

# Goal setting



Unit  
Making it real



Length:  
75 minutes

## About this lesson

To effectively select and refine their goals for their first post-secondary year, students will understand the importance and challenge of setting a post-secondary preferred destination, design a plan to get there, and know how to ask for reference to help them achieve it.

## Learning objectives

By the end of this lesson, students will:

- understand the importance and challenges of setting and achieving their goals
- set and design a plan to achieve their post-secondary destination
- learn how to ask for a reference or recommendation letter

## Driving question

How will I reach my preferred destination after high school?

## Future-ready skills

Critical thinking

Goal setting

Planning

Communication

## Lesson breakdown

20  
minutes

### Activity 1: Preferred post-secondary destination

In this activity, students will reflect on the values, skills, and interests they've learned about themselves throughout this course to help them identify a preferred post-secondary destination.

35  
minutes

### Activity 2: Goal getter

In this activity, students will develop a plan to help them reach their post-secondary destination.

20  
minutes

### Activity 3: Requesting a recommendation

In this activity, students will learn how to ask for a reference or letter of recommendation and why this skill is important to achieving their post-secondary goal.



### Xello entry point

Before starting this lesson, students should complete the **Financial basics** activity from the Unit 1 **Budget basics** lesson where they were introduced to short, medium, and long term financial goals. This lesson is also a culmination of what they've learned about themselves – their values, skills, and interests, which should help them identify a desired post-secondary destination.

## Vocabulary

- Short term
- Long term
- Specific
- Realistic
- Plan
- Motivation
- Obstacles
- Reference or Recommendation letter

## Ontario career studies

**C1.1** select and organize information related to the post-secondary options that best suit their specific interests, values, strengths, and aspirations to refine their goals for their first post-secondary year

**C1.2** develop a plan that identifies steps and strategies for working towards their initial post-secondary goal(s), addressing potential opportunities and challenges

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# Activity 1: Preferred post-secondary destination



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Length:  
20 minutes

## Inquiry prompts

- What is my preferred post-secondary destination?
- What will my first year after high school look like?

## Teaching strategies

In this activity, students will reflect on the values, skills, and interests they've learned about themselves throughout this course to help them identify a preferred post-secondary destination. In the following activity **Goal getter**, students will breakdown a plan to get there, but before they do that, schedule time with each student to hear why they are curious about their preferred option and how they think it is a good fit for themselves.

- 1 Provide the [instructions](#) on the next page to your students.
- 2 Tips for conferencing with your students:
  - Have them show you their **My plans** section in Xello.
  - Ask: how did you decide on your preferred destination?
  - Ask: what makes you curious about this option for yourself?
  - Ask: do you have any apprehensions or worries about your life after high school?
  - Remind them that they will be breaking down a plan in the next activity, where they'll have the opportunity to address the steps they'll need to take in order to achieve their goal.

## Materials required

- [Student instructions](#)
- Computer or tablet with internet access
- 1:1 conference time with each student

## Artifacts

Students will identify a preferred post-secondary destination in their **My plans** section on Xello.

## Culminating project tip

Add your students' questions about goal setting to the discussion guide. For example: What are some goal setting strategies have you used to help you achieve career success?

## Preferred post-secondary destination

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### Student instructions

There are probably lots of things you want to achieve after high school. But how do you go about setting goals for yourself? Throughout this course you saved different options in Xello as you explored your values, skills, and interests. You also identified preferences and even ranked important factors. With any goal it should be:

- Specific: it can't be too vague, or you won't know when you've achieved it!
- Realistic: it should be something you're able to achieve, with some level of effort. Some goals take a bit of effort, while others can take a lot more.

- 1 Start by reviewing your saved options in Xello to help you identify a preferred destination:
  - Is there one career, program, or school you often think about?
  - Why does this option peak your curiosity?
  - How does this option come closest to meeting your highest-ranked preferences?
- 2 Draft or edit a **Plan** in Xello with this destination. Update the **plan title** to indicate this as your "Preferred Destination: \_\_\_\_\_". You can always change the **plan title** by editing the first step of your plan.
- 3 Add to the notes section of the **Plan**:
  - Make it specific: When you finish high school how will you know you are on track to this preferred destination?
- 4 Conference with your teacher. Share 3 reasons why you've selected this post-secondary destination.

## Activity 2: Goal getter



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Length:  
35 minutes

### Inquiry prompts

- What's the secret to staying motivated to attain a goal?
- What will I need to do to achieve this goal?

### Teaching strategies

In this activity, students will develop a plan to help them reach their post-secondary destination. It's highly recommended you conference with each student to hear about their preferred destination and any worries they may have about their life after high school.

- 1 Create an **Assignment** in Xello called **Goal getter** and provide the [instructions](#) on the next page to your students.
- 2 OPTIONAL RESOURCES:
  - Some students may benefit from exploring the transitions section of the [Ontario native education counselling association \(ONECA\)](#) website,
  - or the [Transition resource guide for students with disabilities](#) for support in making the transition from secondary school to a post-secondary destination.

### Materials required

- Computer or tablet with internet access
- [Student instructions](#)
- [Goal getter template](#)

### Artifacts

Students will upload their completed **Goal getter template** to the **Assignment** on Xello.

### Culminating project tip

Add your students' questions about goal setting to the discussion guide. For example: What are some goal setting strategies have you used to help you achieve career success?

# Goal getter

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## Student instructions

Now that you have a post-secondary destination you want to achieve you can:

- Set a deadline
- Break it into steps
- Think about obstacles and solutions

With a solid plan, you can achieve your goal.

It helps to think about how you will:

- 1 Make a plan to achieve the goal
  - Break down the goal into smaller steps
  - Set a timeline to finish each step in your plan
- 2 Ask for support if you need it
  - Ask a friend to check in with you on your progress
  - Brainstorm how to achieve your goal with someone
- 3 Deal with problems or obstacles
  - Think about how to solve problems that may come up
  - Be ready to adapt your plan to fit new factors
- 4 Stay motivated
  - Write down your goal and repeat it often
  - Imagine how you will feel once you achieve the goal

Use the [Goal getter template](#) to help you break down the steps you'll take to successfully transition to your post-secondary life. Writing down your plan is great way to help you stay motivated to reach your goal.

## Activity 3: Requesting a recommendation



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Length:  
20 minutes

### Inquiry prompts

- Why will I need a reference or recommendation letter?
- How do I ask for a reference?

### Before you begin

- Create a Xello **Assignment** called **Requesting a recommendation** where students can upload their mock reference request.

### Teaching strategies

In this activity, students will learn how to ask for a reference or letter of recommendation and why this skill is important to achieving their post-secondary goal.

- 1 Provide the [instructions](#) on the next page to your students to help guide them in writing a strong reference request.

### Materials required

- [Student instructions](#)
- Computer or tablet with internet access

### Artifacts

Students will upload their mock reference request to a Xello **Assignment**.

### Culminating project tip

Add your students' questions about goal setting to the discussion guide. For example: What are some goal setting strategies have you used to help you achieve career success?

# Requesting a recommendation

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## Student instructions

References help round out your applicant profile. Whether you're applying for a job or submitting a school application, they provide insight into what you are like as a student and person from the perspective of someone who has worked closely with you during your high school career. The experiences that high school counsellors, teachers, or mentors have had with you can help to paint a better overall picture of your accomplishments, potential, and character.

Admission officers or employers aren't just looking at quantitative factors like grades or training completion. They're also evaluating qualitative factors to get a personal perspective on your strengths and background. Wherever you're headed after high school, a good reference may be the edge you need to get there. Who could you ask for a reference or recommendation? What is the best way to request a reference or recommendation?

A recommendation letter should tell a story about who you are as a person. When asking someone to write a letter for you, you should highlight any achievements you would like included. You should also make sure to personalize each request. Let your referrer know why you have chosen them.

Use these pointers to help you write a mock reference request:

1. Why are you contacting this specific referrer?
2. When do you need their reference by?
3. Should they expect to be contacted? If so, what is the best way to reach them?
4. Do you have any special skills or interests you'd like your referrer to speak to?
5. Are you involved in a club, sports team, or other extracurricular activities?
6. Did you complete any projects while at high school? Can your referrer include detailed information about any of them?
7. What intellectual and personal qualities would you like highlighted? Have you completed any volunteer work?
8. Did you overcome any challenges while at school? What character traits helped you to overcome these challenges?

Upload your mock reference request to the Xello **Assignment** called **Requesting a recommendation**.