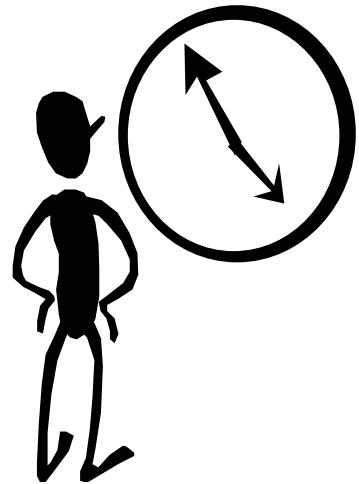


# Goal-Setting and Planning

- Students set two main types of goals: performance goals and learning goals (Taing, Singla, Johnson, & Chang, 2013).
  - A *performance goal* is based on getting a certain amount of work done (e.g. "By the end of this hour, *I will have written two pages.*").
  - A *learning goal* is based on strengthening your knowledge, understanding or mastery of a concept or skill (e.g. "By the end of this hour, *I will be able to accurately describe the theory of supply and demand and give three real-world examples.*").
- The most effective academic goals are *learning goals* (Payne, Youngcourt, & Beaubien, 2007).
- Strong learning goals have four components: **Time frame, Action, Standard and Concept(s)**. This acronym spells TASC, so we call these **TASC Goals** (Hadwin & Webster, 2013). We can now look at each component of a TASC goal...

## Time Frame

- A **time frame** will help you plan when you will accomplish your goal and keep you accountable.
- Set a definite start and end time.
  - For example, "On Wednesday from 3-5 pm..."
  - Setting a fixed end time ensures you take regular breaks to attend to your basic needs and refresh your working memory.
- Set a goal for a maximum of two hours to not overload yourself.
  - Some students find that even shorter time frames work better.
- Setting a time frame allows you to monitor how much work you can get done in that amount of time.
  - This can help you predict how long similar tasks will take in the future.



## Action

- The learning **action** part of a goal can be thought of as the **STRATEGY** you're going to apply.
- How are you going to *work with* the information so you understand and remember it better?
- Actions need to be more specific and targeted than broad actions like, "read", "review", or "study".
  - Those words don't really describe what the tasks of reading, reviewing, or studying look like, or how to do them effectively.
- To make sure you are creating an effective action (or strategy), think about the **SMART** learning operations (which we'll look at more closely in Phase III: Strategy Enactment). What types of activities help you perform one or more of these learning operations?
- An example of an effective action might be: "I will highlight the key concepts from my lecture notes on Supply and Demand that are relevant to my paper's thesis, and assemble the bits I have highlighted into an outline for the paper, rephrasing them in my own words."



## Standard

A goal's **standard** will be how you measure, in a concrete way, what you learned in your study session. Your standard marks the difference between a less-effective performance goal, and a more-effective learning goal. Your standard might be phrased in terms of what you should *be able to do* once you have completed your study session. For the paper mentioned before, it may look like this:

"By the end of the study session, *I will be able to* clearly articulate the three main arguments I have chosen to support my thesis, and for each argument, give a real-world example where this occurred."



## Concept

Here's where some information about learning and memory comes in handy. We store information more effectively if we can put it in a (imaginary) "folder" of related information in our brains. In order to store and retrieve information quickly, it helps if the folders have meaningful names (just like storing documents on a computer). That's why it's helpful to actually name the specific **concept** you're working with, rather than just the course name or chapter number. "Supply and Demand" is a more informative label than "History" or "Chapter 6".

## LET'S PUT THESE COMPONENTS TOGETHER:



"On Wednesday, from 3-5 pm (**time frame**), I will highlight the key concepts from my lecture notes on Supply and Demand (**concept**) that are relevant to my paper's thesis, and assemble the bits I have highlighted into an outline for the paper, rephrasing them in my own words (**action**). By the end of the study session, *I will be able to* clearly articulate the three main arguments I have chosen to support my thesis, and for each argument, give a real-world example where this occurred (**standard**)."

### For more Information:

- Hadwin, A.F., & Webster, E.A. (2013). Calibration in goal setting: examining the nature of judgments of confidence. *Learning and Instruction*, 24, 37-47. doi: 10.1016/j.learninstruc.2012.10.001
- Payne, S.C., Youngcourt, S.S., & Beaubien, J.M. (2007). A meta-analytic examination of the goal orientation nomological net. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92 (1), p. 128-150. doi: 10.1037/0021-9010.92.1.128
- Taing, M.U, Smith, T., Singla, N., Johnson, R.E., & Chang, C.H. (2013). The relationship between learning goal orientation, goal setting, and performance: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 2013 (43), p. 1668-1675. doi: 10.1111/jasp.12119
- Winne, P.H., & Hadwin, A.F. (1998). Studying as self-regulated engagement in learning. In D. Hacker, J. Dunlosky, & A. Graesser (Eds.), *Metacognition in Educational Theory and Practice* (277-304). Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum.

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