

Eight Steps to IEP Goals

1. Evaluate current performance: How am I doing now?

Students can use the statement of their present level of performance to develop their goals. For secondary students, performance levels are often tied to graduation and show areas for improvement. For elementary students, terms and symbols such as “On My Own” or “:)” (independent), “With Help” or “:):)” (instructional), and “Not at All” or “:(“ (frustration) can be used to identify their areas of strength and need.

2. Choose goal topic or ACTION: What do I want to work on? Or, What am I going to do?

Here the student needs to present an action that can be physically observed (orally read vs. read; describe in writing vs. understand). Each action must have a measurable outcome (written document or problems; number of words). While many education goals are standards driven, opportunities can be provided to exercise choice and ownership of goals.

3. Determine CONDITION: What am I going to use to reach the goal?

Conditions include level of difficulty, accommodations, modifications, strategies, or any special materials needed to perform the action.

4. Set CRITERIA: How well do I want to do?

Help students identify a target point that can be reasonably accomplished in the time frame. Students may over- or underestimate criteria in the beginning. Experience with the process will help them set realistic criteria.



5. Write the GOAL: What do I want to accomplish?

At this point students would use their identified Action, Condition, and Criteria to write their goal. To assist students, the formula provided can be used as a fill-in-the-blank tool: FORMULA: Given (CONDITION), (student) will, (ACTION), (CRITERIA).

6. Take ACTION: Do it!

7. Evaluate ACTION: How well am I doing?

Students can apply the terms or symbol(s) they used in Step 1 to state their performance and progress toward their goal.

8. Determine and make adjustments: What do I need to change?

Students respond to questions (What worked? What didn't work? What would have made it better?) to determine and make changes to the goal.

Resources

- ◆ *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction: Early Elementary Version*, by Michael Wehmeyer and Susan Palmer.
- ◆ *Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction: Adolescent Version*, by Michael Wehmeyer and Susan Palmer.
- ◆ *ChoiceMaker Self-Determination Curriculum: Take Action*, by Laura Huber Marshall, James E. Martin, Laurie Maxon, Terry L. Miller, Wanda Hughes, Toria McGill, and Patty Jerman.

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