

## Setting the Goals

The mentoring relationship works best when the mentor and student mentee set goals that they can achieve together during the mentoring relationship. The goals set will predominantly be those of the student mentee, but the mentor may also have goals that he or she wants to set.

### Why Set Goals?

- ✓ Goals set a clear direction. Goals are a reminder of where you want to go or a level of achievement you want to attain. You set your own goals based on what is meaningful to you. Writing down your goals (making them tangibly real as a commitment) supports successful accomplishment of your goals.
- ✓ Goals focus your time and effort. Goals allow you to focus. Goals are individual choices you make among all the wonderful things there are to do, have or achieve in the world. Without some focus, we would not be able to accomplish much.
- ✓ Goals remind us what we want and why it matters to us. The “why” behind a goal (the reason you want to accomplish the goal) comes from your personal desire and motivation — what is meaningful to you. Goals can help you remember what is important to you and support you as you keep focused and moving toward the goal.
- ✓ Goals help clarify priorities. If something comes up, you can ask yourself, “Will this new thing get me to my goal?” If not, you can move ahead to your goal without distraction, focusing on those things that get you to your goal...the priorities.
- ✓ Goals provide a way to make daunting achievements realizable. By writing down the action steps for your goals, you identify the framework that allows you to make incremental and steady progress to the ultimate goal.

## SMART Goals

**Use the SMART goal setting criteria and framework on the next few pages to set the goals for the student mentee and the mentor.**

### A SMART goal is:

- ✓ Specific — The goal is clearly identified so that it answers the questions:
  - Who: Who is involved?
  - What: What do I want to accomplish? Is the goal a challenge or a stretch for the mentee and/or the mentor, with a focus on future development?
  - Where: Identify a location, if appropriate.
  - Which: Identify requirements and constraints, if any.
  - Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal. Why is the goal important to your development and success?
- ✓ Measurable — The success toward meeting the goal can be measured. Measurement is objective and answers the question: How will I know if I've done it?

- ✓ Action-Oriented and Attainable — Action-oriented means you must identify the strategy or strategies for how you will achieve the goal. In addition, an attainable goal answers the question: Can the strategies be executed in the time frame I select?
- ✓ Realistic — To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. A realistic goal answers the question: Am I willing and able to do this?
- ✓ Timely — The goal has a clearly defined time frame including a target date. Having a time frame answers the question: When will I achieve the goal?

### Goal Setting Framework

Goal: What do you want to achieve?	Action Steps/Strategies: What steps will you take to achieved the goal? Measurement/Objective	Evidence: How will you know when each goal is achieved? What will you be doing or saying differently?	Celebration: What will you do to celebrate reaching each goal?

### Evaluating the Goals

1. Is your goal clearly anchored in the future? How do we know that?
2. Is the goal realistic? What evidence do we have to support that it is?
3. Will the goal be challenging? That is, is it a stretch goal rather than a maintenance goal? In what ways?
4. Will this goal help you grow personally or professionally? How?
5. Will this goal require you to make a personal investment of time, energy, and effort? Is this something that you can manage?
6. Is this goal achievable within the timeframe of our mentoring relationship? What makes you think that it is (or is not)?
7. Will you feel a sense of pride and satisfaction in accomplishing this goal? How will that manifest?
8. Is attaining the goal in your best professional or personal interest and in the best interest of your organization? In what ways?

*Adapted from The Mentor's Guide: Facilitating Effective Learning Relationships (Lois J. Zachary, 2011)*