

ITF Coaches Education Programme Level 2 Coaching Course



Goal-setting for tournament players

By the end of this session you should be able to:



- Explain the definition and importance of goal-setting for tennis
- Understand the different types and principles of goals in tennis
- Know the steps and problems of goal-setting
- Understand what research tell us about goal-setting
- Devise effective and appropriate goal-setting for tournament tennis players

Goal-setting: Definition



- Goal-setting is the aim or purpose of an action
- It involves deciding where you want to go and the steps necessary to take to get you there

Goal-setting: Importance



- Setting 'targets'
- Provide sense of direction and purpose
- Stimulate players to overcome challenges
- Specific goals increase players performance
- Help to determine what's important
- Maintain and reinforce motivation
- Increase persistence and effort
- Direct attention to task-relevant aspects
- Ensure more productive use of time
- Reinforce self-confidence

Types of goals



TYPE OF GOALS	CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLES
Objective / subjective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O: Deal with external aspects of the player, and are easy to observe and to evaluate. S: Deal with inner aspects of the player, and are difficult to observe and to evaluate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O: 'To improve slice backhand approach'. S: 'To improve body chain co-ordination'
General / specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G: Ambiguous, goals involving immeasurable aspects. S: Refer to measurable aspects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G: 'To improve level of play' S: 'To improve depth and height of second serve topspin to the ad side by 20th April'.
Outcome / performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O: Focus on the end result. Dangerous if they put pressure on the player. P: Focus on improvements relative to ones own performance. Help to achieve outcome goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O: 'To be National champion under 18'. P: 'Hit over my backhand on returns'.
Short-term/ intermediate/ long-term	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S: Session, day, week or month. They help to achieve the intermediate and long-term goals. I: Several months. L: 1-2 years or more. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S: 'Today we are going to work in the down the line passing-shot'. I: 'To improve endurance during the preparation period'. L: 'To be ranked top 10 in the country by the end of this year'.

Types of goals Candidate's task



Give other examples of:

- Objective/Subjective
- General/Specific
- Outcome/Performance
- Short-term/Intermediate/Long-term

Principles of goal-setting

- Specific
- Measurable
- Agreed
- Realistic
- Time phased
- Evaluated
- Recorded

Principles of goal-setting

PRINCIPLE	CHARACTERISTICS	EXAMPLE
Specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set as specific goals as possible and avoid vague statements. Specific, quantifiable goals help players to focus their attention and plan their route to achieve the goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I want to run 1 ½ mile in 8 minutes' rather than 'I want to have a better aerobic base'.
Measurable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set measurable and controllable goals. Measurable goals help players to assess whether or not they have achieved them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I want to hit 8 out of 10 topspin second serves in the service box' rather than 'I want to improve my topspin second serve'.
Agreed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve the player. Goals should be set with an agreement by both player and coach. Agreed or shared goals help players to be more committed and motivated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I agree that I will hit over my backhand on all 2nd serves'
Realistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set challenging, exciting, difficult but realistic goals. Easy goals offer little satisfaction nor motivation. Very difficult goals create frustration and make the players lose self-confidence and create frustration. Realistic goals help players to be more motivated and to gain self-confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I'm 14 years old and I want to be under 14 national champion this year' rather than 'I'm 14 years old and I want to be Wimbledon champion this year'.
Time phased	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set target dates for the achievement of the goals. They should have a deadline. Plan the progress into small steps (intermediate and short-term goals). Time phased goals help players to assess accurately their achievement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I want to improve my drop-shot from mid court by the end of this week' rather than 'I want to improve my drop-shot'.
Evaluated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schedule goal evaluation meetings periodically. Re-evaluate, restate goals if already achieved or if unlikely to be achieved in the time frame allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Evaluation or assessment of this goal will be done March 22nd, April 20th and June 21st'.
Recorded	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write down the goals. Make a kind of contract. Written goals help players to increase commitment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'I'm writing down my goals' rather than 'bla..bla..bla..'.



Principles of goal-setting

Candidate's task

Give examples of:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Agreed
- Realistic
- Time phased
- Evaluated
- Recorded

How to set goals



- Use questions
- In areas over which the player has control
- Change and adapt them if necessary
- Beware of mental aspects
- Monitor progress and reset goals
- Evaluate each training session at the end

Combination of goals



- Short-term (daily) with long-term (season)
- Individual (player) and group (team)
- Prioritise goals:
 - Which comes first?
 - Important goals vs. urgent goals
- Practice and matches goals

How to reach the goals



- Daily practice
- Matches
- Season plans
- Sub-goals
- Tests

Best types of goals



YES

- Short-term
- Performance
- Positive
- Effective, meaningful
- Self-oriented
- Quality

NO

- Only long-term
- Outcome
- Negative
- General, theoretical
- Oriented against others
- Quantity

Goal-setting quiz

Candidate's task

Link each phrase with the area



PLAYER

- I need more power on my forehand
- I lose all tie-breakers
- I've lost my touch on the volley
- I have problems when playing pushers

AREA TO WORK IN

- Technique
- Tactics
- Physical conditioning
- Psychology
- Other

Areas to work in goal-setting



Areas	Specific aspects
Technical skills	Grips, strokes, stroke production, footwork, technical corrections, biomechanical analysis, etc.
Tactical components	Phases of play, game styles, tactical patterns, design of matchplans, tactical analysis and evaluation in game situations
Physical abilities	Endurance, speed, power, strength, co-ordination, dexterity, agility, flexibility, etc.
Mental qualities	Motivation, concentration, emotional control, relaxation match preparation routines, discipline, communication, fighting attitude, etc.

Goal-setting system for coaches



Phase	Steps to success
Planning phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Think about the season ahead* Identify player's needs and possibilities in all areas* Turn the needs into specific goals* Determine priority goals* Identify possible strategies to facilitate the achievement of these goals* Invest commitment and effort
Meeting phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* First meeting: Introduction to goal-setting to all players* Ask players to set their goals (give them a couple of days to do it)* Explain the theory to the player* Second meeting: Discuss players' goals* Other meetings: One-on-one to discuss player's personal goals* Sign-up a contract between player and coach regarding specific goals.
Follow-up/ Evaluation phase	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Schedule goal evaluation meeting periodically* Constantly remind the player of the goals* Provide feedback in written form* Show the player match statistics or coaches evaluation form of goals

Players and goal- setting



Type of player	Characteristics	Goals
Performance-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They want to learn, to improve, to be better players. • They like playing tennis because they enjoy it, they accept the challenge of the battle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are their own point of reference • They prefer challenging, measurable, individual and long-term goals
Success-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They want to win, to beat others and to be champions. • They like playing tennis only when they win. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other players are their point of reference • They prefer rather difficult, general, individual and short-term goals
Loser-oriented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are afraid of losing, they don't want to be compared with others • They don't like to play tennis because they don't have self-confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other players are their point of reference • They prefer easy or very difficult, vague, team and short-term goals

Goal-setting system for players



- Set the long term goal:
 - Where do I want to be?
 - Where am I right now?
 - What do I need to get there?
- Write a time frame: How long it will realistically take?
- Determine which areas to work on
- Assess present and future ability levels
- Devise the action steps needed: set some landmarks to help the player log the progress towards the goal.
- Monitor and evaluate progress

Problems and obstacles

- Too many goals
- No re-evaluation
- Immeasurable or too general goals
- No goals or 'do your best' goals
- No strategies of achievement
- No adaptation
- Lack of faith in goals
- Academic problems
- Lack of confidence
- Excuses
- Wrong inter-relationships between goals
- Only outcome or result goals

Coaches who do not accept goals think...

- Goals limit the players' performance
- Performance goals make the players less competitive
- Outcome goals put too much pressure on players
- Goals are innate to the players, if a player doesn't have goals already it is a waste of time working in goal-setting

What research tell us about goal-setting

- Players with specific and challenging goals had better performance than players with easy goals, 'do your best goals' or players with no goals
- Players that use an appropriate goal-setting technique enhanced their intrinsic motivation and improved performance

What research tell us about goal-setting (II)

- Goals preferred by university coaches/players:
 - performance improvement (36%),
 - winning (24%),
 - enjoying (20%).
- Degree of goal difficulty preferred by university coaches/players is:
 - moderately difficult (60%),
 - very difficult (20%),
 - average (20%).

What research tell us about goal-setting (III)

- Effective in 70% to 90% of the situations
- Goal-setting is not the ultimate solution
- Only increase performance by 5%
- Results of goal-setting are influenced by the overall motivation and attitude of the player
- They can't overcome a negative behaviour of the player towards tennis