

SETTING "SMART" LANGUAGE GOALS



Multilingual Student Support (MSS)

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2. Considering your language skills:
 - Speaking
 - Reading
 - Writing
 - Listening
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Ask yourself:

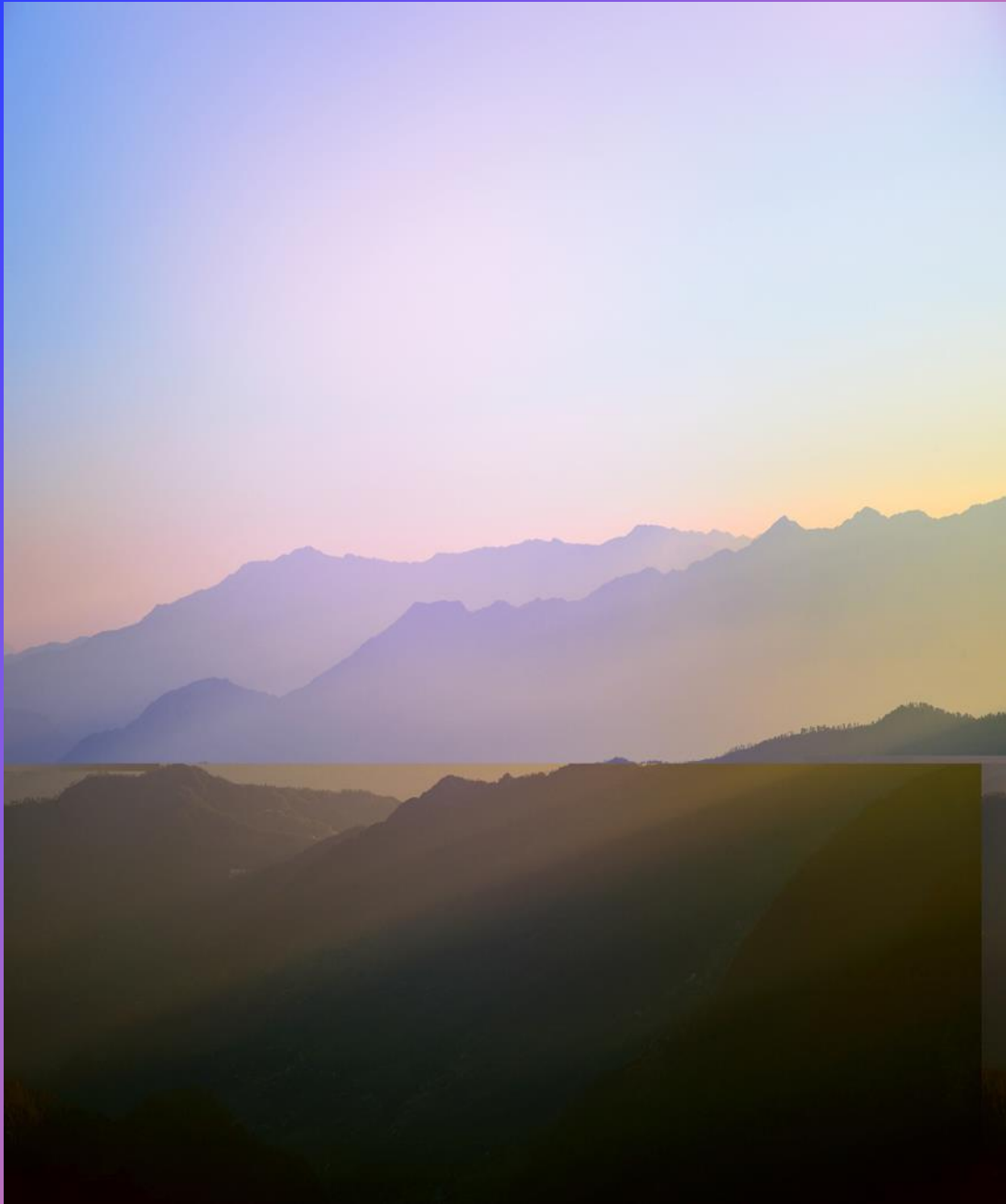
1. What are your current goals right now?
2. How do you track your goals? (In your head? In a planner? By talking about it with family or friends?)
3. What is a goal you constantly have?
4. What is a goal you recently achieved?
5. What is the difference between a short-term goal and a long-term goal? Provide examples from your life.
6. Do you have any specific language-related goals?





DEFINING SMART GOALS

- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Achievable
- R = Relevant
- T = Time-bound



The way to get started
is to quit talking
and begin doing.

Walt Disney



S = SPECIFIC

- A goal must be **specific**. It can't be too big or too broad to get started.
- If you want to “improve your speaking” – What aspect of speaking? Do you mean conversational English? Presentations? Interviewing? How about clarifying or interrupting skills in a conversation? Etc.

Examples:

- I want to improve my writing. (too broad or specific?)
- I want to improve my grammar. (too broad or specific?)
- I want to get into a big university. (too broad or specific?)

How can you improve the above goals in terms of specificity?

M = MEASURABLE

- You can see success after committing to a period of time.
- How will you know you are achieving your goal?
- How will you measure success? Is it a better grade? A feeling?
Time related?

Examples:

- I will finish writing 200 words a day in 3 weeks, 4 days a week.
- I want to get an A grade on my next exam.
- I will learn to type at 60 words per minute within two months.

A = ACHIEVABLE

The goal challenges you but is **realistic or attainable**.

Don't set yourself up for failure by expecting too much, too fast. Have reasonable expectations of yourself. Try not to be a perfectionist but keep striving for the result you want.

Consider:

- You want to be a “pro” at presenting but have only done **one** presentation in front of a small class of 10. Can you reasonably expect to be an expert and highly confident the second time at a conference with 100+ people?

Examples:

- I passed first year English with a B+, so it's reasonable to pass second year English with a better grade if I seek help or study smarter.
- Earn my degree by the end of the year by completing required courses over the summer and during the fall semester.

R = RELEVANT

- The goal is related to your longer-term needs and objectives. It is also specific to your life.
- Do you need to do this? Why or why not?

Example:

- Goal – improve typing speed
- Reason – improve efficiency when typing assignments – why? To have more time to spend with family/for social life/for exercise, etc.

You should always remind yourself WHY you are doing something and the impact it will have on your life.

T = TIME-BOUND

- The goal includes specific times, with an end date in mind.
- How often will you do it? When do you expect to finish? Can you look back over the initial investment of time to where you are now and see a difference?

Example:

- You practiced speaking informally **every week** in a Conversation club **for two months** and now you feel more confident in group discussions in your class project. You can contribute easier, and you feel more respected; you made friends in your group.



SPEAKING CONSIDERATIONS

- Confidence
 - Practice
- Comfort zone
- Knowledge of gambits/expressions

Speaking Scenario

Student: *I want to be better at working in a group.*

Coach: *What is difficult about working in a group?*

Student: *My group members don't let me talk. **They talk too fast.***

Possible issue? – INTERRUPTING & CLARIFYING

Strategy? – Learn/review appropriate phrases for interrupting and clarifying. Practice a comfortable number each week in a non-threatening, casual situation (i.e., with friends, at the dinner table with your family, at a social event.)

Speaking Examples

Interrupting

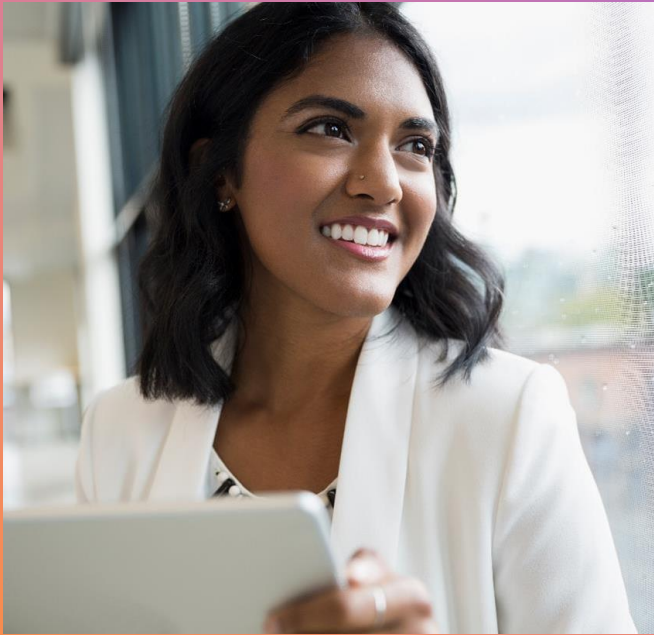
- Sorry to interrupt, but...
- May I interrupt for a moment?
- I'd like to add something here, if I may?
- Could I come in at this point?
- Could I say something about...?
- I have a point to make here.

Clarifying

- Would I be correct in saying that...?
- Are you saying that...?
- Do you mean...?
- If I've understood you correctly, you're saying that...?
- Would you mind saying that again?
- I'm sorry, I didn't quite follow what you said about ...

Correcting

- That isn't quite what I meant.
- Allow me to rephrase that.
- Let me put it another way...
- To be more specific...
- I think you misunderstood me.



READING CONSIDERATIONS

- Digital vs paper
- Testing reading speed
- Topic selection (self-interest or required reading)
 - Tracking of reading & vocabulary

Reading Scenario

- Student: *I have too much reading. I can't keep up. There's too much new vocabulary.*
- Coach: *What is your timeline like? Have you prioritized the readings? How do you manage your vocabulary?*
- Student: *Here are my course syllabi with reading due dates. I write new words in my notebook with translations into my language.*
- **Issues?:** Time management. Memory load.
- **Strategy?:** Work backwards from due dates; use a calendar and identify when to read and how much. Use vocabulary log with words in context or use sticky notes around your home! 😊

Vocabulary Log Example

Lexical Item (word, idioms, collocations)	Use in original sentence (passive/receptive understanding)	Meaning (in context) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • denotation (synonyms, your own words to define) • connotation (added meaning- negative or positive) 	Word form (noun, verb, adjective adverb, collocation, idiom) examples of other collocations	Record use in your own sentence. (active/productive understanding)
cyclical	<i>Cyclical unemployment</i> refers to the year-to-year fluctuations in unemployment around its natural rate and is closely related with short-run ups and downs of the economic activity. (Ch 1. Rd. 1 LEAP)	denotation: changes in unemployment happening in regular and repetitive pattern connotation: in this context: positive, reassuring	adjective cyclical changes in..... cyclical patterns	<i>Main people who argue against the science supporting the fact that humans have influenced global warming say that the warming trend is a natural cyclical pattern that began millions of years ago.</i>



WRITING CONSIDERATIONS

- Types of written tasks
- Grammatical knowledge
- Proofreading and abbreviations
 - Editing checklists
 - Peer editing
- Help Centre/Writing Centre support
 - Technology tools
 - Academic integrity

Writing Scenario

- Student: *My teacher gave me bad mark and said my grammar needs to improve.*
- Coach: *What aspect of “grammar”? Can you be more specific?*
- Student: *Not sure.*
- **Issues?:** Lack of specific feedback or knowledge of linguistic terms; needs clarity in identifying errors during the editing process.
- **Strategy?:** See an expert. Target recurrent issues from writing samples (ex., comma splices, subject-verb agreement, etc.).
- Identify specific resources to support specific errors and implement a plan around these.

Student written work with feedback: review comments and summarize. Focus on errors that recur and target with appropriate resources and assistance as needed.

Dear Petersen,

Here is the meeting reports about our International client Merrill Lynch Bank.

As you can see in the report, Arval is the sole supplier of this client.

With this client, end of contract date is December 25.

Looking at the Company Car Policy of this client that can be offered the Bmw 3 series, and Audi A4 series at director level.

Toyota Corolla and Honda Civic will be appropriate for manager level.

Our first offer price was found high by client compare with competitors.

If it is possible I will sent revised offer with 1% rone.

And I also mentioned that to take advantage over competitors and to use the process to our advantage I can make informal extension for six month.

They also pleased them for not increasing their monthly payments during the extension process.



LISTENING CONSIDERATIONS

- Exposure to English (home use vs at school/work)
 - Interests
 - Speed
 - Practice

Listening Scenario

- Student: *I can't follow most of what my instructor says in the lectures. She talks too fast.*
- Coach: *Do you record? Do you have the slides available before class? Have you prepared for the class?*
- Student: *No, yes, and sort of.*
- **Issues?:** Native speaker pace is often filled with hesitations, linking and incomplete sentences, as well as being very fast. Lack of preparedness on the student's part. Inability to access materials before or lack of time to prepare.
- **Strategy?:** Study skills and use of technology to help support lectures.

Using a Learning Plan



- Identify your strengths and weaknesses.
 - We usually want to IMPROVE something in our lives, so most goals are about moving forward.
 - Identify the long-term goal and then break it down into shorter, more manageable chunks (or short-term goals).
 - Once you have established clear goals, write down a timeline for yourself.
- Use a grid/table to separate short and long-term goals. Note:
 - *What activities will help you?*
 - *Whose help do you need?*
 - *What is your target date (to completion)?*
 - *How are you doing? (as you progress)*
 - *What resources do you need?*

Accountability

Yourself

- Check in with a self-reflection each week.
- Use a productivity planner.
- Adhere to your learning plan.

Your College

- Take advantage of the college supports available!
 - Help Centre
 - Writing Centre
 - Your MSS!
- Talk to your instructors!
They are nice people. They want you to succeed!

Your Social Network

- Have conversations with your friends/family about your goals. Support each other.
- Ask for help from family/friends if you are stuck.
- Don't feel pressured to say YES to everything. It's ok to say no to taking on extra responsibilities if not urgent.



Summary

- Get started small and you will see BIG results. Be specific about what you can achieve and when.
- Don't pressure yourself with too much at once. Try to always think "backwards" from where you want to be or what you have to do.
- Using English is part of life in Canada. Find ways to incorporate strategies that complement what you are already doing!

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THANK YOU

Multilingual Student Support
WordPress QR code pending

Resources:

- Hadwin, L. (n.d.). *Goal setting*. Aurora English. Retrieved December 5, 2022, from <https://auroraenglish.wixsite.com/english/goal-setting>
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- Barber, B. & Foord, D. (2014). *From English Teacher to Learner Coach. Help your students get motivated, get organized and get practicing!* The Round.