

# Mental Performance: Goal Setting

Goals provide you with a direction and purpose and give meaning to your pursuits. They are like critical reference points on the map of your progress, allowing you to focus on what matters most and persevere in the face of obstacles.

## Types of Goals

There are several types of goals that you can set to increase your chances of reaching your full potential. Similar to the multiple directional points that are included within any map, you can integrate a hierarchy of goals in your overall plan, such as those below, to have a clear and comprehensive trajectory.

### Dream Goals

The ultimate wishful goal that can become a reality if you fully commit to developing your potential and skills. e.g. To represent Canada at the Olympics.

### Long-Term Goals

Realistic goals that you set for several months away (i.e. end of season, nationals) based on what you need to do to ultimately achieve your dream goal. e.g. Finish top 5 in C1 at nationals.

### Short-Term Goals

Realistic goals that you set every month or week based on what you need to do to achieve your long-term goals. e.g. Improve my start to get off the line and accelerate more aggressively.

### Deliberate Practice Goals

Daily intentions for each training session. Your coach tells you what to train, but you can choose which aspect of your training you are deliberately focusing on. This could be a mental goal, physical goal, technical goal, or tactical goal.

### Self-Acceptance Goals

Goals that allow you to accept and appreciate yourself, regardless of your outcomes. e.g. I will feel good about the effort I put in on the water each practice, regardless of whether or not I finish in the top 5 at nationals.

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## Outcome / Performance / Process

As you identify these different types of goals, you can articulate them as **outcome, performance or process goals**. All three are important to sustain your focus and motivation over time.

### Outcome Goals

Focus on a particular result you want to achieve. Outcome goals are not completely within your control since outcomes are contingent upon the performance of your opponents. e.g. win the race, finish top 3 in the province

### Performance Goals

Focus on aspects of your performance you want to improve in order to eventually achieve your outcome goals. Performance goals are more within your control. e.g. improve time in 200m time control by 2 seconds.

### Process Goals

Focus attention on concrete actions you can execute to improve your performance. Process goals provide you with the most control. e.g. Focus on a strong and connected catch in every stroke.

## SMART Goals

SMART goals are **specific, measurable, action-based, relevant, and time-based objectives**. They help you set clear and realistic targets by outlining exactly what you want to achieve, how you'll measure progress, and when you aim to complete them.

- **SPECIFIC** - Formulate your goal in a clear, detailed, positive manner based on what you want to accomplish or improve. Consider including how you want to feel when specifying your goal.
- **MEASURABLE** - Quantify your goal to measure what you want to accomplish or improve and compare your performances against your current and desired results.
- **ACTION-BASED** - Identify the actions required to reach your goal in order to guide your efforts and focus on appropriate elements or steps.
- **REALISTIC** - Determine if your goal is challenging but attainable based on your current capability and the resources you have.
- **TIME-BASED** - Set a deadline by which you want to reach your goal.

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## Complete this worksheet to set a goal

**\*NOTE: Print multiple pages to plan different goals**

Set as many goals as you feel inspired to! Ensure that you include variety in the goals you set by exploring outcome, performance and process goals, different time frames and goals of self-acceptance. If you find that you have set so many goals that you can no longer keep track of them or are forgetting what you are trying to achieve, take a step back and reevaluate which goals are most important and relevant to your performance.

Check one of the following types of goals:

Outcome
  Performance
  Process

Check one of the following types of goals:

Dream
  Long-Term
  Short-Term
  Deliberate
  Self-Acceptance

My goal is: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the text box to make your goal SMART.

SPECIFIC	
MEASURABLE	
ACTION-BASED	
REALISTIC	
TIME-BASED	

## NOW WHAT?

Monitor, evaluate, and assess your goals by considering factors like current inspiration, desired experience, timelines, performance changes, and progression. Share your goals with individuals like coaches or teammates who can provide support and accountability. Upon achieving a goal, take the time to celebrate and acknowledge the effort invested in the accomplishment.