

Maximizing Your Learning with Purpose

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Hello everyone. Let's talk about something we all experience: studying. Now, be honest – when someone mentions 'studying,' do you do a happy dance or more like sighing? It's no secret that for many, it's the sigh. But have you ever stopped to think about why? The reasons could be: not having clear goals, dealing with past failure, or always seeking quick learning shortcuts. Today, I'll focus on one of the key reasons – the lack of clear goals.

Imagine your education as a journey and think of setting clear goals as a compass. But what if you started this journey without a clear destination? You might feel like you're drifting, lacking motivation, and not really connected to your study. This is where having clear goals can help. I will share 3 strategies to maintain a sense of purpose in studying: 'setting small and manageable goals,' 'rewarding yourself,' and 'defining clear targets.'

First of all, setting small and manageable goals. While having ambitious long-term goals is important, if your goals are too big, you might end up getting discouraged and losing your motivation. Dividing your goals into achievable steps reduces the feeling of being overwhelmed. Every achieved small goal is like placing a flag on a mountain peak – showing progress and a feeling of achievement. As a personal example, my TOEIC score was 390 in January of this year. To improve, I set simple daily goals like learning only one short section of vocabulary and practicing listening for just five minutes every day. By sticking to these goals, I raised my score to 495 in May, an increase of about 100 points. This approach takes time but works well, showing clear progress and making learning a great experience.

However, while achieving goals is important, it's also essential to reward yourself. Researchers at Cornell University found that receiving immediate rewards for completing small tasks not only increases your interest and enjoyment but also boosts your motivation to continue (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*). For instance, if you finish your homework early, treat yourself to your favorite snack, take a nap or have a short walk outside. These rewards are like little celebrations that keep you looking forward to the next part of your journey.

Finally, defining clear targets. It means deciding exactly what you want to achieve in a straightforward way. Instead of saying, "I want to do well on this test," you can set your goal as, "I want to get 80 points on the Math test." When you write down exactly what you're aiming for, it makes your goal clear. And when your goals have numbers, even if you don't reach them all at once, seeing those numbers go up keeps you motivated.

So, as you set off on your learning adventure, remember: you're not just a student, you're the captain steering your own ship. Small and manageable goals help you see progress, rewarding yourself keeps you excited, and clear targets give you direction. With these strategies by your side, you're on a journey towards success. Thank you.