



# IOC ATHLETE CAREER PROGRAMME

## GOAL-SETTING

### What is the purpose of the following fact sheet?

Goal-setting is like a map – the big-picture goal is the destination. Goals should be straightforward and emphasise what you want to happen. Goal-setting will give you direction and help with your motivation, as well as increasing your satisfaction and self-confidence in your performance. The map will help you track your development towards reaching your full potential.

As an athlete, you will need to know where you are heading. A way to help you remember the make-up of effective goal-setting is to use SMART goals:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action
- Realistic
- Time limited

### Specific

Help us to focus our efforts and clearly define what we are going to do. Specific is the what, why, and how of your map.

The “what” section of your map is an outline of what you are going to do. When designing this section, use action words such as direct, organise, coordinate, lead, develop, plan, build etc.

The “why” section of your map covers why it is important for you to do this at this time. In simple terms, it is what do you want to ultimately accomplish.

The “how” section of the map is your plan of how you are going to do it. Ensure the goals you set are very specific, clear and easy. Instead of setting a goal to break a world record, set a specific goal to do a personal best on a number of occasions heading towards the record.

### Measurable

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. In the broadest sense, the whole map is a measure of what you would like to achieve; if the goal is accomplished, there will be success. However, it is beneficial to set measurable progress points along the way. Choose a goal with measurable progress, so you can see the change occur. Be specific! “I want to improve my personal best by the end of next month.”

When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to the continued effort required to reach your goals.

### Action

When you identify the goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them happen. You develop the attitudes, abilities and skills needed to reach them. You probably will not be able to commit to goals you set which are too far out of your reach. Although you may start with the best of intentions, the knowledge that it's too much for you means your subconscious will keep reminding you of this fact and will stop you from even giving it your best. A goal needs to stretch you slightly so you feel you can do it, and it will need a real commitment from you. The feeling of success which this brings helps you to remain motivated.

## Realistic

Realistic, in your map, means “do-able.” It means that the learning curve is not a vertical slope and your plan includes all the factors that are needed to achieve your goal – including your progress goals (sometimes known as short-term goals).

Devise a map or a way of getting there which makes the goal realistic. The goal needs to be realistic for you and for where you are at the moment. A goal of being a world champion without the training, competition and hard work will not be realistic.

Be sure to set goals that you can attain with some effort! If they are too difficult, you set the stage for failure, but setting them too low sends the message that you aren’t very capable. Set the bar high enough for a satisfying achievement!

## Time limited

Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by the end of the competition season, etc. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a clear target to work towards. If you don’t set a time, the commitment is too vague. It tends not to happen because you feel you can start at any time. Without a time limit, there’s no urgency to start taking action now. Time must be measurable, attainable and realistic.

Everyone will benefit from setting goals both on and off the sporting arena.

## Goal-setting tips:

- Write your goals down
- Set short-, medium- and long-term goals
- Set a combination of sport and life goals
- Visualise yourself achieving your goals
- Frequently review your goals
- Always reward yourself when you achieve a goal.