

Goal Setting Guidelines

One of the primary purposes of the Cornerstones program is to help guide our members toward the achievement of their own personal and professional goals. As such, the very first recommended activity for any member of Acacia Fraternity is to do some focused planning.

You may find useful the following three sets of guidelines to write out your goals.

The first set of guidelines are the “**Three P’s of Goal Setting**”, and deal specifically with the language you use to write your goals.

The second set of guidelines is known as **SMART goals** (different people use different words for this acronym, but we will rely on the following descriptors - goals must be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely).

Finally, the third set of guidelines provides you a **strategy for achieving your goals, step-by-step**.

The Three P's of Goal Setting

When setting a personal goal, the manner in which you write the goal has a huge impact on how quickly and effectively you accomplish that goal. Brian Tracy, one of the world's top authorities on personal productivity and success offers the following guidelines for writing every goal in your life.

In writing your goal, be sure that they all follow these guidelines. You will notice that for each example below, there is a specific time deadline stated:

- 1) Present Tense - "I earn a salary of \$50,000 by my 25th birthday."
 - a. Each goal should be written as if it has already been achieved. This will trigger your mind to work more efficiently to achieve the goal.
- 2) Positive Language - "I am a non-smoker by January 1, 2010."
 - a. Again, use positive language "as if" the goal were already completed. This will help your mind do a shift into a mode in which you mentally get used to believing that this goal will be accomplished
- 3) Personal - "I run 5 miles a day, four days per week, by June 15th, 2009."
 - a. Always use the word "I", plus an action verb
 - b. Keep action verb short, simple, sharp

SMART Goals -

After you have written out your goals using the Three P's of Goal Setting, test your goals against these standards, and ask yourself, "Is this goal specific enough? Is this goal measurable? Is this goal attainable? Is this goal relevant? Have I defined a time element, or set a deadline?"

Specific

- Good example - "I have earned a 3.5 gpa by December 15th (end of semester)."
- Bad example - "I want to get better grades than I have in the past."

Measurable

- Good example - "I run 25 miles per week by October 15th."
- Bad example - "I will start working out when I have time, and try to run a few times per week."

Attainable

- Good example - "I am elected to the Student Senate by October 15th."
- Bad example - "I am elected as President of the United States at some point during my undergraduate career."

Relevant

- Good example - "I am awarded the Order of Pythagoras by the end of my Senior Year."
- Bad example - "I am known as the top video gamer on the third floor of the fraternity."

Timely

- Good example - "I have earned a 3.5 gpa by December 15th (end of semester)."
- Bad example - "I will get better grades."

Goal Achieving Strategy –

- Step One: **Decide exactly what you want.**
 - Gain clarity about what is expected of you, and in what order of priority

- Step Two: **Write it down.**
 - A goal or objective that is not in writing is merely a wish or fantasy. It has no energy behind it. Remember the three P's: present, personal, positive. A goal should be in the present tense, use personal language, and positive language. For example, "I am the President of the Interfraternity Council by the beginning of my junior year." Or, "I am the facilitator of an excellent chapter retreat during the first week back to school in the spring."

- Step Three: **Set a deadline on your goal.**
 - Set sub-deadlines if necessary. You must assign a time element to make it more real to you.

- Step Four: **Make a list of everything you can think of that you are going to have to do to achieve your goal.**
 - As you think of new activities, add them to your list. Keep building your list until it is complete. A list gives you a visual picture of the larger task or objective. It gives you a track to run on.

- Step Five: **Organize the list into a plan.**
 - Organize the list based on '*priority*' and '*sequence*'. Decide what you can do now and what you can do later. Decide what needs to be done first and what needs to be done afterwards.

- Step Six: **Take action on your plan immediately.**
 - Do something...anything; and you will build the momentum needed to complete the entire goal. An average plan vigorously executed is far better than a brilliant plan on which nothing is done.

- Step Seven: **Resolve to do something every single day that moves you toward your major goal.**
 - Build it into your daily schedule. Whatever it is, you must never miss a day.