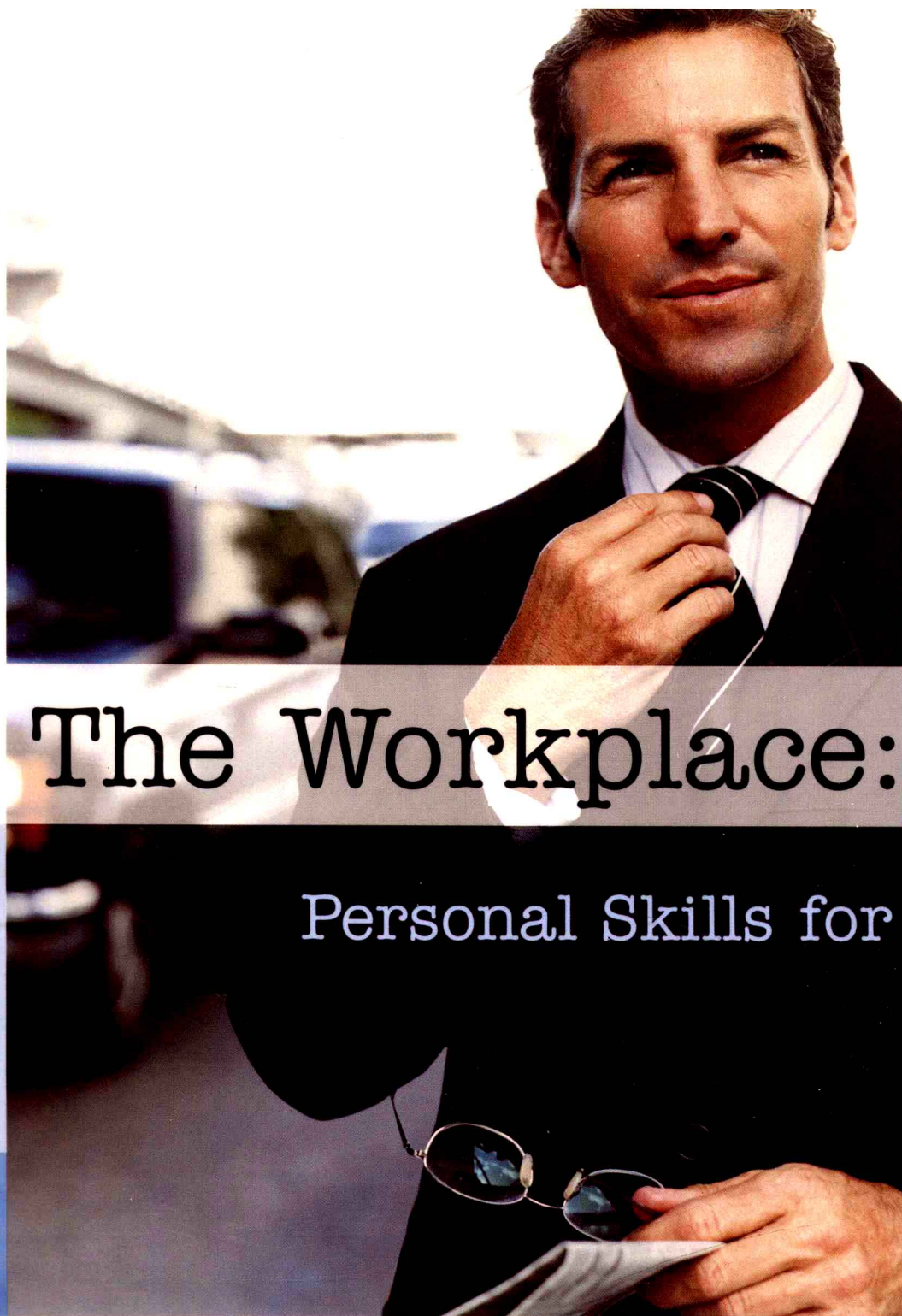


Dr. Joe Pace



The Workplace:

Personal Skills for Success

The Workplace

PERSONAL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

Dr. Joe Pace



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THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES: BOOK THREE: THE WORKPLACE: PERSONAL SKILLS FOR SUCCESS

Published by McGraw-Hill, a business unit of The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc., 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY, 10020.

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 CUS/CUS 0 9 8 7 6 5

ISBN 0-07-829830-X

Publisher: *Beth Mejia*

Executive editor: *David S. Patterson*

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Interior design: *Kiera Pohl*

Typeface: *9.5/12 Palatino*

Compositor: *Carlisle Communications, Ltd.*

Printer: *Von Hoffmann Custom*

www.mhhe.com

Preface

As a psychologist and former college president involved in higher education for over 36 years, I often have been asked what skills most directly contribute to career success.

The questioner generally expects me to talk about job skills. Thirty years ago, it would have been typing. Today, it might be familiarity with common workplace software.

But the fact is that most employers don't care how fast you type or how well you align columns on a spreadsheet.

What Do Employers Want?

In a recent survey,* business owners and corporate executives in the United States were asked to rate what they valued most in a new employee:

- Dependability—35%
- Honesty—27%
- Good attitude—19%
- Competence—19%

What does this tell us? It says, simply, that 81 percent of corporations in the United States rate the personal qualities of dependability, honesty, and attitude—what I call *professionalism*—above any skills-based competencies.

The Need for Professionalism

Does it make sense that employers value professionalism over what we generally think of as job-related skills? Certainly. All jobs and businesses are different. Even companies manufacturing similar products in the same city will have their own unique procedures and policies. Working for one does not mean you can easily transition into working for another. Employers know this. They know that they will have to train you in the skills necessary for your job and they are willing to do this. What employers want from you are the internal qualities that make you trainable.

Employers want you to be reliable; they want you to be hardworking; and they want you to be ethical. In a word, employers look for the qualities that make a person *professional*.

*Padgett Business Services, quarterly survey of service and retail clients.

Why The Professional Development Series?

The sad fact is that most colleges and schools spend an overwhelming majority of the time and energy developing hard skills while ignoring the personal qualities of character and dependability that actually get people hired. The good news is that—like typing or programming—professionalism can be taught.

My aim in developing this *Professional Development Series* has been to teach the personal skills that lead to job and career success. The *Series* is based on both my own research on career success and my experience as a lecturer, college president, and mentor. The material I present in the *Series* is the same material I have used to guide thousands of students and to train hundreds of instructors across North America. The goal for teachers who use the *Series* is to help turn out graduates ready to meet the challenges of the fast-paced professional world. The goal for students learning with the *Series* is to succeed in their chosen careers and, more importantly, to succeed in life.

The Books in The Professional Development Series

The *Professional Development Series* is easy to read and user-friendly. The books are brief, because you are busy. The books are practical, because you need specific guidance, not vague assurances. Each book and every chapter use a consistent organization of text and features to structure the material.

Book 1: The Workplace: Today and Tomorrow

Book 1 is an orientation to the world of work. In it, you will consider the occupations that are most likely to have job openings in the coming years, how to prepare yourself to fill these openings, and what the workplace environment is like in the twenty-first century. Professional business protocol, professional presence, and a customer-first attitude also are explored and discussed.

Book 2: The Workplace: Interpersonal Strengths and Leadership

Professional success in the twenty-first century demands that people work together to achieve their goals. Book 2: *Interpersonal Strengths and Leadership* explores and develops the skills that make a person a good teammate and a good leader. Developing a standard of excellence and pride in your work along with understanding ethics, trust, and respect also is covered. Thinking strategically and modeling leadership techniques are addressed as well.

Book 3: The Workplace: Personal Skills for Success

Time management and stress management come to mind when we talk about *Personal Skills for Success* and in Book 3, you will develop and practice these skills. You also will be encouraged to think about who you are and what you believe and to use what you learn to establish goals for the future and to develop a plan to achieve those goals. Communicating and presenting ideas and concepts, as well as thinking critically and creatively, also are covered.

Book 4: The Workplace: Chart Your Career

One day you leave school and you have a job; 20 years later you look back and realize that you have a career. How can you make sure that the career you have is fulfilling and rewarding? How can you avoid or overcome the inevitable missteps—taking the wrong job, for example—and get your career back on track? Book 4 offers guidance on planning a career and, more importantly, on developing, changing, and maintaining it.

Features of Each Book in The Professional Development Series

Every chapter of each book has a consistent format, clearly organizing the material to help you learn.

Beginning Each Chapter What Will You Do? The entire plan for the chapter is set out in What Will You Do? Each section within the chapter is called out with a one-sentence summary describing the content.

Why Do You Need to Know This? The information in each chapter is there for a reason. Why Do You Need to Know This? explains how the material will be useful in finding a job, building a rewarding career, or succeeding in life.

Set the Pace Before beginning a chapter, it is important to determine what you already know about the topic. Set the Pace asks you to think about your own experiences with the subject.

Objectives These are your goals for the chapter. When you have done the reading and the work for each chapter, you should have learned about and practiced each of the bulleted skills. These Objectives will be revisited in the Chapter Summary.

Beginning Each Section **Reading and Study Tip** Each tip presents a helpful suggestion to aid your retention of the material in the section.

In Each Section **Quotations** These thoughts offer inspiration, context, and perspective from important and influential people in all walks of life.

Vocabulary Important terms are called out in the margins and defined.

New Attitudes/New Opportunities These profiles present real people giving voice to their real-world goals, concerns, and experiences.

Pace Points These are techniques and advice that I have found useful from my own work experience.

Judgment Call These real-world scenarios call on you to interpret and act on the information in the section. Check your answers online at www.mhhe.com/pace.

Dr. Joe Pace These are quotations from my workshops that, over time, my students have found the most meaningful.

Ending Each Section **Quick Recap** Here is a summary to help you review the section material, check yourself with short review questions, and check your answers online at www.mhhe.com/pace.

Chapter Review and Activities **Chapter Summary** The chapter's Objectives reappear here with a review of what you should know about each section and about each objective.

Business Vocabulary All the vocabulary terms from the chapter are listed with the page number where they can be found within the chapter. Double-check to make sure you know what each word means and how it is used.

Key Concept Review Short-answer questions in the Key Concept Review will help you remember the material from each section.

Online Project Go online to learn more about what you have learned in the chapter.

Step Up the Pace These real-world scenarios help you think about applying what you have learned in the chapter to your own life, job, and career.

Business Skills Brush-Up This activity gives you the chance to practice important business skills such as critical reading and effective writing.

Support for *The Professional Development Series*

The books of the *Series* are supported by

Professional Development Series Web site (www.mhhe.com/pace) On the Web site, students can find answers to questions posed in the text, additional chapter review materials, and topics for additional reading and study. Instructors also can access sample syllabi, suggested test questions, and tips for teaching.

Study Smart Study Skills Tutorial From time management to taking notes, *Study Smart* is an excellent way to practice your skills. *Study Smart* was developed by Andrea Bonner and Mieke Schipper of Sir Sanford Fleming College and is available on CD-ROM (0-07-245515-2). This innovative study skills tutorial teaches students essential note-taking methods, test-taking strategies, and time management secrets. *Study Smart* is free when packaged with the books of *The Professional Development Series*.

BusinessWeek Online Interested instructors can offer their students 15 weeks of access to *BusinessWeek Online* by requesting that a password card be packaged with the books of *The Professional Development Series*. For further information call 1-800-338-3987 or speak to your McGraw-Hill Sales Representative.

Instructor's Resource CD-ROM This is a thorough guide to planning, organizing, and administering courses using *The Professional Development Series*. The CD includes sample syllabi, model assessments, and test questions, and teaching tips for each section in every chapter of all four books.

About the Author

For over 36 years, Dr. Joe Pace has been a nationally recognized speaker, author, and educator. A psychologist and former college president, Dr. Pace currently serves as the managing partner of the Education Initiative for The Pacific Institute.

Dr. Pace is creator of the *Success Strategies for Effective Colleges and Schools* program implemented worldwide in over 200 colleges and schools. He has served as commissioner of the Accrediting Council of Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) in Washington, D.C.; on the board of directors of The Association of Independent Colleges and Schools, now known as the CCA (Career College Association); and as president of the Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges.

A popular keynote speaker at conferences and conventions, Dr. Pace also has conducted a variety of seminars and workshops throughout North America on such topics as school management, faculty development, student retention, psychology, and motivation. Thousands of college-level students have benefited from his expertise in the areas of psychology, personal development, and business administration.

Dr. Pace is known for his warmth, enthusiasm, humor, and "intelligent heart." His audiences enjoy his genuine spirit and heartwarming stories. Because of his loving and caring nature, Dr. Pace is able to help people to succeed in their chosen careers, but more importantly, to succeed in life.

Acknowledgments

The energy to develop this series has come from my family: my wife Sharon, my daughters Tami and Tiffany, my son-in-law John, and my grandkids Nicholas, Jessica, Dylan, and Jonathan. Their love and support get me up in the morning, inspire my work, and excite me about tomorrow.

Thanks also to Shawn Knieriem, my director of operations, for her assistance and support with this project.

My special thanks to the Advisory Board and Review Panel for their excellent suggestions, tips, techniques, and wisdom, as well as for their time and effort in attending various meetings. I have considered them friends and colleagues for many years and it was an honor to work with them on this project.

Advisory Board In October of 2002, a group of educators came together to chart the course for the project that would become *The Professional Development Series*. Their insights and vision guided me.

Teresa Beatty, ECPI

Gary Carlson, ITT Educational Services

Jerry Gallentine, National American University

Gery Hochanadel, Keiser College

Jim Howard, Sanford Brown Colleges

Ken Konesco, Indiana Business Colleges

Review Panel Once the Board provided the goal, the Review Panel undertook to develop the project. Their sage advice influenced every page of *The Professional Development Series*.

Steve Calabro, Southwest Florida College

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Lynn Judy, Carteret Community College

Ken Konesco, Indiana Business Colleges

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The Workplace

Establish Values, Goals, and Attitude

What Will You Do?

1.1 Assessing What You Want To get what you want out of your career—and out of life—determine exactly what you do want. This section guides you in taking into account your value system and personal goals as well as your professional goals, then setting priorities.

1.2 Assessing Your Strengths Strengths include interests and aptitudes, as well as skills. Learn how to determine current and future strengths.

1.3 Setting Your Personal Goals Learn how personal goals are essential to professional success. This section guides you in setting and reaching your personal goals.

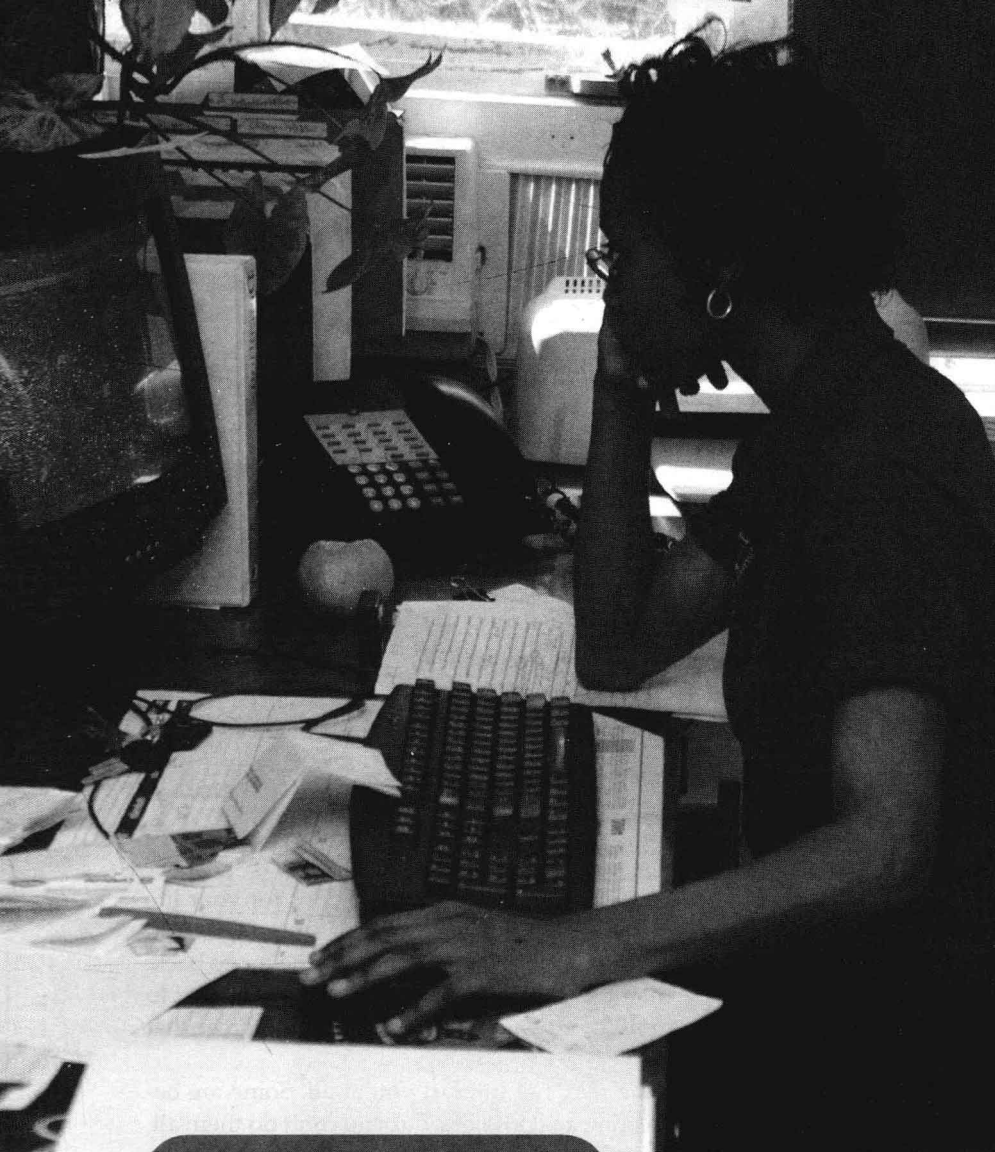
1.4 Setting Your Professional Goals Read about the difference between career and job goals. This section guides you in setting and reaching your professional goals.

1.5 Setting Your Attitude Everyone fails. Your attitude and reactions to the experience can make all the difference in where you go from there. Use this section to help change an attitude.

Why It's Important

If you want to get somewhere, it helps to know where you want to go. You need a destination, a goal—and you need to know how to get there. If you don't know where you're going, you will wander. You may waste a lot of time, and you may end up where you'd rather not be.

This applies to a road trip as well as to your profession and your life. As far as your profession and your life go, some of the biggest decisions you'll ever make concern your goals: where you want to go and how you're going to get there. It's never too soon to make those decisions, and it's never wrong to change them. This chapter will help you get started in the process of deciding what you want, what you're good at, where you want to go, and how you're going to get there.



Chapter Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to

- Recognize what you want and set benchmarks for getting there.
- Assess your strengths, skills, and aptitudes and orient them to your goals.
- Set personal goals and determine the steps you must take to reach them.
- Set professional goals and determine the steps you must take to reach them.
- Set your attitude on positive, take rejection and failure for what they're worth, and grow from your experiences.

Set the *Pace*

Toot Your Own Horn Think about what you've already accomplished in your life.

Make a list of your highest achievements in (a) school, (b) sports or a hobby, (c) making money, (d) financial responsibilities (such as a mortgage), and (e) making yourself proud.

- How long did you work for each of these accomplishments?
- Who set these goals—you or someone else?
- Which of these accomplishments has set you up for a bigger accomplishment?

Activity Write a one-page autobiography about what you've accomplished in your life, starting with the earliest steps that led up to those accomplishments. Then write another page about how you can build on those accomplishments to reach even higher goals. In a class discussion, talk about why you'd like to reach those new goals.

Assessing What You Want

What's important to you? What do you want to do with your life? How are you going to match the ideals of your life and the responsibilities of your career? How much can you accomplish? What do you have to do to get where you want to go? *These are not easy questions.* In fact, you'll probably spend the rest of your life thinking about them and adjusting your answers from a few years earlier.

What Do You Want? The first step toward getting what you want is knowing what you want. That's a complicated question with a lot of complicated answers. In this section, you'll apply a critical eye to your many interests and think hard about what you'd like to get out of life.

Reading and Study Tip

Rhetorical Questions

A rhetorical question is a question that someone asks without expecting an answer. For example, you may say to yourself, "What am I doing here?" As you read through this section, look for rhetorical questions.

What Do You Want?

The world has no shortage of options. In fact, you have more options for your life than any one life can possibly accomplish. You can get married or stay single. You can stay in school until you get a Ph.D., or you can drop out now and never go back. You can work in a bank, a fire department, or a soup kitchen. You can work hard to grab every possible dollar, or you can live on a shoestring and follow a career that offers other kinds of satisfaction.

But the options aren't infinite. Some may not interest you at all. Some are beyond your ability. Some might be interesting *and* possible, but you can't do them all. You can't be a professional baseball player *and* an astronaut *and* mayor of your town . . . at least not all at the same time.

“To me, success means effectiveness in the world, that I am able to carry my ideas and values into the world—that I am able to change it in positive ways.”

Maxine Hong Kingston
Contemporary American Author

values the basic beliefs that are important to you, the ones that guide your choices and tell you what is right or wrong

Your Values: What's Important to You

The decisions you make about how you want to live and what you want to do for a living depend fundamentally on your **values**. Your values are the basic beliefs that are important to you, the ones that guide your choices and tell you what is right or wrong for you. Everybody has his or her own set of values. Here are just a few of the many values that people have:

- Having a lot of free time
- Being productive
- Being helpful
- Being respected as a man or woman
- Being respected as a citizen
- Being attractive
- Being loved
- Having a lot of money
- Giving your family a better life
- Health
- Physical strength
- Honesty
- Knowledge
- Power

- Making the world a better place
- God and the morality of a religion
- Maximizing pleasure
- Financial security
- Working with other people
- Working alone
- Being in charge
- Living with nature
- Enjoying culture
- Perpetual learning
- Taking life easy
- Being a good parent

Your values are, by definition, important to you. You should take the time to think about them and write them down. This is something you can do periodically for the rest of your life. The total of all your values and the way they work together is your personal **value system**. By understanding your own value system, you will be better able to set realistic and satisfying goals.

value system the total of all your values and the way they work together

Two Value Systems

Noreen and Aaron are both about to graduate from Centerville Vocational-Technical School. They've both concentrated on communication, but their value systems are quite different, and they're likely to set different goals and pursue different careers.

Noreen's Values	Aaron's Values
Being honest	Being honest
Being productive	Being productive
Being competitive and winning	Avoiding competition
Being attractive	Helping others
Being in charge	Being independent
Being respected for her accomplishments	Being respected for his accomplishments
Being respected for her possessions	Being respected for his knowledge
Being with important people	Spending time with family

Neither of these value systems is better than the other; they are simply different. If Noreen and Aaron are going to be happy in their lives, they will probably have to pursue different goals.

Linking Values and Goals

Goals are end results. Your values tell you where to aim your efforts. They determine your goals. Goals let you put your values into action. As long as your values are driving you toward your goals, you can find as much satisfaction in pursuing those goals as you do in reaching them.

goals the ultimate aim of your efforts

Internet Quest

Reaching a Goal

Go online to find five sites that are related to your personal goals. They could be sites featuring a car you want to buy or the school you want your child to attend. Find an image on each site and print it. Paste the images together on a separate sheet of paper to make a collage of your goals. Keep the collage in your career portfolio to remind yourself why you are working.

What Are Your Benchmark Goals?

benchmark goals points or standards from which you can measure or locate other things; in terms of goals, the important goals that are unlikely to change

Benchmarks are points or standards from which you can measure or locate other things. When you think about your goals, benchmarks are indispensable: they are the goals that stand no matter what, the ones that all other goals must fit around. For example, if spending a lot of time with your family is a benchmark, then you don't need to consider career goals that would have you traveling constantly. If a good salary is of benchmark importance, your goals might lead toward a career in business or information technology rather than social work or retail sales.

What are your benchmark goals—the aspects of your life and career that are of absolute importance? Look at Aaron's and Noreen's benchmarks as examples. Note how they fit in with their respective values.

Noreen's Benchmarks	Aaron's Benchmarks
High salary potential	Career that helps people
Career in financial field	Family with children
Work in New York City	Live near parents
Own a sports car	Financial stability

Thinking About Benchmark Goals

Benchmarks are worth a lot of thought. You'll be making a lot of other decisions based on your benchmarks. You can change them, of course, but that may mean changing a lot of other goals.

Here are some things to consider as you think about benchmarks:

- **Money.** Of course money is important, but remember that it comes at a cost. In general, earning more means risking more, working more, studying more, competing more, and showing more dedication to your job. Do you want to aim for wealth? Or stability? Or a specific income bracket?
- **Working conditions.** Is it important to you whether you work indoors or outdoors? Does physical risk bother you? How much does it matter whether you work in an office?
- **Family.** How would you like to balance family and job? Do you want to have children? Does it matter how much time you spend with your spouse and children? Do you want to live near your parents, siblings, or in-laws?
- **Geography.** Do you insist on living in a certain geographic region? Does it matter whether you live or work in a city, suburb, or rural area? Is it important that you live or work near a cultural center, a beach, mountains, good schools, or anything else? How much time are you willing to spend on your commute?
- **Employer.** Do you care whether you work for a large corporation, a smaller company, or yourself?
- **Education and training.** What is the level of education you want to reach? How much time and money are you willing to put into it? At what stage(s) in your career do you want to work on your education?
- **Definite job or career path.** Are you determined to take or aim for a certain job or follow a specific career path?

- **Shifts in career path.** Do you already know that you want to shift career paths at some point? For example, do you want to switch from practicing accounting to teaching accounting?

What Are Your Interests?

You'll be a lot more successful in your career if you do something that interests you. In fact, interest may be the most decisive factor in your success and satisfaction as a professional. Yet knowing which interests make for an ideal career can be tricky.

For example, being interested in baseball does not necessarily mean that you should—or can—become a professional baseball player. Yet, a seemingly frivolous interest may have potential. Your interest in baseball might help you pursue a career of coaching, journalism, health medicine, manufacturing of sports equipment, or broadcasting. Give all of your interests due consideration.

What if you are interested in computers? An interest does not mean you need to seek a job at Dell or IBM. Information technology reaches into almost every business in the country. You can turn your interest in computers into a career in health science in a hospital, in investment banking, television broadcasting, the military, advertising, sports administration . . . almost any field! Your interest can lead in directions you may never have considered. By looking at your values and benchmarks, you may discover a career that satisfies many interests.

Your Priorities

In this section, you've thought about your *values* and your *benchmarks*. Both are, by definition, important to you. As you thought about them, you probably thought of conflicts—values and benchmarks that can't happen at the same time. Just as Noreen probably can't run a horse farm and work on Wall Street, you will have to make some decisions.

Prioritizing—ranking values in order of importance—may remove certain values and benchmarks from your professional options. Or it may require you to organize your life so that you take care of the important things first, then move on to matters of lower priority.

prioritize put things in order of importance

Questions of Priority

As you determine your goals, you will also need to decide on the importance of each. Ask yourself the following questions as you prioritize your values, benchmarks, and goals:

- Which is more important in the long run?
- Which can wait? Which will be easier if done later?
- Which will make me a better person?
- How will this affect other people in my life?
- Do I really want to commit myself to this?
- What do I need to do before I get to this point?
- Will this prepare me for something else?

Professional Goals versus Personal Goals

One of life's big conflicts is the tug-of-war between professional goals and personal goals. The ideal would be to combine the two, but in reality, your profession is likely

“ Know what you want to do, hold the thought firmly, and do every day what should be done, and every sunset will see you that much nearer to your goal. ”

Elbert Hubbard
Nineteenth-Century Teacher, Editor,
Printer, and Lecturer

to pull you one way while your personal life pulls you another. Later in this chapter, you'll look at both kinds of goals and explore ways to bring them into a satisfying balance.

Look at the difficulties Noreen and Aaron will have maintaining their values as they pursue both personal and professional goals.

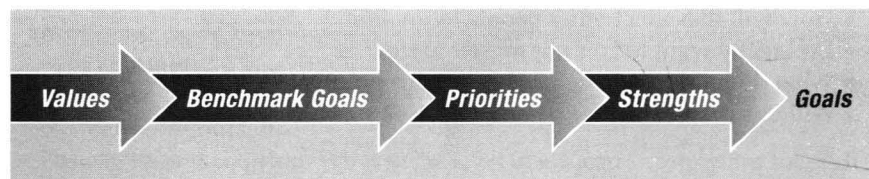
	<i>Personal Goals</i>	<i>Professional Goals</i>
Noreen	Own a nice house in the country Have a loving husband Stay under 135 pounds Knit an afghan Own thoroughbred horses Earn an MBA Become vice president of a bank before 30	Work in a major investment bank Become department manager in 2 years Commute less than 15 minutes Manage a mutual fund Know all major financial software First-name basis with bank president
Aaron	Own a house in the country Have a loving wife and 3 children Attend a concert each month Read a book a week Own a small airplane Spend a week overseas every year Put kids through college	Teach high school art Earn a Ph.D. in art history Retire by age 60 Work with students after school every day Teach college course at night Work at museum during summer Earn Teacher of the Year award

Aaron and Noreen both have lofty personal and professional goals, but are they all realistic? By pursuing one, will they lose another? Can Noreen live on a horse farm and work on Wall Street? Can Aaron raise three children, teach at night, and study for a Ph.D.? Can Noreen become vice president? Is Aaron the type to study the stock market? Aaron and Noreen each has some thinking to do. Some personal and professional goals aren't compatible. Both people will need to do some prioritizing and scheduling to put their goals in order.

Ready . . . Aim . . . Goal!

As you can see in Figure 1.1, planning a goal takes several steps. Once you've given careful thought to your values, benchmarks, and priorities, you're almost ready to start setting personal and professional goals. Before you start, let's take a look at your strengths, abilities, and aptitudes. These are covered in the next section.

Figure 1.1 *The Steps to Creating a Goal*



Thinking Critically Creating realistic goals involves several steps. *Have you taken everything into consideration when planning your goals?*

QUICK RECAP 1.1

ASSESSING WHAT YOU WANT

- Your value system helps determine your goals.
- Before you set goals, you should establish benchmark goals, that is, your most important goals.
- Benchmark goals are often set according to your firm preferences in salary, working conditions, family, workplace, preferred career, and efforts in education.
- Interests are important to consider in setting goals, but you need to think about where they might lead.
- You will need to prioritize your values, benchmarks, and goals in order to put goals in a logical order.

CHECK YOURSELF

1. Why is it important to understand your value system before setting your goals?
2. How are benchmark goals different from other goals?

Check your answers online at www.mhhe.com/pace.



BUSINESS VOCABULARY

benchmarks points or standards from which you can measure or locate other things; in terms of goals, the important goals that are unlikely to change

goals the ultimate aim of your efforts

prioritize put things in order of importance

value system the total of all your values and the way they work together

values the basic beliefs that are important to you, the ones that guide your choices and tell you what is right or wrong