Learning Objective

In this lesson, you will learn the problem solving skill of making decisions about goals, standards, and priorities and how they apply to your work environment. You will learn how to:

1. Set appropriate goals
2. Describe activities to reach goals
3. Put activities in priority order

Vocabulary and Key Terms

accomplished - carried out or completed; succeeded in doing
achieve - to gain by work or effort
adjust - to change in order to correct or improve something
advanced - at a higher or more difficult level
adventures - exciting and unusual experiences
advertise - to prepare public notices or announcements, as for things for sale or needs
alternatives - possible choices
appropriate - proper; suitable
attitude - an opinion or feeling about a person, place, or thing
average - a usual or normal amount, quality, rate, etc.
behavior - the way a person acts
brainstorm - the offering of ideas by all members of a group to find ways to solve a problem
career - a job a person trains for and does to make a living
competition - a contest
criticize - to find fault with something
deadlines - set times by which certain things must be finished
decent - fairly good
delays - periods of time during which something is slowed down
discussion - the act of talking about something
derly - somewhat old; past middle age
emergencies - situations that develop suddenly and call for action or attention right away
financing - getting money or credit for
foreign - of or from another country
foreman - a person who is in charge of a group of workers
fluently - writing or speaking smoothly and easily
goals - things a person wants and tries to get
gossip - talk about other people that is often untrue and unkind
habit - a tendency to perform a certain action or behave in a certain way; usual ways of doing something
hire - to give a job to; employ
improve - to make or become better
inspect - to look at closely and carefully
interrupt - to stop a person who is acting or speaking
local - having to do with a particular place
maintenance - the work of keeping something in good working condition or repair
major - bigger or more important
manners - polite ways of acting
manual - a small book that gives instructions or information about something
marathon - a race of about 26 miles for runners
master's degree - a degree given by a college to a person who has completed a course of study beyond the usual four year program
menu - a list of the foods that are served at a meal
motivation - a moving to action; inspiration
occasional - happening only once in a while
patient - having the quality of being able to put up with pain, trouble, or delay without getting angry or upset
performance - the act of carrying out a task or doing something
phrase - a short expression
physical - having to do with the body
political - having to do with government and the way it works
popular - being liked by many people
prevent - to keep from happening
priorities - orders of importance or of consideration
produce - to make something
progress - advancement, a moving forward or becoming better
promoted - advanced to a higher job or rank
rate - to judge according to certain standards
realistic - possible and practical; able to be achieved
recreation - sports, exercise, hobbies, etc. done to refresh the body and mind
referees - people who make sure rules are followed in certain sports and games
requires - needs or demands
respectable - worthy of respect; decent or correct in behavior
results - things that happen or are brought about because of something else
retirement - the time when a job, business, or career, is given up, especially because of getting older
route - a set of customers to whom a person delivers something at regular times
schedules - lists of times, events, or things to do
specific - special; characteristic of something
sponsored - supported by paying expenses or giving other support
standards - rules for measuring quality, quantity, values, etc.
target - something a person tries to reach or achieve
task - a piece of work to be done
tournament - a contest or competition
**Prescription for Understanding**

You may have heard about goals, standards, and priorities from work or school. Do you really know what those words mean? Do you know how to use goals, standards, and priorities in your life?

Read the story below and you will understand.

**The Couch Potato Crowd Gets Physical**

We need to get in shape! Let's plan an activity.

-- The "Couch Potato Crowd" together.
-- Susan and Bill want great adventures.

-- Other ideas.
-- Susan and Bill get real.

How about a total of $100 for the trip?

"Good, and let's stay within 100 miles."

-- Getting down to brass tacks.
More dream vacations.

Looking at the possible choices or alternatives.
-- The group decides.

-- First things first.
-- It's hard to break a habit.

-- The great day arrives.
In the story of the "Couch Potato Crowd," you can see some skills being used. How many skills did you recognize? Look at this list:

1. Setting Appropriate Goals – To get something done, you should have a good target - something to work toward. The friends decided to get in shape. To do this, they plan a hiking trip.

2. Describe activities to reach goals. – After setting a goal you describe activities and list things that you might do. If you are with a group, you might get ideas from others, or "brainstorm. Our group talked about places to go and what to take along.

3. Putting Activities in Priority Order – You decide which activities are important to do first. You may decide not to do some activities. The friends planned on getting maps and borrowing equipment for camping. These were their first priorities.

These skills are really ways of planning. Maybe you don't think you do much planning. As you read on, you'll find that you do use these skills. You will be given helpful hints on how to plan your personal life and work activities.
**Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals**

This section has several exercises. Complete each exercise as well as you can.

Why should you worry about setting goals? Won't you do the same things anyway? Some people will ask these questions when you tell them about goals.

A goal is like a target. A goal tells what you are aiming at.
In your personal life, you can have goals. For example, your goals might include one or more of the following:

- Completing your education
- Getting a better job
- Getting in better shape
- Finding an apartment or home
- Planning a family

Having a goal helps you in several ways. You will be more likely to change or improve if you have a goal. If you have some direction, you will make better plans. Have you ever heard the words "desire," "motivation," or "willpower"? If you have a goal, you will have more motivation or desire. You will have more willpower or strength to change.

This business about goals is more than just nice talk. To be serious, you have to set appropriate goals. Appropriate goals are those that are right for you. How do you know whether a goal is appropriate? Here are three suggestions:

- Appropriate goals are practical or realistic.
- Appropriate goals challenge you.
- You must know about short-term and long-term goals.

A realistic goal is similar to something that you have done before. A realistic goal is one that you can do or achieve with some hard work.

In our story, do you remember the man who wanted to hike Death Valley? That was not a realistic goal for someone who doesn't exercise. At least it was not realistic in the short run. (More on this later.)
Appropriate goals are realistic, but they should also challenge you. A challenging goal will cause you to work to become better. Have you heard the phrase "nothing ventured, nothing gained"? It means that you won't achieve anything unless you try. Going on a 10-mile hike could be a challenge for people who have been couch potatoes all winter. Walking from the refrigerator to the TV would not be a challenge!

Some other words that we use about goals are "short-term" and "long-term." You can have goals that change with time. Short-term goals are the ones you can work on in the near future. Long-term goals give you a challenge for the more distant future. For example, you could have the following short-term and long-term goals:

![Runner](image.png)

Short-term goal - to run a 3-mile race by fall of this year.
Long-term goal - to run a marathon (26 miles) in the next 3 years.

Or, as another example:

Short-term goal - to lose 10 pounds in one month.
Long-term goal - to lose 40 pounds next year.

Short-term goals can take several weeks or months. Long-term goals can take months or years. You may be asking why you need the short-term goal. Why not just set the long-term target? People often get discouraged unless they can see changes or improvements. You set short-term goals so you don't have to wait forever to know that you have accomplished or done something.

A wise Chinese man once said, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step."
Completing a short-term goal helps you to feel good about yourself.

Some people who live in other countries say that Americans are not patient. They say that we want everything to happen right away. That's why we also need long-term goals. Big changes and major improvements take time.

To make sure that you understand what appropriate goals are, try the following example exercises.

Example Exercise 1

A. Jackie is a middle-aged office worker. She wants to start exercising. Usually she just walks three blocks to work and back each day. Which of the goals below is the most realistic goal for Jackie's exercise program?
   a. To run a 5-mile race in a month
   b. To run a 5-minute mile after two months
   c. To work up to jogging 2 miles a day after 3 months
   d. To run the three blocks to work and back every day in one week

If you chose “c,” you are correct. To work up to jogging 2 miles a day after 3 months is a realistic goal for Jackie. The other choices are not reasonable or practical.
Example Exercise 2

A. Bill is a college student. He wants a better math grade than the grade he got last quarter. Last quarter he earned a C-. In other math classes he has made B’s and, once in a while, an occasional C. To get a B, he studies very hard. Which of the following goals is an appropriate challenge for Bill?
   a. To earn a C- again in the next class
   b. To earn a B in the next class
   c. To earn an A in the next class
   d. To earn a C in the next class

If you chose “b,” great. To earn a B in the next class is challenging and realistic. Bill can earn a B by changing his study habits and working hard.

Example Exercise 3

A. Judy is trying to choose a career. She knows that college or advanced training will help her. Which goals below would be short-term goals?
   a. To take career interest tests and read about careers which interest her
   b. To complete a master’s degree in her chosen field
   c. To contact 100 companies which have jobs like the ones she wants
   d. To finance a loan for a big, expensive house

The correct answer is “a.” Taking career interest tests and reading about careers is a short-term goal.
Skill Check
Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals
Exercise A

Each problem below lists personal goals. Select the goal that is most realistic.

1. Jim wants to be a better student. For three years his best grade has been a "C."
   a. Goal - to earn all A's next quarter
   b. Goal - to be on the honor roll all year - A average
   c. Goal - to earn all C's next year
   d. Goal - to earn at least one B by the end of the year

2. Susan wants to get a good job. However, she disliked school and doesn't plan on college. She had trouble with studies.
   a. Goal - to become a medical doctor
   b. Goal - to become a college professor
   c. Goal - to become an auto mechanic
   d. Goal - to become a lawyer

3. Enrique is very shy and hardly anyone knows him. He wants to become more popular.
   a. Goal - to be elected class president next week
   b. Goal - to join a school club or sports team this year
   c. Goal - to have a date next month with the homecoming queen
   d. Goal - to say "Hi" to three people every day

4. George wants to become wealthy. He has an average job and a little money left over after his rent, food, and car payments.
   a. Goal - to win the state lottery for $10 million
   b. Goal - to save $10,000 in a year
   c. Goal - to save $50 each month
   d. Goal - to stop wasting money on rent, food, and car payments

5. Linda enjoys playing tennis. She has never played in competition.
   a. Goal - to enter the tournament sponsored by the recreation department this summer and win 1 match
   b. Goal - to win the local recreation department tournament
   c. Goal - to qualify for the Virginia Slims this summer
   d. Goal - to find a job as a tennis coach

6. Marta would like to buy a car. She spends $40 a month on bus fares. She has $800 in savings that she could spend.
   a. Goal - to watch for a good buy on a used car
   b. Goal - to buy a new car with monthly payments
   c. Goal - to buy a new car with cash
   d. Goal - to buy the first car she can find for $800
Each of the following problems lists four goals for a work situation. Select the goal that is most realistic.

7. Bill wants to improve his typing speed. Last year he was typing 30 words per minute. Now he is up to 40 words per minute.
   a. Goal - to type 50 words per minute by the end of the year
   b. Goal - to type 70 words per minute by next week
   c. Goal - to type 100 words per minute in a month
   d. Goal - to type 45 words per minute by the end of the year

8. Maria has been doing well at work. She wants to be promoted from her job as a clerk.
   a. Goal - to become the president of the company next year
   b. Goal - to become a head clerk next year
   c. Goal - to become an engineer next year
   d. Goal - to become the vice-president of the company next year

9. Sally and Jim build houses. They usually take 2 to 4 months to build a house.
   a. Goal - to build a house in 2 to 4 weeks
   b. Goal - to build a house in two weeks
   c. Goal - to build 10 houses in a year
   d. Goal - to build 7 houses in a year
10. Jose runs a machine that makes auto parts. Usually he makes 100 parts an hour. Sometimes he can let the machine run a little faster.
   a. Goal - to produce 120 parts an hour
   b. Goal - to produce 200 parts an hour
   c. Goal - to produce 50 parts an hour
   d. Goal - to produce 101 parts an hour

11. Kevin and Tom started a tree service. They don't have much money to invest.
   a. Goal - to buy a log chipper in two months
   b. Goal - to employ two other people in two months
   c. Goal - to buy an ax in two months
   d. Goal - to buy a power saw in two months

12. Gloria is in charge of the United Way collection at work. The first week, only 10% of the employees gave money. There are three weeks left.
   a. Goal - to get 100% participation this week
   b. Goal - to get one person to give a lot of money
   c. Goal - to get 30% of the employees to give each week
   d. Goal - to get three people to give a dollar extra
Skill Check
Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals
Exercise C

Each of the following problems tells about a goal. Choose the sentence that best describes the goal.

13. Melody enjoys bowling. Last year her bowling average was 100. This year she wants to keep the same average.
   a. The goal is not realistic.
   b. The goal is challenging.
   c. The goal is realistic, but it is not challenging.
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging.

14. Rick is a farmer. Usually he gets 80 bushels of corn from each acre of ground. Next year, by making some improvements, he hopes to get 90 bushels per acre.
   a. The goal is not realistic.
   b. The goal is realistic and challenging.
   c. The goal is not challenging.
   d. The goal is realistic, but not challenging.

15. Jennifer sells computers. Last year she sold 80 computers. This year she plans to sell 60 computers.
   a. The goal is realistic, but not challenging.
   b. The goal is not realistic.
   c. The goal is realistic and challenging.
   d. The goal is challenging.
16. Eli drives a delivery route. Usually he and the other drivers complete their routes in five or six hours. He wants to do the route in two hours.
   a. The goal is realistic, but not challenging.
   b. The goal is realistic and challenging.
   c. The goal is challenging.
   d. The goal is not realistic.

17. Sally and Jim build houses. They usually take two to four months to build a house. They want to build a house in two weeks.
   a. The goal is realistic, but not challenging.
   b. The goal is not realistic.
   c. The goal is realistic and challenging.
   d. The goal is challenging.

18. Linda enjoys playing tennis. She has never played in competition. Her goal is to enter the tournament sponsored by the local recreation department this summer and win one match.
   a. The goal is realistic, but not challenging.
   b. The goal is not realistic.
   c. The goal is realistic and challenging.
   d. The goal is not challenging.
Skill Check
Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals
Exercise D

For each of the following goals, decide if it is usually a short-term or long-term goal. Remember that short-term goals usually take a few months or less. Long-term goals may take several years to accomplish.

19. Lose 10 pounds
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

20. Lose 80 pounds
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

21. Save money for retirement
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

22. Save money to buy a shirt
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

23. Plan a family
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term
24. Plan a date with your steady boyfriend or girlfriend
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

25. Read a magazine
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

26. Learn to speak another language fluently
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

27. Visit all 50 states in the U.S.
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

28. Visit a local museum
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

29. Be promoted to president of a company
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

30. Run in a 26-mile marathon
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

31. Go on a short hike
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

32. Complete a degree at a technical college
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

33. Complete a course at a technical college
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term

34. Learn ten phrases in another language
   a. Short-term
   b. Long-term
Skill Area #2: Describe Activities to Reach Goals

Example Exercise 4

Your business has decided to start an office in a new city. Salespersons will work there to sell products to people in the city.

Look at the following activity. Is it important for the goal of setting up the new office?

A. Find the closest restaurants in the city.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

   If you chose “b.”, you are right. Finding the nearest restaurants is not important to your goal of setting up a new office.

B. Hunt for office locations.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

   The correct answer is “a.” Hunting for office locations is important to your goal of setting up a new office.
Skill Check
Skill Area #2: Describe Activities to Reach Goals
Exercise E

Now look at these additional factors concerning the business for which you have decided to start an office in a new city. Remember that salespersons will work there to sell products to people in the city.

Which activities are important for the goal of setting up the new office?

35. Learn about local political gossip in the city.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

36. Advertise your company's products in the city.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

37. Hire or transfer workers for the new office.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

38. Talk to your relatives who live near the city.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

39. Learn about airports and highways near the city.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

40. Find out about utility costs.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

41. Find out how many police stations the city has.
   a. Important
   b. Not important
Skill Area #3: Put Activities in Priority Order

Have you made a list of activities for reaching a goal? Good. Now you need to organize the activities.

You need to decide which activities are most important. You need to decide which activities to do first.

We call this setting priorities. To set priorities means to put "first things first."

Here are some ways to put activities in priority order:

1. Decide which activities prevent emergencies.
2. Look at deadlines or schedules.
3. Decide which activities need to be finished before other activities can begin.

If an activity will prevent an emergency, you will usually do this activity first. For example, you have four machines to fix. Only one might explode. You will fix that machine first. If you live in Alaska during the winter and don't have a winter coat, you will shop for a coat before buying a swimming suit.

Next, you will look at deadlines and schedules. Which things have to be done at a certain time? You need to do these activities before the deadlines.

If you have no emergencies or schedules to consider, look at how the activities fit together. You need to cut down trees before you can chop them into firewood. You need to buy cloth before you can make a dress.


**Example Exercise 5**

**A.** You have several things to fix in your house. You have the money to do all the repairs. Which of the following repairs have priority?

- a. Fix a creaky board in the dining room floor
- b. Replace the dining room carpet
- c. Fix a leak in your gas line
- d. Replace one of the light bulbs in your dining room light fixture

The correct answer is “c,” fix a leak in your gas line. You need to stop the gas leak first to stop an emergency.
SUMMARY

Let’s review the facts about goals, standards, and priorities. Here is a system you can use to plan your personal and work activities.

1. Set goals that are realistic and challenging.

2. Decide on short-term and long-term goals.
3. Decide on standards that are specific and visible.

4. Make lists of activities to meet goals.
5. Brainstorm with others.

6. Decide which activities have priority.
You are looking forward to a happy weekend. The weather is fine and you are planning to go away for the day. You get up Saturday morning at 9:00. You find that some things need to be done first. Look at the list. Put the actions in priority order.

42. Put the actions in priority order:
   a. The mail comes, and you get a bill that must be paid in 5 days.
   b. Your toilet starts to overflow on the carpet. You can fix it in 10 minutes.
   c. The garage calls and says you have to pick up your car by 11:00.
   d. A friend calls to borrow a tool. He needs it sometime in the next day or two.
   e. You decide to pack up and leave for the rest of the day.
   f. You pack a picnic lunch to take with you.
You are a secretary in a sales office. Your normal work is typing sales reports. You type a report every week for each salesperson. You also do special jobs for the sales manager.

These jobs take priority over work you do for the salespersons.

When you come in Monday morning, your work is waiting. In addition, you find that a worker seems to be having a heart attack, the phone is ringing, and a salesperson is waiting for your help. Decide the priority of the things you need to do.

43. Put the actions in priority order:
   a. Call a coworker to see if he can join you for lunch.
   b. Type a special letter that the sales manager needs by noon.
   c. Call an ambulance for a worker who is having a heart attack.
   d. Begin typing the weekly sales reports.
   e. Help a salesperson to find a missing invoice.
   f. Answer your telephone.
   g. Check the bulletin board for notices of fun activities.
You are in charge of the maintenance department in a large factory. Your department’s usual tasks are to oil, adjust, and inspect machines.

This is done on a schedule, but the exact dates can vary. You also fix machines that are broken. A breakdown on the production line can cause costly delays. When you come in Monday morning, there are many things to do.

44. The foreman on the main production line says the biggest machine is broken. Can you fix it?
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

45. Machines in the packaging department are scheduled for their monthly oiling today.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

46. The maintenance foreman from another plant wants to visit sometime.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

47. You want to ask the second shift operator if you can borrow his fishing boat.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more
48. The company president has arrived from New York and wants a tour.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

49. You need to set a date for the weekly maintenance department meeting.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

50. The company maintenance manual needs some changes made.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

51. Your supply of oil is down to one can, and you need to order some more.
   a. Priority A - needs immediate action
   b. Priority B - can wait one or two days
   c. Priority C - can wait a week or more

Now select your area of work and then turn to the appropriate page for “Let’s Apply to Your Workplace” questions:
   Nursing Assistant ---------------------- Page 231 - 234
   Dietary Services ----------------------- Page 235 - 240
   Environmental Services --------------- Page 241 - 244
Let’s Apply to Nurse Assistant
Problem Solving - Lesson 2 of 5

Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals

As a Nurse Assistant, you help people to recover from injuries or accidents, and cope with various everyday life activities. You help residents set goals that are realistic and possible to attain. But goals must also be challenging. Some residents might be fearful. You need to help them set goals that are difficult enough to make the resident work to become healthy.

Each of the following statements talks about a resident and gives four choices for a goal. Select a goal that is realistic and a goal that will challenge the resident.

1. Mr. Johnson had his leg amputated last month. He is very discouraged and doesn’t want to get out of bed. Mr. Johnson’s doctor has advised that he be more active. What goal should you and Mr. Johnson set?
   a. To walk 5 miles this week
   b. To rollover in the bed this week
   c. To get out of bed and walk to the bathroom
   d. To walk 2 miles this week

2. Jim sprained his ankle last week and should recover quickly. What goal should you set Jim set?
   a. Walk around the facility twice daily
   b. Keep off his feet completely
   c. Attend a social activity Friday night
   d. Attend physical therapy this week

3. Mrs. Dunn slipped last week and broke her hip. She is very weak and moves slowly. Yesterday Mrs. Dunn took two (2) steps in a walker. What goal will you and Mrs. Dunn set for this week?
   a. To complete 10 jumping jacks
   b. To take 3 steps in her walker
   c. To walk 100 feet down the hallway
   d. To walk 1 mile by the end of the week

4. Mr. Parker is a resident assigned to the total care unit. He has had a severe stroke and is unable to move. What weekly goal would you set for Mr. Parker?
   a. To get out of bed and walk to the bathroom
   b. To attend a social function Friday night
   c. To blink his eyes when someone says “Hello”
   d. To walk 10 yards down the hallway
5. Mr. Begley has hands that are extremely stiff with arthritis. He has worked hard to hold a fork without assistance. What monthly goal should you and Mr. Begley set?

a. Take a bite or two of his meals without assistance
b. Hold a hot cup of tea without assistance
c. Use a knife and fork without assistance
d. Eat a meal without assistance
**Skill Area #2: Describe Activities to Reach Goals**

As a Nurse Assistant you will be expected to help the residents reach their goals. Suppose that Hazel, one of the residents that you are responsible for, had phenomena last month. She no longer has phenomena, but lost a lot of weight and is very weak as a result. In fact, she hardly has the strength to get up to go to the bathroom. She is very sad and discouraged, but has set a goal of gaining her strength back and walking to the dining area by herself within the next four weeks.

Which activities are important for Hazel to reach the goal that she has set of being able to walk to the dining area by herself within the next four weeks?

6. Getting as much sleep as possible each day  
   a. Important  
   b. Not important

7. Eating all of or least as much of each of her meals as she can  
   a. Important  
   b. Not important

8. Walking in the halls with the assistance of the Nurse Assistant for 1 hour each day  
   a. Important  
   b. Not important

9. Spending time each day talking with the other resident in her room  
   a. Important  
   b. Not important

10. Waking up early each morning  
    a. Important  
    b. Not important
Skill Area #3: Put Activities in Priority Order

Nurse assistants have busy days. They often have more tasks to do than they have time for and have to establish priorities. They must decide which activities are very important and which activities are less important.

Review the list of activities below for a nurse assistant. For each activity, decide whether it is very important or less important in doing your work.

11. Talk to someone who is interested in learning about your job.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

12. Arrange for the repair of equipment that you will be using this week.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

13. Look for paper writing pads for the department.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

14. Assist a resident to the bathroom.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

15. Complete taking resident’s vital signs as required.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important
Let’s Apply to Dietary Services
Problem Solving - Lesson 2 of 5

Skill Area #1 - Set Appropriate Goals

As a Dietary Services worker you are expected to work as a member of the department team to do your jobs and provide nutritious and appealing meals for the residents.

During the past month several new members have joined the dietary services team and during that same period of time, the team has not been able to keep up with the schedule in the kitchen and dining area. Meals are not being prepared and served to the residents in a timely manner. The team has met and suggested the following goal ideas to try to help resolve the problem.

For each goal idea select the sentence that best describes the goal.

1. Cut back on the number of different items on the menu for all meals for the next two months to allow the new staff to learn their jobs.
   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging

2. Make sure that each team member understands the kitchen and dining area procedures and can follow them within the next week.
   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging

3. Hire four extra team members to work in the kitchen and dining area so that the meals can be served on schedule.
   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging

4. Assign one extra person to work with the new team members for the next week to show them the proper methods to follow in preparing and serving the meals and cleaning up the area after each meal.
   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging
5. Allow the new team members to learn the jobs at their own pace. They will eventually speed up and everything will be back to normal.
   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging
Skill Area #2: Describe Activities to Reach Goals

As a Dietary Services worker you will be expected to work with your coworkers to set up and serve all meals. Each resident must have their tray filled with the proper amounts of the correct food items as called for on their menu card.

Your team has been making some errors in filling trays and as a result they have established a goal of filling each tray order with 100% accuracy during the next month.

Which activities are important for the team to reach their goal?

6. Make sure that all menu cards are legible and are typed with large enough print so as not to create confusion when reading them.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

7. Place all hot items on the tray first and then add any cold items.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

8. Insure that all team members understand the importance of 100% accuracy in filling trays and encourage them to ask a coworker if they are not sure about an item on the menu card.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

9. Ask the residents if they enjoyed their meal.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

10. Ask the head dietician to spot check the cards against the filled trays to make sure the menu cards are correct and that the trays are being filled correctly.
    a. Important
    b. Not important
**Skill Area #3: Put Activities in Priority Order**

Everyday you must deal with performing tasks in a limited amount of time. Since other people are dependent on you to accomplish these within a given time, you must be able to prioritize your activities.

The following list of sub-tasks associated with serving breakfast is in the order that they should be accomplished. For the following questions, we will assume that these are the only tasks associated with serving breakfast.

- Put on hair net and wash hands
- Gather cold cereal and place on serving line
- Write substitute menus on menu board and in log book
- Get menu cards from menu book location
- Review menu book for utensil sizes
- Gather utensils from kitchen
- Take food temperatures
- Record food temperatures in log book
- Place utensils in food
- Prepare a test tray as required
- Serve food on trays according to menu cards
- Remove utensils from food
- Place lids on food containers
Use the list on the previous page to answer the following questions:

11. What should be the next step following “take food temperatures?”
   a. Place lids on food containers
   b. Take food temperatures
   c. Prepare a test tray as required
   d. Record food temperatures in logbook

12. Which of the following steps should be completed last?
   a. Place lids on food containers
   b. Put on hair net and wash hands
   c. Prepare a test tray as required
   d. Place utensils in food

13. Which step should be completed immediately prior to serving food on trays according to menu cards?
   a. Record food temperatures in logbook
   b. Write substitute menus on menu board and in logbook
   c. Prepare a test tray as required
   d. Place utensils in food

14. Which of the following tasks must be accomplished before you gather the utensils from the kitchen?
   a. Put on hair net and wash hands
   b. Place lids on food containers
   c. Prepare a test tray as required
   d. Take food temperatures

15. Which of the following tasks must be accomplished before you prepare a test tray as required?
   a. Serve food on trays according to menu cards
   b. Remove utensils from food
   c. Gather cold cereal and place on the serving line
   d. Place lids on food containers
Let’s Apply to Environmental Services  
Problem Solving - Lesson 2 of 5  

Skill Area #1: Set Appropriate Goals  

As an Environmental Services worker you are expected to work as a member of the department team to do your jobs and provide a safe and clean environment for the residents.  

During the past month several new members have joined the environmental services team and during that same period of time, the team has not been able to keep up with the schedule in the laundry area. Personal items are not being washed, dried and returned to the residents in a timely manner. The team has met and suggested the following goal ideas to try to help resolve the problem.  

For each goal idea select the sentence that best describes the goal.  

1. Make sure that each team member understands the laundry area procedures and can follow them within the next week.  
   a. The goal is not realistic  
   b. The goal is challenging  
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging  
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging  

2. Require that the residents wear their personal items for several days before they send them to the laundry, and thus reduce the amount of personal laundry items that the team needs to do each week.  
   
a. The goal is not realistic  
b. The goal is challenging  
c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging  
d. The goal is realistic and challenging  

3. Hire four extra team members to work in the laundry area so that the laundry can be done on schedule.  
   a. The goal is not realistic  
   b. The goal is challenging  
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging  
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging  

4. Purchase larger washers and dryers to that more laundry can be done at one time.  
   a. The goal is not realistic  
   b. The goal is challenging  
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging  
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging
5. Assign one extra person to work with the new team members for the next week to show them the proper methods to follow in sorting, washing, drying and folding laundry items.

   a. The goal is not realistic
   b. The goal is challenging
   c. The goal is realistic, but not challenging
   d. The goal is realistic and challenging
Skill Area #2: Describe Activities to Reach Goals

As an Environmental Services worker you will be expected to work with your coworkers to make sure that the facility is maintained at the desired standards. Each resident and any visitor expects to see hall floors that look neat and clean.

Your team has set a goal of maintaining the hall floors so that they always look like they have just been waxed.

Which activities are important for the team to reach their goal?

6. Set up a procedure that requires anyone who notices a spill on the hall floors to notify the environmental services department immediately so that someone can clean up the spill.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

7. Make sure that the entrance hall windows are washed every day.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

8. Damp mop the hall floors every day.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

9. When the hall floors are stripped and re-waxed, make sure that you always put down more wax than the instructions call for.
   a. Important
   b. Not important

10. Run the buffer over all hall floors every other day.
    a. Important
    b. Not important
Skill Area #3: Put Activities in Priority Order

Environmental Services workers have busy days. They often have more tasks to do than they have time for and have to establish priorities. They must decide which activities are very important and which activities are less important.

Review the list of activities below for an Environmental Services worker. For each activity, decide whether it is very important or less important in doing your work.

11. Gather the dirty linen from each floor and take to the laundry area.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

12. Check the flower planter in the entry lounge to see if any dead leaves need to be removed.
   a. Very important
   b. Less important

13. Mop up a spill in the hall where a nurse assistant dropped a tray of food.
    a. Very important
    b. Less important

14. Wipe off the window ledge and wash the windows in the storage room.
    a. Very important
    b. Less important

15. Inventory the clean linen storage room to insure that there is a sufficient supply of clean linens for the Nurse Assistants to change all of the beds today.
    a. Very important
    b. Less important