Goal setting is a far more complex process than just wanting or wishing for things to end up a certain way. It is a process that identifies and communicates a desired outcome, outlines steps necessary to make that outcome more probable, establishes an appropriate timeline in which to take those steps, and keeps you accountable to someone or something in that timeline as to how those steps are taken. All the wanting and wishing in the world will amount to nothing without path, patience, and perseverance.

**Type:**

**Qualitative:** Measuring outcome/progress based on Quality.

* Often without specific enumeration or unit of measure.
* Often using determiners like Better, More, Less, Fewer, etc.; and adjectives like Clear, Consistent, Punctual, Disciplined, etc.
* Can pertain to large concepts like a systematic shift in attitude, behavior, perspective, or overall awareness of goals.
* Can pertain to smaller details/skills like “Better streamline discipline,” or “Swimming more butterfly during ‘choice’ opportunities.”

Other examples of Qualitative Goal topics may include: Awareness and management of feelings (mental, physical, and emotional); Communication habits/tendencies; Presence, awareness, and engagement during practice/meets/other; Time/Energy management; Ability to seek and accept support/feedback; Ability to give or encourage support/feedback to another; Research/Study; Consistency or Discipline in the area of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

**Quantitative:** Measuring outcome/progress based on Quantity.

* Specific enumeration of goal elements
* Often pertaining to specific times, meets, records, etc.
* May pertain to specific details on timeline for goal evaluation, reorganization, prioritization
* May pertain to specific measurable practice or behavior elements. (“6 dolphin kicks off every wall,” “Only one unscheduled bathroom break this week,” etc.)
* May designate detailed parameters for diet/hydration/nutrition.
* May designate specific timelines/parameters for supplemental physical activity (dryland, etc.)

**Time:** Goals can be loosely grouped into Short-, Medium-, or Long-term categories.

**Terrain:** Linking specific goals to particular locations, or areas of operation, can help in time, energy, and progress/outcome management.

**Reminders:** Keep your goals close.

* Be accountable. Tell someone you trust. Say it out loud to a parent, coach, friend, pet, etc. Speak the words to the world with your own face. It will be more challenging to retroactively edit your goals to fit real outcomes/progress to create the appearance of accomplishment.
* Make paper posters, signs, or labels with goals or goal-prompts. Put them where you spend time. You don’t need to stare at them all day, just have them around. Your eyes and brain will soak them up with the other surroundings. Your goals will become an everyday part of your conscious and subconscious world.
* Laminate note cards with goals or goal-prompts. Put them in your swim-bag, school bag, gym bag, desktop, end table, nightstand etc. They will be in the way enough that you acknowledge them numerous times a day/week, but not intrusive enough to become a problem to your daily routines.
* Get a label maker. Label all sorts of things with your goals.
* “Hello, My Name Is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” stickers; get a bunch and fill them in. “Hello, My Name Is Zeblort Gritbust and I will sign up for the 200 Fly every time it is offered this season.” Put those stickers on things that you use/see regularly.
* Dry-erase marker: Write your goals on your bathroom mirror, bedroom window, etc.

**Qualitative**

Short Medium Long

Practice

Meets

Home

Other

**Quantitative**

Short Medium Long

Practice

Meets

Home

Other