

Goal setting -

Watch this video – what do you see?

Basically the guy is trying to get up the stairs to his goal...whatever that is. So what is your goal this year? What do you want out of soccer? Where do you start?

Well...let's explore where to start. First off some definitions...there are 3 types of goals?

Outcome goals – this is simply where we want to be at the end of our quest. These will be things you are looking to obtain as a result of all your hard work. Examples of these goals are to play at a Division I college, earn an athletic college scholarship at a Division I institution, be a consistent starter on a u-18 MLS academy team, or earn a professional contract by the age of ____.

Outcome goals function as dreams and VERY important as they keep you going when times get tough.

Performance goals – performance goals are detailed improvement areas relative to your own performance. Some playing examples might include working on first touch to get out of space quickly, trying to take players on at least 5 more times in games in order to get behind, spending 30 additional minutes 4 days a week working on receiving balls out of the air. There are also nutritional examples, such as eating a certain type of balanced diet or pregame/post game food. There are also mental examples such as how one will deal with disappointment or losses, or how to build ones focus on perhaps set pieces.

Process goals – are daily checklists and reminders about what needs to get done. These basically function as to do lists. As we all know to do lists are critical and come in many forms for us – yellow stickies, notes on our phones etc. but the gist is that they remind you to get something done.

For you process goals or “to dos” are things that remind us to improve in certain areas and focus on the process. They are things like keep your toe up, head up before you turn, get to practice early, don't forget to compliment Joey, etc. These things are critical to hitting performance goals as well as outcome goals....as they keep our attention focused on the target.

If we look at these 3 types of goals - they fit right into the staircase on the video.

- Outcome – the end of the staircase. This is where the guy wants to go.
- Performance – I need to climb 2 steps today to get there. I need to work on picking my left foot up higher every time to get up that step.
- Process – I can do it! Keep saying to yourself I can do it. When I fall down, don't complain, get right back up and keep going.

The point is that we all need to set goals to reach them. There are some simple ways to think about and set goals. Look at some of the things below and take a peek at how some pros set goals

How do we set goals? A Simple way to think about all of your goals is to set SMART goals.

- **Specific** - make your goals specific to what you want and where you want to get.

- **Measurable** – You must write down and measure your goals!!
- **Adjustable** – don't be afraid to modify your goals as you move forward and reach or barely miss your goals...nothing is permanent!!
- **Realistic** – be sure that what you set is realistic to your skill set and ability levels.
- **Time-based** – it is very important to ensure you set a time and date to reach your goals...to many process goals with no time table are simply reminders vs. goals that hold you accountable

Here are a few ways for you to start thinking about your goals.

Outcome: Create 2-3 large goals for you to shoot for this year. They can be team goals or individual goals. Write them down.

Examples include:

- I will make the high school team
- I will be a consistent starter by the end of the year
- I will make the regional or id2 team by the end of the year.

Performance: Create 2-3 performance goals for you to shoot for.

Examples include

- Practice my shooting 4 times a week for 30 minutes at a time
- Be sure to attempt 5 shots in every half I play in.

Process: Create 4 process goals, with objectives, for you to improve on this year. These should try to fit into what the team needs for the year.

An example can be

- I will improve my focus during practice and games.
 - a. I will focus more at trainings when coach is talking
 - b. I will listen and focus during half time talks by picking out phrases that the coach is talking about

Helpful hints for all of the goals:

- Write them down and keep them posted for you to see
- Set short range AND long range goals
- Set goals for practice and competition
- Set positive goals vs. negative goals
- **Failures aren't permanent...and neither are successes...evaluate your goals**

a. when you do not reach a goal review your goal and reset it

b. owhen you DO reach a goal...be excited....then, set a new one

Whatever you do...shoot for the stars!!!!