

## Setting Goals

Setting goals is important as it is a way to outline and plan what you want to achieve within a specific timeframe.

An easy way to set goals is to use the acronym “SMARTIE”

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Achievable

R = Rewarding

T = Time committed

I/E = Inspiring/Exciting



### **Specific**

It is important that your goal is specific. A vague goal that is unclear will be harder to achieve and work towards. For example, “learn some French” is a poor goal as it is too vague.

“Study pages 1-10 of my *Introduction to French* text book in preparation for my trip to France” is a better goal as it is clear and specific.

A specific goal will usually answer at least one of these questions:

- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

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- Who: Who is involved?
- Where: Identify a location.
- Which: Identify requirements and constraints.



### **Measurable**

This emphasises the need for a way to assess your progress towards your goal.

“Read chapter 3 of my *Introduction to French* book” is not measurable as there is no way of assessing whether or not you have retained any of the information you have read. Instead, try “Write down and memorise 10 phrases from chapter 3”. This is a better measuring tool as it

requires you to test yourself and demonstrate what you are learning.

A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

## **Achievable**

It is important that your goal is realistic. There is no point in having a goal that will be too difficult to achieve as this will simply set you up to fail and could affect your self-esteem.

“Memorise my *Introduction to French* book” is unrealistic as very few people can memorise an entire book. However “memorise the vocabulary lists at the end of each chapter of my book” is a more achievable aim.

An achievable goal will usually answer the question:

- How: How can the goal be accomplished?

## **Rewarding**

Your goal should be something that makes you feel good about yourself and gives you a sense of achievement. This is important as it will motivate you to achieve your goal.

For example, your reward could be to order yourself a hot chocolate in French as soon as you get to your hotel in France.

A rewarding goal will usually answer the question:

- What’s the point?
- What’s in it for me?

## Time Committed

It is important to give yourself a clear timeframe in which to complete your goal and to give yourself a target date. Without this, you could end up repeatedly putting off working towards your goal, jeopardizing



your chances of achieving it. Having a target date or deadline will help you focus your efforts towards achieving your goal.

“I will finish studying my *Introduction to French* book next week” is not specific enough. “I will finish studying my book by 6pm next Thursday, in time for my flight to France on Friday” is a better time commitment.

A time-bound goal will usually answer the question:

- When?
- What can I do 6 days from now?
- What can I do 6 weeks from now?
- What can I do today?

## Inspiring / Exciting

As well as being rewarding, it is important that you are inspired and excited by your goal as this will motivate you to achieve it and to hopefully enjoy the process.

For example, you may feel inspired and excited at the prospect of visiting France and being able to converse with people in French and understand what they are saying to you.

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