

JANJ Women’s Future Leadership Series

Setting and Achieving Goals

Being a leader is about having a vision for change—and encouraging ourselves, and the people around us, to work hard to bring that vision to life. By setting goals for ourselves, with a timeline and steps to get there, we get closer to creating the change we want.

Goal setting is an important life and leadership skill. When you know how to set goals, you get much closer to making them a reality.

1. Translate your dreams into goals.

Goals help us realize our dreams—they are the steps between us and what you imagine could be possible. Goals are different from dreams because they are more concrete and achievable. While I might dream of going to the moon someday, my goal would be to get an A in Physics.

A good goal is specific and objective, so it’s easy to see the results. We can focus on short-term goals that can be accomplished in one year.

EXAMPLES OF DREAMS VS. GOALS

Dream: I want to run in the Olympics

Goal: I want to run JV track this spring

Dream: I want to be a great teacher

Goal: I want to be a mentor to younger students

2. Set your own personal goals.

Sometimes goals seem so big that it’s almost impossible to imagine how you’ll accomplish them. By breaking a goal down into smaller, attainable steps, we can take on new and sometimes scary things in smaller pieces. This allows us to feel a little braver, and makes it more likely that we won’t give up.

EXAMPLE OF BREAKING A GOAL INTO RISK ZONES

Goal: Be in a school play

Comfort Zone: Talk to members of a drama club and find out what it’s like.

Low Risk Zone: Talk to drama teacher about what it takes to audition.

High Risk Zone: Audition for the play.

You can organize the steps into three groups—which we’ll call **risk zones**—based on how nervous they make us. Then, pick the first step you’re going to take.

- Your Comfort Zone: Feels easy to do—no problem!
- Your Low Risk Zone: Makes you feel a little nervous—but not terrified!
- Your High Risk Zone: Makes you so nervous now that it’s hard to imagine trying—but maybe you can!

Remember, we all have different comfort zones. You- and only you- should decide what feels right to you.

Let’s plan! The handouts following this page will prompt you to fill out four things:

1. Your dream: What you imagine is possible—a big, bold vision
2. Your goal: What you can do in the next year on your way to her dream
3. Your steps: The steps you can take to reach your goal, organized by how risky each step feels
4. Your first step: The first step you is comfortable taking toward your goal

Having dreams is a thrilling part of growing up and imagining your future. Making them a reality takes hard work and practice. When you have the skills to break your dream down into goals, and break your goals down into smaller steps, you create your own road map for success!

Ready, Set, Goal!

1. Fill in your dream

What you imagine is possible—a big, bold vision

Dream big
but set a
realistic goal
for yourself.

2. Fill in your goal

What you can do in the next year
on your way to the dream

3. Fill in your steps

Break your goal into steps and organize them into these three risk zones.

Steps in My Low Risk Zone

Makes you feel a little nervous—but not terrified!

Steps in My Comfort Zone

Feels easy to do—no problem!

Steps in My High Risk Zone

Makes you so nervous now that it's hard to imagine trying—but maybe you can!

4. Circle Your First Step

Read through the steps in all three risk zones and circle the one you feel comfortable doing first.