



UNITED STATES *Dressage* FEDERATION

Using Goals to Improve Training

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lesson Objectives:

- Analyze three goal setting theories for usefulness in dressage.
- Adapt personal goals utilizing three goal setting theories.
- Assess importance of goal setting vs. behavior control for training improvement.

Read pages 2-3. Outline what task and outcome goals are then fill in a goal that you have for yourself.

Task Goals:

Outcome Goals:

My Goal:

SMARTER Goals

- **Specific**

- Answers five questions:

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- **Measurable**

- A measurable goal needs to have very specific criteria for measuring

- _____.

- How much?

- How many?

- How will I know when I've met my goal?

- **Attainable**

- Goals must be realistic and obtainable. Begin by identifying the goals that are the most important to you. Then assess whether they are within reach. Choosing goals that are too difficult can lead to _____ while choosing a goal that is too easily met might feel meaningless. Find a happy medium.

- **Relevant**

- This item is all about choosing a goal that matters. Think of something that will _____ you forward in your training.
 - Why is this important?
 - What will I gain by reaching this goal?

- **Time**

- You'll need to set up a time frame for the goal. _____ can help to drive training but also help to keep you focused. Goals do not always have to be long term goals. Choosing "today" as a timeframe is valid as long as you meet the other criteria.

- **Evaluate**

- Once you have created your goal you'll need to evaluate your progress. These can be written or just a quick analysis if your goal is for a single training session. Writing down a progress report related to your goal can help you keep track over time.
 - Where am I today/What can I do today?
 - Where was I yesterday?

- **Revise**

- You need to be able to adapt as challenges or successes arise. If through your evaluation you find that things are too easy or difficult you can modify them at any time. Revise until you are sure that you can find a way to meet it and the goal still fulfills all of the other requirements.

Locke and Latham

1. Clarity: Clear goals help you to know exactly what you are working to achieve.

2. Challenge: A goal should be challenging enough that you will need to develop self-discipline and persistence to work through problems that arise.

3. Commitment: What keeps a person committed can vary; find something that works for you.

4. Feedback:

- Feedback can come from 2 sources:
 - Yourself

 - Another person

5. Task Complexity: Choosing a goal with too little complexity won't be enough of a challenge to keep you committed.

Why goal setting doesn't work

Ray Williams is the author of *Eye of the Storm: How Mindful Leaders Transform Chaotic Workplaces, Breaking Bad Habits, and The Leadership Edge*.

Posted Apr 11, 2011, Psychology Today

Despite the popularity of goal setting, there is compelling evidence that regardless of good intentions and effort, people and organizations consistently fall short of achieving their goals. More often than not, the fault is attributed to the goal setter. But the real problem may be in the efficacy of goal setting itself.

The Center For Disease Control estimates that 34% of Americans are overweight and a further 34% are obese, which means almost 70% of the population are dangerously unhealthy. A curious result, despite the proliferation of weight loss programs that usually focus on weight-loss goals. The easy explanation would be to attribute fault to lack of will or effort. But the problem may be inherent in the validity of goal setting.

In the early 2000's, General Motors had set a goal to capture 29% of the American auto market. They even produced corporate pins for people to wear with the number 29 on them. Needless to say they never achieved that goal, and without a government bailout, may not have even survived.

Our society, at both the individual level and in organizations, has an obsession with goal setting, particularly "stretch" goals or "audacious goals." We tie goals to accomplishment. In our culture, an individual or organizations cannot be considered successful unless goals are achieved. And the usual motivation method used by leaders to achieve these goals is the continual focus on "improvement," "bigger and better," through harder and harder work, and increased productivity. And the way to measure that success is to measure goal attainment. Thus self-help gurus such as Stephen Covey, Tony Robbins, Brian Tracy and others emphasized the necessary link between goals and success.

In my article in the Financial Post, I said, "The inherent problem with goal setting is related to how the brain works. Recent neuroscience research shows the brain works in a protective way, resistant to change. Therefore, any goals that require substantial behavioral change or thinking-pattern change will automatically be resisted. The brain is wired to seek rewards and avoid pain or discomfort, including fear. When fear of failure creeps into the mind of the goal setter it commences a de-motivator with a desire to return to known, comfortable behavior and thought patterns."

Adam Galinsky, a professor at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and one of the authors of a Harvard Business School report called *Goals Gone Wild*," argues that "goal setting has been treated like an over-the-counter medication when it should really be treated with more care, as a prescription-strength medication." He argues that goal setting can focus attention too much on the wrong things and can lead people to participate in extreme behaviors to achieve the goals.

There is an addiction in our culture to "getting more," the "going for the goals" hype is disconnected from peoples' authentic selves, and their values.

Finally, there are psychological manifestations of not achieving goals that may be more damaging than not having any goals at all. The process sets up desires that are removed from everyday reality. Whenever we desire things that we don't have, we set our brain's nervous system to produce negative emotions. Second, highly aspirational goals require us to develop new competencies, some of which may be beyond current capabilities. As we develop these competencies, we are likely to experience failures, which then become de-motivational. Thirdly, goal setting sets up an either-or polarity of success. The only true measure can either be 100% attainment or perfection, or 99% and less, which is failure. We can then excessively focus on the missing or incomplete part of our efforts, ignoring the successful parts. Fourthly, goal setting doesn't take into account random forces of chance. You can't control all the environmental variables to guarantee 100% success.

Mindfulness has gathered the attention of brain researchers, coaches, psychologists and medical practitioners recently. A fundamental concept in mindfulness, is focusing on being in the moment, the present. This presents an interesting problem for the goal setter, where the focus is on the future. How can you be focusing on the present and also be thinking about the future?

The other problem is that goals are often cast in the image of the ideal or perfection, which activates the self-judging thinking of "I should be this way." This counteracts the positive need for self-acceptance.

And if the goal is not attained, we can often engage in thinking we are failures, not good enough, not smart enough, not beautiful enough, etc. So the unattainment of goals can create emotions of unworthiness.

We must also make a distinction between our intentions vs. goals. An intention is a direction we want to pursue, preferably with passion. My experience is that people are often confused, and unclear about the intentions of how they want to live and achieve, and therefore a focus on goals doesn't assist them with clarifying their intentions.

When I work with people as their coach and mentor, they often tell me they've set goals such as "I want to be wealthy," or "I want to be more beautiful/popular," "I want a better relationship/ideal partner." They don't realize they've just described the symptoms or outcomes of the problems in their life. The cause of the problem, that many resist facing, is themselves. They don't realize that for a change to occur, if one is desirable, they must change themselves. Once they make the personal changes, everything around them can alter, which may make the goal irrelevant.

There's an old saying: "you don't get what you want in life, you get in life what you are."

The Problem with Goals:

What has been your experience with goals in the past?

Intention: a determination to act in a certain way

Goals are focused on the future. Intentions are in the present moment.

Goals are a destination or specific achievement. Intentions are lived each day, independent of reaching the goal or destination.

Goals are external achievements. Intentions are your inner-relationships with yourself and others.

Goals require a result that is measured against the goal to determine if you were successful or not. Intentions do not require a result.

What matters most to you?

What would you like to build, create, or nurture in your life?

What would you like to let go of?

How do you feel when you are your happiest self?

What makes you proud?

What fears would you like to release?

My Revised Goal and/or Intention:

If you want to achieve your goals, don't focus on them.

TEDx Video with Reggie Rivers

What can I do today?

What can I do tomorrow?

What can I do this week?