

## Golden Rules of Goal Setting

Hopefully you have read the previous articles on goal setting and are now on the path to success, at whatever level you desire.

Before we go much further, I need to remind you that Goal Setting is not just about writing down a few random thoughts or wishes. Like most things, there are a number of rules you must follow if you are to get the best out of it.

### **1. ALL Goals should be SMARTER**

**S**pecific – You need to accurately define what you want to achieve. Goals such as wanting to be a better archer or trying harder are too vague. Concentrate on Specific goals such as achieving a better release or tuning your bow..

**M**easurable – Goals such as “Shooting more arrows” should be replaced with “I will shoot 180 arrows per day. If you only shoot 50 arrows per week then “more” arrows could just mean 60! Your target is achieved but is of no real benefit.

**A**chievable - Work out where you are now and detail all the steps you need to make to get to your goal. If you want to shoot in the Olympics you first need to get into the National squad. To do this you need to shoot qualifying scores. To do this you need to ---- and so on. Set yourself small targets that will lead you to your ultimate goal. Small achievable goals will keep you interested and you will be able to see progress.

**R**ealistic – Make your goals challenging but realistic. Goals such as winning a medal in the next Olympics are pretty unrealistic if you can only shoot once a week. You will probably never achieve this and will soon become disillusioned. Goals such as adding 2 points to your FITA 18 score are probably too easy.

**T**imebound – If you have no deadline to meet then your small goals could take years to achieve. Identify target dates for your goals to be achieved. Most people try harder and work better when they are constrained by deadlines. Remember to make the target dates achievable.

**E**xciting – Ensure the goals are exciting and you reward yourself when you achieve them. When you reach your goal – however small, treat yourself to the new CD you want or a meal out with friends. This will help you stay motivated and interested.

**R**eviewed – Review your goals regularly and set new ones when goals have been reached. Keep pushing yourself and setting ever more challenging goals.

### **2. Set Long Medium and Short Term Goals**

Goals are usually defined as Long, Medium and Short Term and your goal setting process should include all of these steps. It's difficult to put a timescale on what actually constitutes Long, Medium and Short.

For some, the long term goal is to shoot in the Olympics and in this case long term means upwards of 3 years. For someone with more modest ambitions of gaining MB status, long term will mean within a year.

Think of Long term goals as what you ultimately want to achieve and the Medium and Short term goals as the stepping stones to help you get there. As you reach your short term goals, everything moves up a place so your medium becomes the short and the long becomes the medium. This means you now have to set yourself a new long term goal. Goal setting is not a one off activity and you will need to constantly review and adjust your goals.

- ⇒ Long term goals – Product or Outcome Goals – Usually specify your outcomes
- ⇒ Mid term goals – Process Goals – Usually specify what you need to get there
- ⇒ Short term goals – Process Goals – Usually specify how you get there

Process goals specify a skill

Product or Outcome goals specify an outcome or desired result.

Remember - you mostly control process goals; you mostly don't completely control outcome goals.

**Outcome Based Goals** – These Goals are generally result oriented. They can be a certain score, a win at a certain tournament, a top ten finish or even becoming an Olympian. Be careful when setting these. People generally set 'score goals' because they are easy to set. It's the lazy option. It doesn't require any thought other than "what do I want to score?" It's best to be more specific (and realistic) with these goals.

Outcome goals are mostly out of our direct control. You cannot control or predict how your competitors will shoot and their result may be better than your best efforts. The weather may play a big part in these goals. You can't expect to shoot huge scores in a 50mph crosswind.

Outcome goals can be a great source of motivation, but they must be joined with proper performance goals to be truly useful. Outcome goals are often the place we want to go, but not the actual means of getting there.

### Examples

- ⇒ I want to give up smoking by the end of the year.
- ⇒ I want to make the GB squad by 2011.
- ⇒ I want to make MB and obtain my 1200 FITA Star by the end of the year.
- ⇒ I want to lose 20lbs in weight by the start of the 2011 indoor season.

**Process Based Goals** – These Goals directly relate to the Outcome goals you create. The Outcome goals are the destination; the process goals are the route map to the destination. These are the only type of goals that you can directly control. Only you can make yourself go to the gym or put in the hours of shooting required.

Process goals can be anything that helps us achieve the desired result. Things like improving stamina, working on an aspect of your form, nutrition, time management etc.

With process goals you will need to carry out an HONEST appraisal of your current skills and areas for improvement. Process goals are not just about improving weak areas – they can be about making good skills stronger.

### Examples

- ⇒ Within the next month, I will evaluate and finalize my stabilizer setup.
- ⇒ By the end of (insert month here) I will execute every shot in both practice and competition with control and precision.
- ⇒ By (insert month here) I will have joined a gym, sought advice on a training schedule and will be training twice a week.
- ⇒ By (insert month here) I will be shooting a minimum of 250 arrows per day in the pursuit of perfect practice – not scoring.

Notice that all the goals above, both process and outcome are based around the SMARTER system. They are all **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**imebound. The "E" and the "R" I will leave to you. Only you can decide if your goals are **E**xciting and how you will **R**eview them.

Look back at the goals and sub-goals that you have set and check if they meet all the SMARTER criteria. If not, you may need to redefine them

### **3. All goals should be personal to you**

You should write all your goals in the first person. Rather than "Shoot all arrow..." try - "I will shoot all arrows..."

### **4. Use positive statements.**

If I say to my son, "Don't spill that drink on the floor" the first image he gets in his head is of a drink spilt on the floor. This makes it more likely to happen.

If I were to say "Make sure you keep that drink in the cup until you can put it carefully on the table" his mental image is of a non-spilt cup sitting on the table. This is a good result for everyone. Make your goals positive rather than negative.

That's about it really. As I have said before, Goal Setting on its own is not going to magically cure you of all your problems. What it will do is give you a clearer understanding of what those issues are and provide a plan to help overcome them.

In the next of these articles, we will move on from the planning stage and set about making the most of the time you have available to shoot.

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