

Goal Setting – Your Foundations for Success



Preamble

The following psychological resource for participants and athletes, has been developed by sport psychologist Fiona McCarthy on behalf of the NSW Office of Sport, as a key initiative of the NSW Government's Future Champions strategy.

For more information on Future Champions, please visit www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development

Getting to know the author

Fiona McCarthy is a registered psychologist, specialising in sport psychology and is a member of the Australian Psychological Society and the Australian College of Sport and Exercise Psychologists. Fiona owns and operates Mind and Body Balance, a business she established 25 years ago.

Fiona is the Hunter Academy of Sport, Sport Psychology Consultant and a New South Wales Institute of Sport, Sport Psychology Service Provider. Over the last twenty-

five years, Fiona has assisted many teams, athletes, parents and coaches in the areas of confidence, concentration, handling pressure, motivation, goal setting, time management, performance preparation and general well-being. Fiona has worked with numerous sports, assisting recreational level athletes to professional, international, Olympic and Paralympic level athletes, reach their full potential.



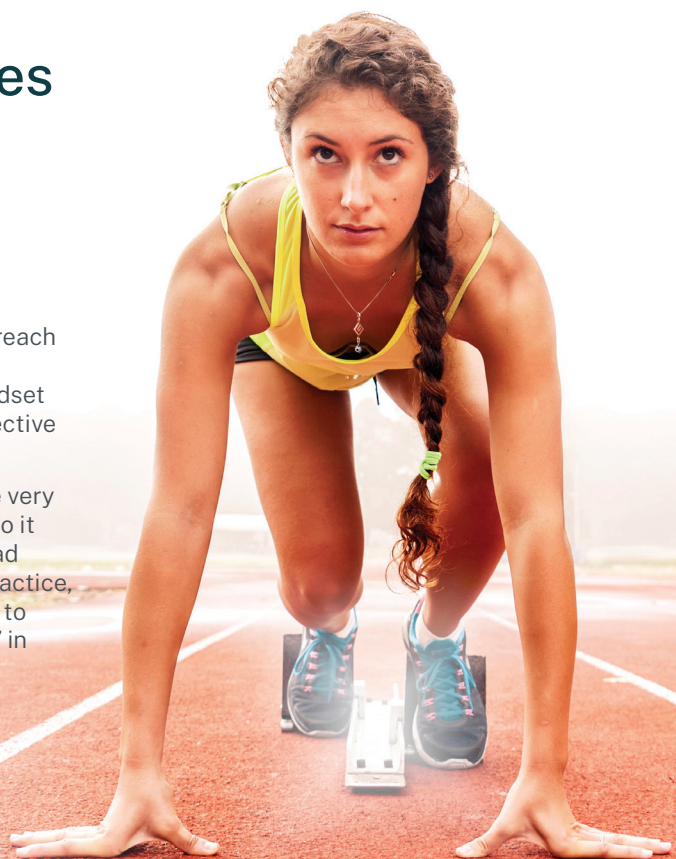
Background to these resources

The importance of having a mental 'tool kit' to support your learning, performance and engagement on and off the sporting field.

The following resources have been developed by Fiona McCarthy to assist athletes at all levels, in understanding the importance of having a suite of mental 'tools' at their disposal. These 'tools' are practical and multidimensional and will help athletes learn and develop the necessary mental skills they require to help them navigate their way through their sporting journey with a positive mindset and achieve success on and off the field.

It is well recognised that to reach the pinnacle within sport, an athlete needs a superior mindset consisting of strong and effective mental skills and strategies.

Importantly, mental skills are very intertwined and integrated, so it is recommended that you read about and put into regular practice, a number of these resources to strengthen the 'mental tools' in your kit bag!



Goal Setting: Your Foundation for Success

How to be **S.M.A.R.T.E.R.** with your goal setting.

People of all ages and experience should set goals in order to remain motivated, focussed and as a means of monitoring their progress and success in their chosen field.

Sadly, many people fail to accomplish their true potential simply because they do not have a concrete plan of attack. They have nothing concrete to aim for and as a consequence many become less enthusiastic and less motivated towards their sport performances.

Effective goal setting provides an athlete with specific measurable aims. It keeps them motivated and allows optimal, consistent and confident performance to be achieved.

One way to look at setting goals is to see it as a road map to success - understanding the destination (outcome) and having a clear but flexible plan on how to get there (i.e., having short, medium and long-term steps and goals).

Effective setting of short, medium and long-term goals should be an integral part of an athlete/ player's psychological tool kit and their skill development.

Remember, the key to setting and achieving goals effectively is the acronym **S.M.A.R.T.E.R.**

Goals need to be –

S Specific		Provides focus to your goal e.g., what part of your performance do you want to improve?	
M Measurable		Allows you to evaluate how you're tracking towards your goal and whether you have achieved it.	
A Action-based		Details specific actions (your action plan!) that you need to consider and do, to reach your goal. Set short, medium and longer term goals within your 'road map'.	Make sure to set process/performance goals as well as outcome based goals
R Realistic		Your goal needs to be challenging but achievable.	
T Time limited		Setting a time frame (e.g., target dates) will help you stay motivated and give you a date to review your progress.	
E Evaluative		Regularly evaluate (e.g., daily, weekly) how you're progressing in achieving each goal. Is your 'game plan' working? What's not working? What can you do to boost your achievement of a goal? This will support your achievement of a goal but also provide you insights for accomplishing goals in the future.	
R Re-adjustable		When you've achieved a goal, set another more challenging goal ! On the flipside, if you haven't achieved your goal, adjust your plan to meet the goal.	

When setting goals, they should be clearly written down in a logbook or diary or even online and regularly evaluated.

Goals should be set in all areas of life and in and out of sport such as at school or University.

Each goal set must have one or several accompanying objectives. If there is no set way/method of achieving a particular goal, problems may arise.

Remember, setting effective goals will empower you to be focussed, enthusiastic and motivated and will support you to enhance and challenge your performances and achievements – it's an important life skill and strategy.

More great tips for **Goal Setting**

- Ensure your goals are specific and measurable. e.g., a goal to improve your 3km run time from 15 minutes to 12 minutes is both specific and measurable, as opposed to a goal that just states I want to improve my endurance.
- Make your goals difficult but realistic.
- Set daily, short, intermediate and long-term goals.
- Set performance goals as well as outcome goals.
- Within your sport, set goals to achieve within your training sessions as well as within your competition events.
- Set positive goals as opposed to negative goals.
- Identify target dates to achieve goals.
- Recognise and celebrate, acknowledge and learn from achieving your goals.
- Evaluate goals regularly, this is best done on a daily to weekly basis.
- Provide support for goals. Sometimes we need to adjust our goals due to achieving them earlier than expected, as well as due to things out of our control like injury setbacks or cancellation of competitions.

Think about writing your goals down in a journal (or it could be online), so you can regularly review them and evaluate your progress.

Daily goals allow you to monitor your goals one step (session) at a time. Remember little steps often add up to big steps!

Using these daily goals helps you to have “themes” and purposes for each training session/competition. They also help you improve your focus on what is within your control and helps you train/compete with motivation and intent.

Try to set process and outcome goals in the following areas to further develop your athlete profile:

- Technical skills
- Tactical skills (e.g., Decision making etc)
- Physical skills (e.g., Balance, Speed, Agility, Fitness etc.)
- Mental skills and strategies
- External areas outside of your sport like school and your hobbies.

On the next couple of pages, we provide some templates that you may want to try out to help you with your goal setting.



Daily Goals

Type of Session: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Process Goals for Session:

Physical _____

Mental _____

Technical _____

Tactical _____

Outcome Goal(s) for Session _____

What have you done to prepare for this session?

Post Session Evaluation	Terrible	Disappointing	Average	Good	Excellent
Goal (Physical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal (Mental)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal (Technical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal (Tactical)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goal (Outcome)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Which two aspects of the session were you the most satisfied with?

1. _____

2. _____

Which aspect of the session would you like to improve?

What can you put in place to improve on the above aspect for your next session/comp?

Goal Setting Template using SMART Principles

Goal Setting Worksheet

My GOAL Statement

How will this GOAL benefit me?

What actions/steps are needed to achieve this GOAL?	Who/What can assist me	Start Date	Finish Date

How will you know you reached your goal

We hope you liked our tips

Have FUN building your psychological skills and strategies and put them into practice in and out of sport!

Remember importantly, if you are unsure of any of these tips or require further advice, please talk to your Coach, Parent or consult a Sport Psychologist.

You might like to check out our NEW animated YouTube video, Developing your mental 'tool kit' to support you in and out of sport featured within the NSW Office of Sport's Pathways and Development webpages @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development>.

Check out more tips for Participants @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/social-and-recreational-sport-participants>

And our tips for Emerging and High-Performance Athletes @ <https://www.sport.nsw.gov.au/pathways-and-development/emerging-athletes>



**Future Champions -
Developing your
mental 'tool kit' to
support you in and out
of sport.**

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