Short, Medium and Long-Term Goal Setting Strategies

The most effective way to achieve important goals in your life is to break big goals up into smaller ones. Long-term, medium-term, and short-term goals are all necessary in a successful goal setting strategy.

*Using enabling goals, or supporting goals, will ensure that you're consistently taking steps toward achieving the life you desire.*

Enabling Goals

The best way to get where you want to go is with a mix of short, medium, and long-term goals. Each has different benefits and can launch you forward toward the end result that you seek. What ties it all together is enabling goals. *These are goals that are formulated as stepping-stones for medium and long-term goals.*

**Use this step-by-step goal setting strategy to bring your dreams to life:**

1. **Set your long-term goals first.** What do you want to achieve in the next few years? These are broad goals that will take some time to achieve, like buying a home, graduating from college, or starting your own business. *Your long-term goals are the foundation for goal setting as they define where you want to be in the future.*

2. Long-term goals should be obtainable within a set number of years. Try to give your goals a time frame, such as buying a home in five years or graduating from college with a PhD degree in eight.
3. **Set your medium term goals next.** Let these act as large stepping-stones to help you achieve your goals. For example, if your goal is to obtain a doctorate degree in medicine, let a medium-term goal be to achieve your Bachelor's degree in the subject, since this is a reasonable goal between where you stand now and the ultimate goal you hope to achieve.

4. Medium term goals should also have specific time frames in mind. These will keep you moving forward, ensuring that you're always working toward your long-term goals and aspirations.

5. **Finally, focus on your short-term goals.** These are goals that you can achieve more readily. Set short-term goals for each semester, for example. Or start with setting a goal to apply for financial aid, a goal to enroll in classes, and a goal to meet with an academic counselor so that you can outline your education plan. These goals guide you toward your ultimate goal.

6. Short-term goals can be anything you want them to be, but they should be enabling goals. This means that they should be small, but definite, steps toward your desired end result.

7. Follow the SMART goal setting strategy for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely short-term goals that you know you can achieve.

Long-term goals tend to be the most meaningful and important, which is why they take so much time to achieve. But we should not only focus our attention on the *big picture* goals, when it is medium and short-term goals that allow us to get there. **Focus on all three types of goals when planning for your future.**

The more time you take to plan out your goals, the better the results are likely to be. Planning and forethought can go a long way in helping you achieve what you really desire in your life.