



Setting goals

Age range: 11-14, 14-16 and 16-19

 **BARCLAYS** | LifeSkills



Session overview

Time	Key learning outcomes	Resources
30-40 mins	<p>By the end of the activity students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the smaller steps and strategies they need to take to work towards a larger goal Explain what the SMART acronym stands for and how this strategy can be used to make goals attainable Describe how developing the right attitude can help reach goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting goals student worksheet Setting goals presentation slides

Remember that you can refer to the guiding principles for establishing a safe learning environment in the Appendix section of the [LifeSkills content guide](#). This includes suggestions for signposting students to further support.

Optional:

The Skills Builder Framework provides measurable steps for eight essential skills and can be used in combination with this lesson to support your students' progress in the skill of creativity – the use of imagination and the generation of new ideas

Skills Builder also offer a student Self-Assessment Tool, which helps learners to reflect on their own skill strengths and areas for development. This and other resources can be accessed on the [Skills Builder Hub](#).

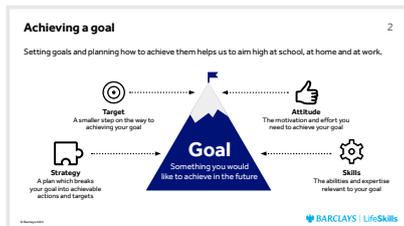
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Activity one

The difference between goals and targets

1. How to set goals



- Show **slide 2** and discuss how setting goals and planning how to achieve them helps us to aim high at school, at home and at work. A goal, aim, or end result is something that can be brought about with a combination of motivation, effort and effective planning, also known as strategies
- Ask students to identify aspirations for things they would like to have or achieve in the future. Break this down into what they would like to achieve this year, by the time they leave school and in 5 years' time. Keep the discussion broad for now, but explain that some goals might be achievable soon, like taking exams, and others maybe further away, like starting a career, but there are strategies that can be used to make all goals more achievable

2. Identifying how to achieve goals

- Using the suggested aspirations, invite students to identify what they need to do in order to achieve any goal they may have set themselves in terms of their school/future work aspirations or their hobbies and interests. This can be in the form of a mind map if being done on an individual basis or as a graffiti wall if being done as a group activity. This activity provides an opportunity to discuss the difference between a final goal and the targets or strategies needed to reach it and also establishes what the students' starting point is in terms of their understanding

3. Taking smaller steps with targets

- Explore in more detail the definition of a target: a smaller step or objective on which you can focus to help you achieve your goal. Setting targets helps by breaking down the actions required into achievable steps. There may be several targets to achieve at different stages on the way
- Some goals may be vague or broad to start with, so asking questions can help make it clearer and identify the smaller steps needed along the way. In pairs invite one student to share a goal that they are comfortable sharing with a peer partner. Remind the class that you are not asking them to share goals connected to their personal life, only to their school/future work aspirations or their hobbies and interests. Read through the below example so that students understand the kinds of questions to pose in order to help their partner identify the steps they need to take towards achieving their goal, e.g.

Goal: 'I want to be a chef one day.'

What sort of restaurant do you want to work in?

What skills would you need to achieve this goal?

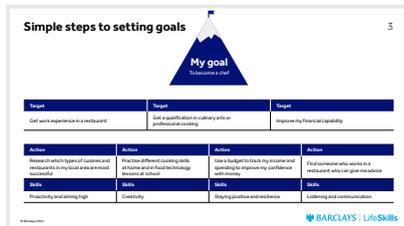
Who or what could help you get there?

What could get in the way?

How could you overcome any challenges?

Activity one

The difference between goals and targets (cont'd)



- Talk through **slide 3** which uses the example above to demonstrate how the journey to achieve it could be mapped out using the flowchart. Hand out the **Simple steps for setting up goals student worksheet** and in their pairs, students should plot the smaller steps needed to achieve their main goal and come up with at least three smaller targets. For example,

Goal: 'I want to be a chef one day.'

Skills, strategies and targets: practise cooking and food technology skills, work towards related qualifications, get relevant work experience, seek advice from someone who works in a restaurant, build financial confidence, research the market

For more inspiration, ask students to look at '[5 motivational techniques to help you achieve your goals](#)'

After a few minutes, discuss with students why goal setting and planning is important.

What has it helped them realise about their goal?

How can breaking a goal down into smaller targets help them?

Is it enough to just set the goals and targets?

Activity two

Introducing SMART targets

- Explain to students that the more specific and challenging a goal is, the more likely it is that people will work to achieve it. This is why SMART targets can be very powerful
- Talk the students through what SMART stands for:
 - **S**pecific
 - **M**easurable
 - **A**chievable
 - **R**esult-focused
 - **T**ime-bound

Activity two

Introducing SMART targets (cont'd)

- Use **slide 4** to demonstrate an example of how SMART targets can be set to help achieve the goal of improving the distance someone can run
 - Specific** – I want to be able to run 5km without stopping in under 30 minutes
 - Measureable** – I will run on a measured running track or record the distance with an app to ensure it is 5km
 - Achievable** – I can already run short distances of about 3km at a moderate pace, so 5km isn't too much more
 - Result-focused** – I will gradually build up my distance by 500m per week
 - Time-bound** – I will achieve this within one month
- Ask students to look back at the **Simple steps for setting up goals student worksheet** with a partner, and adjust their targets so that they reflect the SMART approach

Activity three

The mindset to achieve goals

- Make sure students recognise that the SMART process can help them turn their aspirations into achievable goals. But, they will also need the right attitude. Even the best planned journey can face challenges and they'll need to be resilient, think positively and be able to solve problems along the way
- Revisit the mind map or graffiti wall they started at the beginning of the lesson. Ask them to now add in what they feel they need to include in order to achieve their goal now that they have learned about SMART targets and positive mindsets. Invite them to share their learning with a peer working partner. **Slide 5** shows an example of how they can complete this if needed. You may wish to suggest some additional scenarios to any students who can't think of their own goals
- These attributes are all features of a growth mindset. Use the **How the right attitude can help you achieve your goals student worksheet** to demonstrate to students how they can apply this mindset to setting goals. Ask them to use the template to create an action plan which applies this mindset to a goal of their own. **Slide 5** shows an example of how they can complete this if needed

Try next

- Encourage students to consider additional goals related to their school work or career ambitions using the SMART process. If students are keen to do this you could consider introducing a regular check in point for them at the beginning of some of the other LifeSkills lessons to help them reflect on their progress and to celebrate their achievements where appropriate with their peers
- Goal setting is an important step when making the transition from education to employment and succeeding in the world of work. If your students are ready to explore this further, why not try the [Journey to your career lesson](#) (11-14, 14-16) or [Exploring personal strengths for employment lesson](#) (11-14, 14-16)
- Educators can also take a look at the [Growth mindset toolkit](#) (11-19) and more lessons, activities and inspiration to help students develop the attitudes and the [core transferable skills](#) they need adapt to the changing world of work

Setting goals

Simple steps for setting goals



Target	Target

Action	Action	Action	Action

Skills	Skills	Skills	Skills

Power up your targets by making them SMART

Specific	
Measurable	
Achievable	
Result-focused	
Time-bound	

Setting goals

How the right attitude can help you achieve your goals

Achieving goals isn't just about having the right skills or experience. You also need the right attitude, so you can be resilient, think positively and be able to solve problems along the way.

Use the table to set some targets that will help you develop the attitude to achieve your goal.

What is your goal?

Developing a growth mindset	How can I do it?	Who can help me?	What will this help me achieve?
1. Ask for and act upon feedback about my performance			
2. Push myself to be the best I can be			
3. Welcome mistakes as learning experiences, and be resilient when things don't go my way			
4. Practice my skills and knowledge and always look for ways to improve			
5. Reward myself for my hard work and effort, looking back at how I have improved instead of comparing performance with other people			