

Setting and Sorting Goals
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In our sport of shooting, there can often be a seemingly overwhelming list of skills to build, tasks to accomplish, areas to improve, and important technical requirements. The most important task after setting goals is to manage them into a plan of action that leads to goal achievement.

First, consider two types of goals:

Outcome Goals: Outcome Goals are generally result or score oriented. They can be a certain score, a ranking (i.e.. Gold Medalist), or even a team berth (i.e.. Olympic Team qualifier). Outcome goals can be mostly out of our direct control. You cannot control or predict how your competitors will shoot and their result may be better than your best efforts. Outcome goals are often the place we want to go, but not the actual means of getting there.

Performance Goals: (also called task or process goals) These goals should be directly related to the Outcome goals you create. The Outcome goals are the destination; the performance goals are the actual way that you get to the destination. Performance goals can be any part of the puzzle that helps reach the outcome desired. Performance goals are not only about improving weak areas, but also making needed skills that are already good even stronger.

The outcome goals are easy to set...the real work comes with setting Performance Goals that lead to achieving the desired outcomes.

A Way to Sort and Prioritize Goals

1. Consider sorting your Performance Goals into four categories:
 - A. Technical: This category can contain items like “I will optimize my gun/ammunition match up” to “I will keep my hips straight in standing and place my elbow in exactly the same place every shot in training by May 1.”
 - B. Tactical: Tactical items often overlap the other categories, but the important thing is to think of parts of your performance that are key to your overall effort. At the National Team level we often address issues related to match plan and time management. Example: Time management during the match. In a tactical sense, it is important to manage your time so that you don’t spend too much time in sighters and put yourself in a time crunch later in the match.
 - C. Physical: Use this category to focus on items like endurance in positions, overall fitness and health, food/snack plan, and cardiovascular endurance.

D. Mental: Mental skills are often considered obvious; the important issue is to keep these items skill related and simple. An example might be “I will learn how to relax on demand so that I can calm down if my heart starts racing in competition” or “I will run a pre-shot routine every shot in training and competition so that I am ready to shoot the shot in the best part of my hold”.

Prioritizing your Goals

- In each category above that you have performance goals listed, consider each of the goals and rank them by their potential to directly impact your performance in a positive way.
- This ranking will differ for every individual. Cut the list in each category to no more than three items.
- At this point you will have up to 12 performance goals, three in each category. The next challenge is to cut to one in each category that you can focus your energy on in the next 3-6 months.

If you can finalize a list of 4 Performance Goals, categorized as above, you will have a very manageable list of tasks that will efficiently focus your training and efforts.

Sources of help: Your coach! Ask for help with your goal setting. Coaches, parents, and other mentors can help you categorize your goals and sort them for impact and importance. I believe it is necessary to have “outside eyes” that are interested in your efforts assist you with constructive and objective input. One of the most important tasks a coach can do is to simplify and help focus your efforts on meaningful tasks that will keep you on your goal path.