

Goal Setting: An Integral Part of Player Development

by New York Red Bulls Academy - New York Red Bulls is a partner of Inside Soccer

Learning to set goals is the best tool to help you get where you want to go in your game and help you be a success in your life. Goals should come from what we want and desire. Goals give us a vision and help focus our desire in a direction.

When we set goals and start to get them accomplished it sets the direction. It helps build our confidence, improves our performance, and it gives us “the key” to applying goal setting to other parts of our life. It’s not good enough to have goals just for soccer. You want to set goals for school and goals for your personal life.

So how do we do this?

We begin with the end in mind!

LONG TERM GOALS – We have goals where we want to end up

SHORT TERM GOALS – We have little goals which help us get to our long term goal

A long-term goal or “BIG WHY”

Examples:

- I want to start for my high school team.
- I want to play in college.

The above are BIG goals. How do we get there?

Do you know the saying, “How do you eat an elephant?”

ANSWER: “One small bite at a time.”

What’s the point for goal setting?

The elephant is the long-term goal or the BIG WHY!

The small bites are the short-term goals, the little steps we need to accomplish to get to our destination.

How about you?

- What are your wants and dreams?

- Where do you want to see yourself next year?
- Where do you want to see yourself at the end of your soccer career?
- What are your wants and desires for school and in your personal life?

Let's get started

Get three 3x5 index cards

- Use one card for your soccer goals and the other two for your school goals and personal goals.
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- At the top of each card write your BIG WHY (long-term goal) for each area. Then list the steps (short-term goals) to help you accomplish your BIG WHY.

Here's an example of how each card could look:

- Soccer Goal Card
- Long term goal
- I want to start for my school team
- Short term goals
- Practice my technical skills (juggling, dribbling, moves) every week
- Play pick up with the upper classmen whenever I can
- Play club ball this spring

School Goal Card

- Long term goal
- Get at least all B's on my report card next year

Short term goals

- Do my homework everyday
- Pay attention in class
- Take good notes
- Sit in the front row and participate answering questions
- Go in for extra help and show the teacher I want to improve
- Show up for study groups / do extra credit

Personal Goal Card

Long term goal

- I want to be more outgoing
- Short term goals
- Join at least one club or committee where I can meet new people
- Go to every dance or function even if I don't feel like it
- Say hello to at least one new person everyday
- Volunteer to get up and do things in class even if I feel nervous

Tips

1. Be specific when writing your goals and make sure you measure your goals for progress. It's okay to revisit your goals based on how you're doing and if they need to be adjusted.
2. Make your goals public

When you feel your goals are appropriate enough to be shared, tell your coaches, friends, or family what your goals are. This can really help.

Why?

It makes you more committed and accountable by telling other people what you're going to do. Many time when you tell your goals to people, they can actually help you accomplish them.

- 3.) Read your goals everyday

"We become what we think about most of the time." When we read our goals everyday, it helps us to stay focused and stay dialed into the task we are trying to accomplish. I recommend you keep your goals posted in a prominent place where you see them everyday. For instance, your bedroom or bathroom mirror would be a perfect place.

One of the keys to your success as a person and as an athlete is goal setting. Goals that are written down, made public, read, and worked on everyday are goals that will get done.

GOAL SETTING WORKS!

Absolutely, Positively, Guaranteed!