduction.

TASK: I will write for at least one hour a day this week.

Goal Setting For Big Writing Projects

The longer a writing project, the more helpful goal setting can be.

Set your final, large goal for a period of time (for example, set your goal for the semester, or for the year), and then break that goal down into milestones. Once you have milestones, start making plans for tasks that will get you to the first milestone. Work one week at a time -- what can you do this week that you put you on the path toward the first milestone?

Keep track of your goals, milestones and tasks, and whether you are meeting (or exceeding!) them.

Share your goals with other people to keep yourself accountable to them.