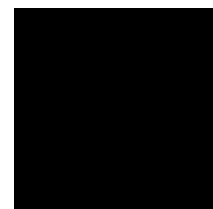


Illustration by Priscilla Fung

Guide to setting your career goals





Student working on computers, Wimbledon
College of Arts © Ana Blumenkron Zertuche



What are goals?

Your goals are what you have to do to achieve your purpose or ambition in life. If you set the right short and long-term goals and take the right steps to achieve them, eventually you will realise your vision.

Turning your goals into SMART goals

To make your goals more effective, try turning them into SMART goals. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound. Remember it's perfectly fine for your motivation or vision to change over time as long as you change your SMART goals to reflect that.

Specific

Define exactly what you want to do. Don't be vague.

Measurable

How will you know you've completed the goal? Can you track your progress?

Achievable

When can you start working towards this goal? Is it realistic?

Relevant

How does this relate to your degree? How does this relate to your past work experience? How does this connect to your aspirations?

Time Bound

Can you set a deadline to follow? What does the timeline look like?

Example 1



I want to get a job as a footwear design assistant.



I will apply for at least 10 jobs per week in the footwear industry and track each application on a spreadsheet.



I will have finished my degree and have one internship under my belt.



I want to gain more experience within the industry before starting my own brand.



I want to have started this job within 6 months of graduating

Example 2



I want to do an internship at a magazine publication over the summer holidays.



I will apply for internships and reach out to connections on LinkedIn for roles.



I have just uploaded my portfolio online and refreshed my CV.



I want to add more experience from the media industry to my CV before I graduate



I will start my job search and applications 2 months before summer



How to break down your goals into manageable steps

Working backwards from the big picture is a great way to create a path for you to follow and breaks your goal down into actionable steps. Once you've decided on your main motivation or ambition, decide what goals you need to complete to achieve that. Then break down those goals into tasks and actions. Finally, think about daily practices or habits you can work on every day that will help towards your tasks.

Follow this structure to break down your goals:

Ambition = Your desired achievement

Goal = Your aim or result

Task = Your action or work required to reach your goal

Daily Practice = Your regular habits or routine which will inform your tasks



Rochelle Saunders in the studio
© Alys Tomlinson

Example 1.

Ambition = Be a celebrity stylist

Goal = Work for a publication

Goal = Work for a stylist as an assistant

Task = Document looks where you've styled yourself or friends

Task = Build relationships at a networking event

Daily Practice = Keep up to date with show calendar

Daily Practice = Forecast any trends you see in the future

Example 2.

Ambition = Be the Senior Buyer of Accessories at Dover Street Market

Goal = Work as a Buying Assistant in Accessories for a global department store

Goal = Intern as a Buying Admin Assistant for a High Street Brand

Task = Complete online numeracy tests to improve accuracy

Task = Get a certified qualification for programs such as Excel

Daily Practice = Visit local stores to understand supply and demand trends

Daily Practice = Sign up to brand newsletters to understand lead times

Example 3.

Ambition = Work in the Creative Direction Field

Goal = Work in the Creative Direction team for a sportswear brand

Goal = Work as a Marketing Assistant for a womenswear brand

Goal = Work as a Social Media Assistant for a lifestyle brand

Task = Create a personal project directing a mock-up campaign for a brand

Task = Become an expert in all social media platforms

Daily Practice = Visit local stores to understand supply and demand trends

Daily Practice = Sign up to brand newsletters to understand lead times

How to keep on track of your goals

If you want to reach your desired goals, it is important you track your progress. Follow this list to keep on top of working towards your goals:

- **Try to set deadlines**

Remember: as long as you base your goals on the SMART criteria, you will have a time-bound goal to meet which will help set a deadline.

- **Hold yourself accountable**

You will need to hold yourself accountable to keep on top of your goals and push yourself along your journey.

- **Identify any self-sabotage or doubts**

It's also important to identify any self-sabotaging or self doubt early on and learn from it.

- **Celebrate small wins**

Make sure to celebrate any small wins you have. E.G. after completing a month of your daily practice, treat yourself with a fun activity.

- **Enjoy the journey**

The journey is the hardest part of reaching a goal but it's important to have fun and reflect along the way!

- **Make sure the goals are still relevant**

Finally keep in mind whether the goal is still relevant and enjoyable, things can change and you are always able to set new goals.