**SPORTS PSYCHOLOGY**

**SUMMER TASK**

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|  | **Goal Setting (and Performance Profiling)** |

*‘I’m a firm believer in goal setting. Step by step. I can’t see any other way of accomplishing anything.’ Michael Jordon.*

**What is a goal?**

# *‘Goals are the standards against which perceived success or failure are measured and thus link to present attributions of success or failure.’*

*‘A goal is a standard or level of proficiency that you work towards or want to attain.’*

*‘Goals are dreams with time lines.’*

Write your own definition:

What is your goal in your sport?

**What is Goal Setting?**

Goal setting is the process of establishing targets and measures towards which an individuals, teams or organizations effort will be directed. Unfortunately goal-setting, although simple, is an often poorly applied and goals often lead to additional pressure rather than reducing it.

**SMARTER**

*‘Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you fail to focus on your goals.’*

**The Mechanics of Goal Setting:**

Make no mistake, goal-setting is a skill that needs to be mastered just like any other although using the SMARTER program can simplify the process. Short term? Long term? Combination? Performance or outcome? How are you going to measure success? It is a simple process that can be made complicated.

**How to Set SMARTER Goals?**

*‘I’m a firm believer in goal setting. Step by step. I can’t see any other way of accomplishing anything.’ Michael Jordon.*

**Specific:** Research has shown that specific goals work better than general 'do-your-best' goals, (Locke & amp 1990; Latham, 1990).

For example, just saying ‘I want to get back into the first team squad’ is not enough. What do aspects of your performance do you need to improve or address to regain a first team place. Look closely at your performance profile.

Suggest **TWO** factors that need to be considered when setting your goals?

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*‘Being specific is also a key. At the beginning of the season, I charted the days, weeks and months before the Atlanta games and figured out where I needed to be at each step along the way.’ Michael Johnson*

The clubs top player comes into your office and states ‘boss, I’m going to score more goals this season. It’s my goal to score more goals!’

Is this goal specific enough? How many questions could you ask to challenge this goal?

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| **Question** | **Answer** |
| 1. Which team are you aiming to play for?
 | 1. 1st Team
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**Measurable** and **Meaningful:** Whatever your goal, you must be able to measure YOUR performance. You have to make it meaningful. Continuous monitoring is needed, but this can become a tiresome and measurement should not be the main focus of the goal setting process. However, measurement should be done on a regular basis.

Suggest **FIVE** ways to measure your performance?

Q How often do you intend to measure your performance?

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| Daily? | Weekly?  | Monthly? | Seasonally? | At the end of the mesocycle? |

*‘I do not try to do better than anyone else; I only try to do better than myself’ (Mikhail Baryshnikov)*

**The most effective way to add meaning to your goals, is to make reference to your own performance.**

**Adaptable:**

*‘Tune the engine. Don’t be afraid to reassess. Is your training schedule working? Is this the path to your goals? How can you adjust.’ Michael Johnson*

Goal-setting is a **dynamic process** and you may face numerous barriers. Some you will be able to overcome and surpass, but others you will have to accept.

*‘While the taste is still fresh in your mouth, begin all over again the process of returning to excellence. Start assessing what went wrong. Take the same work ethic you applied to getting here and use it to look at yourself and see why you failed….. It’s important to acknowledge those things without turning them into excuses.’ Michael Johnson*

However, if you consistently fail to meet a measurable goal, then is it responsible to adapt or adjust it?

**FIVE** games into the season, the clubs top striker last year has still NOT scored. Suggest **TWO** more reasons as to why this **may not be reflective of POOR performance**. Perhaps he even played really well. (Evidence?)

**‘Goals not immediately reached,**

**should not immediately be abandoned.'**

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| **Reasons** |
| 1. The team have played Arsenal, Manchester United and Chelsea in their opening sequence. The other two games were away from home.
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In the course of a season, suggest **THREE** legitimate reasons to adjust your goal! **justify** your decisions.

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*‘Our physical lives are not all a string of triumphs punctuated by occasional failures, but an elusive chase – a tireless run that will eventually end in failure but that can be marked by frantic and wonderful achievements, a constant battle to take advantage of our time, to accomplish as much as we can before the end. Michael Johnson’*

Know that failure is a positive aspect of developing your performance. It shows you areas where you can improve your skills and performance. Remember the *‘first step is knowing yourself.’*

**Goal setting has been shown to help performers develop new and various strategies in order to achieve their goals.**

As likely, is that you will make quicker progress than anticipated and may need to extend or increase the expected targets. For example, the club’s striker has already received his goal tally bonus? His recent performances have been waning. What do you plan to do now?

What factor should you take into account? Consider his **personality** and **motivations**!

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| **Adapt the goal?**  |
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| Factors |
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| Factors |

**Realistic:**

*‘The ability to set realistic goals only comes with experience and with the intimate knowledge of yourself and that you acquire when you’ve worked hard and tested yourself. When in doubt, scale your goals back a bit. If the aim is realistic you will get there soon enough.’ Michael Johnson*

Setting goals at the correct level is a skill that is acquired by practice. Set goals slightly out of your immediate grasp, but not so far that there is no hope of achieving them. No-one will put serious effort into achieving a goal that they believe is unrealistic.

*‘Being realistic isn’t settling for less than you’re capable of doing; it isn’t throwing away your dreams; its simple acknowledging that, right now, you are incapable of doing some things. And it only works if you are able to take pride in the things you* can *do.’ Michael Johnson*

Do you agree?

*‘Keep your ideals high enough to inspire you, and low enough to encourage you.’*

Q What does this phrase mean?

**Time-referenced:**

*‘You must have long range goals to keep you from being frustrated by short term failures’*

If you don't give yourself a **specific time frame** in which the goal must be achieved, then the urgency for attainment is reduced. Try to resist the temptation to adjust goal time frames to accommodate minor events. It is important to identify when this happens and design new objectives within the same time frame, this way your goal-setting plan will not be devalued as easily.

*‘You know, ultimately, I did achieve a lot more than I first set out to do but I took some really small steps along the way. When you want to be ranked number 1 in the world, when you want to be Olympic gold medalist and you want to make history you're really careful setting your goals along the way. You* ***take small steps*** *instead of having a goal that's so far out that it starts to seem unachievable.’*

Most frequently the TIME component of goal setting is expressed as either **SHORT TERM** or **LONG TERM**. Similar to micro, meso and macro training or nutrition cycles.

**The longer the time period the MORE frequent the goals should be.**

Suggest **TWO** time periods in your sport that could be defined as SHORT TERM?

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In contrast, a long term goal for a player may be the 6-8 months recovering from a cruciate knee operation or the duration of a three year contract.

**Recorded:** Without a record there is not goal. Without a record there is no evaluation. Without evaluation there is no success.

*‘Keep a record of your chase, a daily schedule of your training and how far you’ve come and far you have to go. A log provides two necessary things to self-discipline: motivation and habit. Recording your progress in writing keeps you focused.’ Michael Johnson*

The record must be accurate and the measurement reliable. Suggest **THREE** ways to record performance evidence?

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**Why Does Goal Setting Work?**

*‘Focusing on outcome often leads to failure. Focus on the task at hand the outcome will take care of itself.’*

When used properly, goal setting can direct and focus attention, improve self confidence, enhances motivation, reduces the impact stressful situations and encourages persistence. Used improperly goal setting can be the cause of anxiety.

Now you know a little more about SMARTER, what is your goal in your sport?