# Student Goal Setting Activity

# When to Do This Activity:

It is possible to incorporate this into your new student orientation if you are only working with 1-2 people, but it does take a while and might slow down the process.

At West Side Catholic Center, we decided to start doing goal setting for regularly attending adult learners who have attended at least six classes. It started with the Program Coordinator coming to class once every 2-4 weeks and asking the very long term students if they wanted to have a conversation about their goals. Once other learners saw what happened during the conversation, others approached to request to discuss their goals as well.

**Who Should Do This Activity?:**

It is most beneficial to have someone lead this activity who:

1. Is a good listener and builds rapport quickly with new people (I found workshops on Motivational Interviewing very beneficial),
2. Has some experience in education and knows how to create individual lesson plans or learning plans, and
3. Knows how to read and explain the results of the assessments used in class (in our case the Test of Adult Basic Education 9/10 Survey, Wide Range Achievement Test 4, and Official GED Half-Length Practice Tests).

**Materials Needed:**

* Notebook paper and pen/pencil
* Personal profile
* TABE Profile or other skills-break down of assessment results
* TABE Summary Sheet by VCA at Thea Bowman Center
* Goal directed learning

**Script:**

“Hi, my name is Meagen. I help out with the Learning for Life class. Since you have been in tutoring for at least 6 classes, I was wondering if you would be willing to talk about your goals? I want to know more about your goals for the class and discuss the skills you’ve been learning to make sure you’re getting what you want out of tutoring.”

**Handout: PERSONAL PROFILE:**

*If you don’t have the hand out, you can just use a piece of notebook paper. Write PERSONAL PROFILE on the top, and then the learner’s name. Write every other line to allow for edits.*

First of all, I would like to get to know you a little better. What do you want us to call you? What is it that you would like the tutors to know about you? You can write it down if you like, or we can talk and I can write it down for you. (Most learners prefer you to write it down)

*Note: Reflect back what you have heard and ask if that’s what the learner wants you to write down. Use lots of reflective statements that repeat the thought back to the learner: “You like to watch movies.”*

*Start with open questions. Let the learner lead the conversation:*

What are some things you want your tutors to know about you?

What is most important to you in life?

What are some of your interests or hobbies? [What do you do for fun?]

What do you want to get out of this class?

Is there anything tutors should know to teach you, like you need them to speak loudly?

What is your favorite school subject? What is your least favorite?

*Use a second page if necessary. After the conversation, read the profile together and ask if there’s anything you should change or that you missed.*

**Handout: TABE PROFILE:**

I would like to look at your initial assessment test to see what skills it says you have mastered, and what skills you can work on. Do I have your permission to look at your test scores? [Get their original TABE answer sheet from file upstairs or their complete TABE Profile. If not completed, explain] “It may take me a few minutes to figure out what skills the test says you should work on. You can continue working with your tutor or on your work while I figure this out or you can watch as I complete this. [Use TABE Profile to find skills Mastery, Partial Mastery, or Non-Mastery. If they want to watch, talk to the learner as you do the work, explaining what the skills mean.

**Hand out: TABE SUMMARY SHEET:**

On a fresh paper marked with areas for Mastery, Partial Mastery and Non Mastery, mark the appropriate skills from TABE Profile (or other assessment profile).

These are the skills that the TABE test said you had mastered when you first started in class. If you have mastered the skill that means you can answer correctly every time you see this type of question.

[Explain what each skill means]

These are the skills that the TABE test said you had partial mastered when you first started in class. If you have partially mastered the skill that means you can answer correctly sometimes when you see this type of question, but you might need to practice to get it right every time.

[Explain what each skill means]

These are the skills that the TABE test said you had not mastered when you first started in class. If you have not mastered the skill that means you did not answer correctly.

[Explain what each skill means]

I am going to leave the TABE profile and summary sheet in your folder for you and your tutors to look at.

**Hand out: GOAL DIRECTED LEARNING:**

*If you don’t have this hand out, you can just use a piece of notebook paper. Write the learner’s name and the date at the top. Write LONG TERM GOAL with space to write. Below that write SHORT TERM GOAL and items 1, 2 & 3.*

Review Long Term Goal:

I want to look at what you wrote as your goals when you first registered for class (or goal set last month). [Look at Individual Learning Plan & Goals Sheet] Is this still your overall goal in attending class?

Set Short Term Goal:

I would like to help you set some goals for the 6 to 8 times you are in class. If you come to every class, this would take one month. I will be back again in one month to ask if you want to talk about these goals again. To help you set your goal for the next month, can you start by showing me what skills you are working on right now?

Tell me what things would you like to have done or mastered in the next month of classes?

[Often, it’s been enough time to recommend taking TABE as a posttest or a GED Practice Test. Limit to 3 skills/tasks. Also write]

*Most regularly learners can easily answer these questions, or may have already stated their goals during the Personal Profile. If you have difficulty finding 2-3 skills, use open questions:*

* What would you like to be able to do with this skill?
* Tell me why this is skill important to you.
* What could you do outside of class to help you learn/practice this skill?
* What are some ways you can practice this skill?

**Lesson Plan:**

If the learner names a skill that you do not have materials for, create a lesson plan with directions that incorporates their tutors. For example, if a learner wants to write song lyrics, you will write “Write a Song” on the Assignment Sheet in the student folder, give the learner a notebook, and write out directions for a lesson. Here is a sample for writing a song:

1. Decide a theme. Think of a subject you want to write about.
2. Brainstorm. Start by writing for 5 minutes without worrying about spelling, grammar, or punctuation.
3. Create a title. Use your theme or phrases from the brainstorm to select an appropriate title. Pick out a few of the catchiest lines to be the chorus for your song.
4. Revise. Rewrite the song so that you it is organized into verses and chorus. Use correct spelling, grammar, rhyme and rhythm. Review with a tutor to help you find all the corrections.
5. Sleep on it and revise again. During the next tutoring session, revisit your song, say or sing it out loud and make any changes. Type or re-write the entire song.
6. You can revise as many times as you want until you really like the song.