

Goal Setting and Action Planning

GOALS

Goals are plans for the future. They outline where you want to go and are your direction for the year. They state what your group wishes to accomplish. Goals should be evaluated and changed from time to time.

WHY SET GOALS?

- To give direction, provide a course of action for your group
- To motivate members
- To clarify and communicate what your group is striving for
- To define your group
- To provide a basis for measurement of success and accomplishments
- To save time by allowing your group to plan and prepare for the future
- To become more aware of problems in time to develop solutions

OBJECTIVES

Objectives are descriptions of exactly what is to be done, which are derived from your goals. They are clear, specific statements of measurable tasks that will be accomplished as steps toward achieving your goals. Objectives are short-term and have deadlines. Each goal may have a number of objectives.

STEPS FOR SETTING GOALS

1. Brainstorm goals as a group
 - Evaluate past group successes and failures
 - Address new things the group wishes to accomplish
2. Choose from the list those goals to focus on for the coming year
3. Prioritize the chosen goals
4. Break each goal into the steps necessary to reach it
 - Many groups fail to reach their goals because they do not follow through with the action stages of goal setting
5. Move into action and begin working on each step necessary to achieve the goal
 - Set timelines/deadlines for each step
 - Identify what is to be done (Your objective)
 - How will it be accomplished?
 - What are the resources available (people, money, materials)?
 - Who will carry it through?
 - When will it be accomplished?
 - What results are expected and how will they be measured?
6. Continually evaluate your progress
7. Be flexible; realize that your goals might change to meet new circumstances

Make your goals visible!

- Post them in the office
- Give a copy to every member
- Discuss them at meetings
- Put them in newsletters and materials you send out
- Revisit them when your organization needs focus

There are many ways you can remind members of the group's goals. Be creative!

THE ABC'S OF GOAL SETTING

When attempting to define goals you want to achieve in life, there are several considerations you should keep in mind. If you set a goal you do not achieve, it is probably because you have violated one of the following ABC's.

ACHIEVABLE	Can the goal be reached in the time set? Do you need some short-term, immediate goals?
BELIEVABLE	Can you reach the goal, considering such items as required preparation, help required of others, or general motivation?
CHALLENGING	Will it be challenging for the group to achieve the goals? Goals should not be so challenging as to be impossible to achieve, nor should they be so basic that they can be achieved with little or no effort.
DESIREABLE	Is it something you want to do, rather than something you believe you should do?
EXPLICIT	Is it stated as a single goal, rather than as a choice of one goal or another? Is the goal stated so that you can measure it? Will you know when you have reached your goal?