

Printout of MindLadder® Advisor

Section B-5*



T-24: Goal Achievement

This knowledge construction function orients the learner to put plans into action, to problem solve and make adjustments, to persist in the face of obstacles and to accomplish one's objectives. This function focuses on the ability to trouble shoot and stick to one's goals.

Goals exist in the future and to achieve them it is necessary to subordinate one's behavior in the present. This is difficult especially if the goal requires many changes in one's behavior over a longer period of time. Children need to learn that things happen as a result of planning and effort. They don't just happen. They need to develop appropriate expectations about the relationship between effort and achievement and the need to overcome obstacles and frustrations along the way.

Jackie had set a goal to improve her mastery of geometry. She had charted how she would use her time after school and put a plan together to go back, over a two-week period, to cover the chapters and exercises in her textbook. On the third day of her plan she discovered there would be a rerun of her favorite TV show. She stopped her studies and watched the show. Afterwards she looked at the plan and felt it had been pushed all out of order. She took a final look at her chart, tossed it aside and gave up.

The development of this knowledge construction function equips learners with ways to deal with various types of challenges to the realization of one's plans. The attraction of alternative choices, problems with delay of gratification and unsteady motivation may all pose threats to the implementation of a good plan to reach a valued goal. The development of goal achievement helps students to anticipate these challenges and to manage them effectively.

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John wants to get into a good college and go to medical school. He often turns down calls to go the movies or party with his friends but from time to time he makes a spontaneous decision to go out with his buddies. He knows he will replenish his energy if he lets himself get away and do something fun on the spur of the moment.

As students work on school-related projects that call for goal achievement have the students review their project plans in light of their understanding of this knowledge construction function. Work with them to develop the ability to troubleshoot problems along the way and staying committed to their goal. Many goals take time, effort and a willingness to stick with it to accomplish them. They take patience, determination, motivation and persistence. To mediate the development of goal achievement work with your students to come up with factors and circumstances that might pose a threat to the successful implementation of plans to reach goals. Have students discuss how they might recognize the signs of such threats and how they might plan for or take precautionary measures against them. Looking ahead and anticipating challenges to the implementation of one's plans can immunize or inoculate them against threats of derailment.

When you see a student frustrated, offer encouragement and listen to them with understanding. Help them discover the source of the problem and how they might troubleshoot the situation. Share with them about a time when you were learning something and some of the difficulties you had. Talk about how you felt when you stuck with it and then reached your goal. When you share that it is not uncommon to feel frustration along the way, the student will feel more encouraged to continue with his goal.