



Skills Builder
PARTNERSHIP

Newham London



Skill Workbook

Name:

Introduction to the Skills Builder Partnership

The Skills Builder Partnership brings together educators, employers, organisations and learners around a common mission:

One day, everyone will build the essential skills to succeed.

We focus on building eight essential skills which have been shown to most effectively prepare learners for education and employment.



Listening

The receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas



Speaking

The oral transmission of information or ideas



Problem Solving

The ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge



Creativity

The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas



Staying Positive

The ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals



Aiming High

The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them



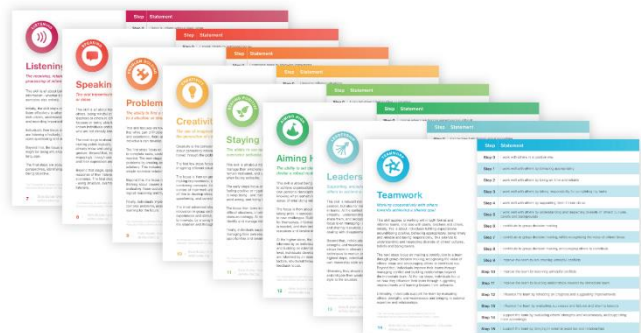
Leadership

Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal



Teamwork

Working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal



The Skills Builder Universal Framework

The Skills Builder Universal Framework shows how to build essential skills at every stage of life. It breaks each skill down into sixteen teachable and measurable Steps. Developed over four years, the Framework is used by 500+ schools and colleges, 120+ employer partners and 90+ impact organisations – all building the skills of 200,000+ individuals.



Aiming High

The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them

- **This skill is about being able to plan effectively - both to achieve organisational goals, and also to set their own personal development targets. Initially, this is about knowing when something is too difficult, and having a sense of what doing well looks like for an individual.**
- **The focus is then about working with care and attention, taking pride in success and having a positive approach to new challenges. Building on this, individuals set goals for themselves, informed by an understanding of what is needed, and then be able to order and prioritise tasks, secure resources and involve others effectively.**
- **At the higher steps, the focus is creating plans informed by an individual's skill set, with clear targets, and building on external views. At the most advanced level, individuals develop long-term strategies. These are informed by an assessment of internal and external factors, structured through regular milestones and feedback loops.**

Why is Aiming High an important skill?

Further Education



When in Further Education, you will often consider and discuss your future. This might be in terms of next steps in education, different types of job sectors or potential careers. Aiming High is a skill that looks to provide support when planning for the future and breaking down large goals into manageable steps.

Higher Education



In Higher Education, you may undertake large assignments or dissertations as part of your qualification. These often require considerable research, analysis and drafting and redrafting. Being able to plan for and break down this target is a key part of Aiming High. You will also look into future careers at this time and Aiming High can support you to do this successfully.

Apprenticeships



Aiming High is important in both the workplace and when studying. At work, you may set yourself targets linked to company aims, your personal development or wider aspirations. Equally, in education, you will undertake qualifications that are made up of modules that you must do well in. These two areas require the use of Aiming High to set goals, find opportunities and make plans.

Employment



In the workplace, many jobs involve employees to be capable of planning and self-structuring their time in order to be successful. Moreover, looking to the future, employability trends suggest a continuing rise of less 'linear' careers and self-employment which will require self-management skills like Aiming High to set goals, find opportunities and make plans.

Workbook overview

Purpose of the Workbook

The aim of this workbook is to support your development in the skill of [Aiming High](#). As you progress, you will reflect, learn new strategies and tools and gather examples and evidence of when you have demonstrated a step of a skill.

Progression can take time. To fully understand, demonstrate and reflect on two or more steps with a year is considered quick progress. Try not to race through and complete the workbook but take your time to build your understanding and master each step in turn.

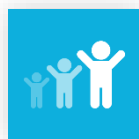
Expectations

In order to get the most from this workbook, it is useful to consider the Skills Builder principles.



Keep it simple

Make sure you use the Framework when talking about the essential skills. This ensures that others have the same understanding of the skills as you do. Use the language and vocabulary of the steps whenever referencing or discussing a skill.



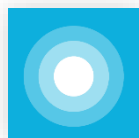
Start early, keep going

Mastering the essential skills isn't simple and takes considerable time and effort. The skills are not just about employability, but about succeeding in all parts of life.



Measure it

It is important to think about and reflect on your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to the essential skills. By fully understanding this you are able to highlight your progress and work out what your next steps are.



Focus tightly

You will most probably have some experience in the essential skills already. It is important to think about what you already know and understand and build up from that point. Ensure you have committed time to specifically building the focus skill.



Keep practising

To speed up progress in the essential skills, you should try to use them as often as possible and in different situations. Alongside this, you should make time to reflect on how you have used them as well.



Bring it to life

When building your essential skills, consider how they could be used in the different parts of your life. For example, you might think about how a particular step might support you in the workplace, in your personal life as well as in education.

Workbook overview

Why should I use this workbook?

This workbook will support you to develop the essential skills which we need to succeed. It focuses on the skills which almost everyone needs to do almost any job.

Focusing on one skill and taking each step of the Framework, this workbook breaks down the steps into it's parts. It encourages you to go out and apply what you have learnt and then record and reflect on the experience. By doing this you will learn how to use the step in different contexts, supporting you to develop positive habits. By collecting these examples, you will build up a bank of evidence for each skill which can be used to support applications or interviews and demonstrate your strengths.

How it's structured

This workbook focuses on one skill. The skill is broken down into steps and each step teaches you an important part of the skill. In this workbook, we begin at Step 0 and build up to Step 10.

1. **Choose the step you want to start with.** This might be Step 0 to recap and build up your learning or you may feel confident to start on a higher step.
2. **Read** the step descriptor, overview and the building blocks that form each part of the step.
3. **Complete the self-reflection** based on your current experience and understanding. Don't worry if you aren't confident yet – it helps to know where you started.
4. The next few pages provide the **details of the step**. These should be read carefully and may need to be revisited multiple times.
5. The end of this section provides ideas on how to **practice the skill step**. Plan when you are going to do this on a few occasions. You can take the ideas directly from the list or use it as inspiration.
6. Once you have practiced the step a few times, there is space to **record your reflections**. The first two questions focus on the knowledge of the skill - try to answer these from memory. Then share your honest thoughts on how you applied the step.
7. Finally, there is space for a tutor, coach, teacher or manager to **sign** to show you have successfully worked on the step.



Step 0

I speak clearly to someone I know.

To achieve Step 0, you will be able to speak clearly to someone that you know - perhaps to ask a question, to talk about something you are familiar with, or give an answer to a question.

This is the first step of speaking in the Skills Builder Universal Framework, and starts with a focus on speaking clearly so that others can understand the words that are being said. This is the starting point for everything else.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- What speaking means
- How to speak clearly

Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?


☐ Never

☐ Rarely

☐ Sometimes

☐ Often


☐ Always

What you need to know

What is speaking?

Speaking is how we communicate using speech, and is also called talking. We form words using our mouths and add sound to them using our lungs.


There are other forms of communication, including through writing, performance, sign language, song, and electronic methods of communicating. Some of the principles of speaking can make sense for other forms of communicating too.




Why do we speak?

We speak for several reasons:

- To share information
- To share an opinion or view
- To express our feelings
- To ask for something that we need
- To learn about others
- To build relationships
- To give instructions
- To encourage others



Quick questions

Over a typical week, write down different examples of when you might speak to others.

Which reason for speaking do you do most often?

4

Example completed Step pages



Step 0

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- What speaking means
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Step self-ref

1. In one sentence, share

This step is all about
through having a con
a problem.

2. When required, how often

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- To learn about others
- To build relationships
- To give instructions
- To encourage others



Quick quest

Over a typical week, write

- Speaking to a friend
- Talking to my sports teacher
- Telling my family

Which reason for speaking

I speak most often to:



Reflection questions

- ## 1. What is speaking?

Speaking is how we share our ideas, using words. It can also be called talking.

2. What can you do to make sure you speak clearly?

We can speak slowly, make sure the person listening is paying attention, think carefully about what we want to say and look at the person we're speaking to.

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

I made a list of all the people I spoke to in one day from start to finish. The total number was 14 which was much higher than I expected. I then reflected on the list I'd made and noted that 10/14 were people I knew well.

I asked my friend to share some feedback on how clearly I spoke and she said she was able to understand everything I said.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

I have to speak to people everyday so this step helps me not only in education but in my wider life. If I can talk to people and they understand me, I'll be happier as I am able to express how I feel. It will also help people support me with what I need.

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☒ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

- Speaking with others in my class
- Discussing my weekend with friends and family
- Speaking to my music tutor about an upcoming show

Step signed off by:

Universal Framework: Aiming High

This workbook will cover Steps 0-10 of the Skills Builder Universal Framework.

Step 0	I know when I am finding something too difficult	Page 7
Step 1	I know what doing well looks like for me	Page 11
Step 2	I work with care and attention to detail	Page 15
Step 3	I work with pride when I am being successful	Page 19
Step 4	work with a positive approach to new challenges	Page 24
Step 5	I set goals for myself	Page 28
Step 6	I set goals informed by an understanding of what is needed	Page 33
Step 7	I set goals, ordering and prioritise tasks to achieve them	Page 37
Step 8	I set goals and secure the right resources to achieve them	Page 42
Step 9	I set goals and plan to involve others in the best way	Page 47
Step 10	I create plans that are informed by my skill set and that of others	Page 52
Step 11	I create plans that include clear targets to make progress tangible	
Step 12	I create plans that are informed by external views, including constructive criticism	
Step 13	I develop long-term strategies taking into account strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats	
Step 14	I develop long-term strategies that use regular milestones to keep everything on track	
Step 15	I develop long-term strategies that include feedback loops to support flexibility and adaptability	



Step 0

I know when I am finding something too difficult.

To achieve Step 0, you will be able to identify when you are finding something too difficult.

This is the first step in Aiming High, and the focus is first on recognising the limits of what you can do.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to know when something is too difficult
- What to do if something is too difficult



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



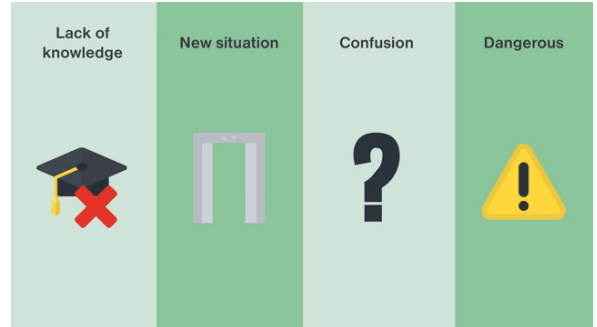
What you need to know

Why might we find something difficult?

When we first do things, we might find them difficult. This is a normal part of learning to do something, and over time it will get easier as we get better.

However, sometimes we might be in a situation where we find something too difficult to do. We might find something too difficult for different reasons:

- We do not have the knowledge to be able to complete something.
- We have never done something before, and don't know what we need to do.
- We are not sure what needs to be done.
- We see that something is dangerous.



How might we feel when we find something difficult?

We might know that something is too difficult if we cannot work out what to do next, or how to do it, or we cannot answer something. When something is too difficult, we might also feel some negative emotions. For example, we might feel sad, disappointed, angry or scared.

Thinking about how to manage these emotions is important, and we explore this in Staying Positive. It is important that if something is too difficult, then we don't just keep going because that might place us in danger.



Quick question

Give some examples of when you have found something difficult.

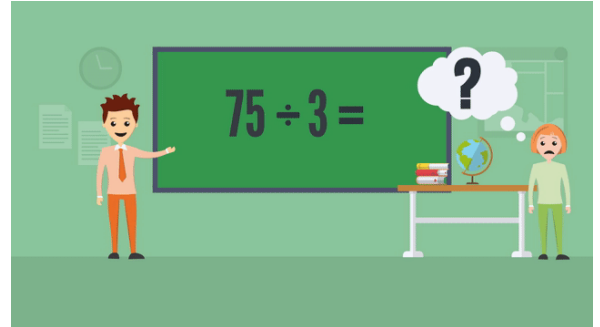


What you need to know

What to do if something is difficult: non-threatening situations

It is important to think about the danger that is present in a situation to know whether it is something that we should keep trying at, or whether we should not because it is too dangerous:

If something is not dangerous, then it might be worth trying again, and persisting in case we can work it out by ourselves. We might be able to find something out or ask someone to help us.

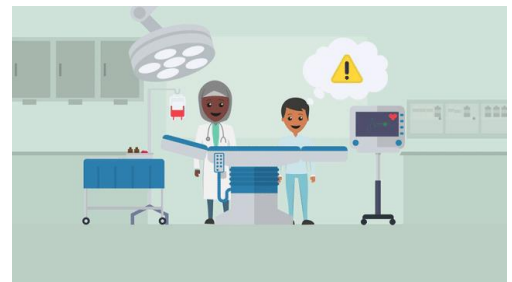
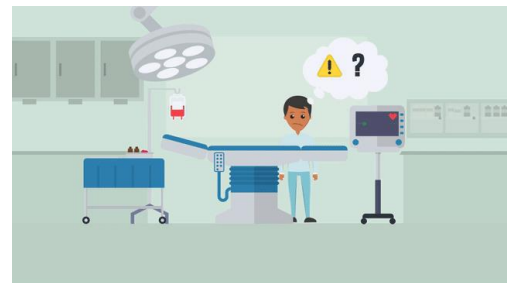


What to do if something is difficult: dangerous situations

If something is *dangerous*, then we absolutely should *not* attempt it if we do not feel completely confident that we know what we are doing. For example, if we are doing anything that needs expertise, qualifications or training that we do not have.

If something is dangerous or feels dangerous, then we should never attempt to do it ourselves.

In this case, we should ask someone who has higher expertise to help us, or a qualified person if required (for example, for repairs or anything involving gas, electricity or water). If that person isn't available, then we should stop and wait, or come back to it later.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Play a new game and see what level you can reach before it becomes too difficult.
- Try out a new exercise routine or running route to find the right level of difficulty. You might want to keep a record of your times so you can keep trying and see your improvements.
- Think about some examples where danger means that something is too difficult to try to do yourself.



Reflection questions

1. How do you know if something is too difficult for you?

2. Why is it important to think about the safety of what you are trying to do?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 1

I know what doing well looks like for me.

To achieve Step 1, you will be able to explain what doing well looks like for you.

In the previous step, the focus was on identifying when you were finding something too difficult. This step takes a different angle, which is encouraging you to identify what doing well looks like for you.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to recognise good work
- How to know when you are making a useful contribution



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

Recognising good work

In the previous step, we looked at what it felt like to find something too difficult. This is the other side, which is knowing when you are doing something well.

There are two parts to explore. The first is how you feel when you are doing something well, as it will normally give as a positive emotional response. This might feel like:

- *Calm* – when you feel relaxed because you know that you don't have to worry about something, you are not feeling too challenged.
- *Happy* – a sense of joy, gratefulness or enthusiasm because you are getting satisfaction out of the work that you're doing.
- *Excitement* – a feeling of energy and drive because you are seeing that your efforts are paying off.



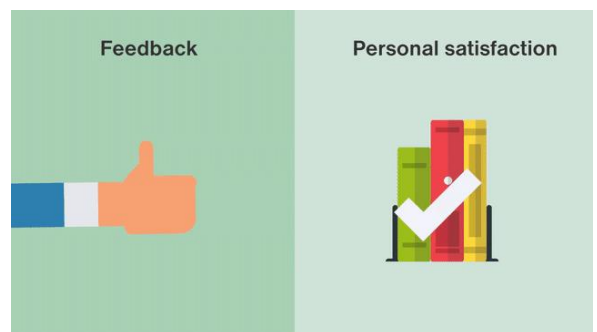
Other signs of good work

There might also be other signs that you are doing well. This might be:

- *Feedback* – other people might tell you that you are doing well
- *Personal satisfaction* – you might feel that you are learning and getting better – perhaps because you know that you are now finding something easier to do well than you previously did.

This combination of how you feel about the work you are doing, and the other signs that you are *doing* good work are both important.

It's important to remember that doing well rarely comes from just doing the easiest possible tasks or doing as little as possible. Over time, that will stop being very satisfying and will just feel boring. You will also stop improving at things, and people will eventually stop giving you positive feedback if they don't think you are trying very hard.





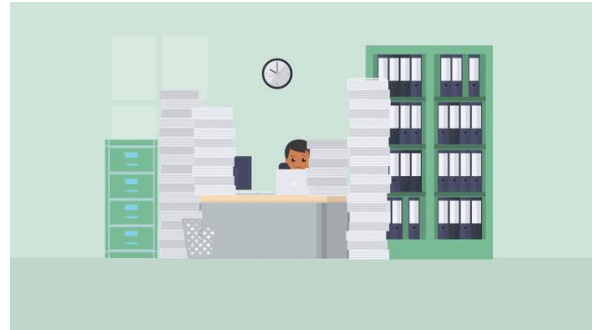
What you need to know

Working well with others

Although it is important, doing well is not just about our work. A part of doing well is also about how we contribute to wider tasks and support others to do well too.

Once again, we usually feel a positive emotional response from helping others and the satisfaction of seeing them do well. However, the difference is that sometimes we might not get the credit for that work because we have just supported someone else. In this case, we might not get positive feedback from other people, or see that leading directly to achieving a goal.

If you are not careful, this might lead to negative emotions like disappointment, anger or envy. In these cases, you might look for feedback from those people that you have helped to see whether they feel that you did well. In many cases though, you will do best to take satisfaction from knowing that you helped someone else to do well, and that you have learnt something worthwhile in the process.



Quick question

What are some examples of times when you have worked well with others?



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- At the end of the day, pause for a moment to take satisfaction in something you have done well. If you're not sure, ask yourself if anyone shared feedback with you.
- If you see someone struggling and you know you can help them, see if you can lend them a hand.
- Before you start a new task, think about what you will need to do that task well. For example, setting out all your ingredients and equipment and checking the recipe before cooking a meal or removing any distractions before studying or working.



Reflection questions

1. How do you know when you have done good work?

2. Why is it important to build good relationships with others?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

 - ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
 - ☐ 2
 - ☐ 3
 - ☐ 4
 - ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 2

I work with care and attention to detail.

To achieve Step 2, you will be able to work with care and attention to detail.

In earlier steps, you considered how you knew when you were finding something too difficult, and when you were doing something well. In this step, the focus shifts to how to work well, starting with how to take care and pay attention to detail.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to work carefully, and ensure you are taking your time
- How to pay attention to detail



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



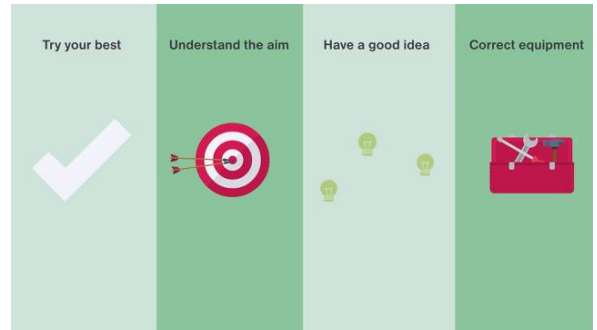
What you need to know

Working carefully before the task

Working carefully is an essential part of doing a good job. It is the only way of ensuring that we do a task as well as we can and that we make as few mistakes as possible.

It means that before we start on a task:

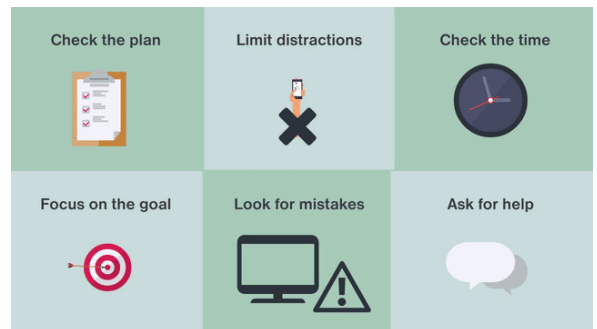
- We decide that we will do the best job we can.
- We understand what we are trying to achieve.
- We have a good idea about how we will achieve it.
- We have the right equipment available to us to complete the task.



Working carefully during the task

During the task itself:

- We maintain focus by avoiding distractions.
- We check that we are following our plan.
- We look for possible mistakes so we spot them quickly.
- We ask for help if we need it.
- We keep an eye on the time so that we are not late.

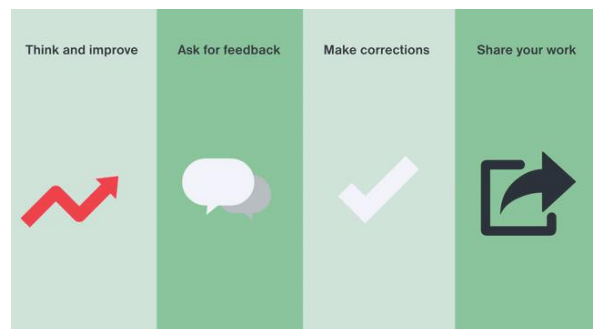


Working carefully when finishing the task

When finishing the task:

- We look back at our work and think about whether we could make it better.
- We might ask someone else to check over our work to give us feedback.
- We make any corrections or improvements that we need to.
- We share our work in the best way we can.

If we follow these steps, then we will be well setup to do the best we can do.





What you need to know

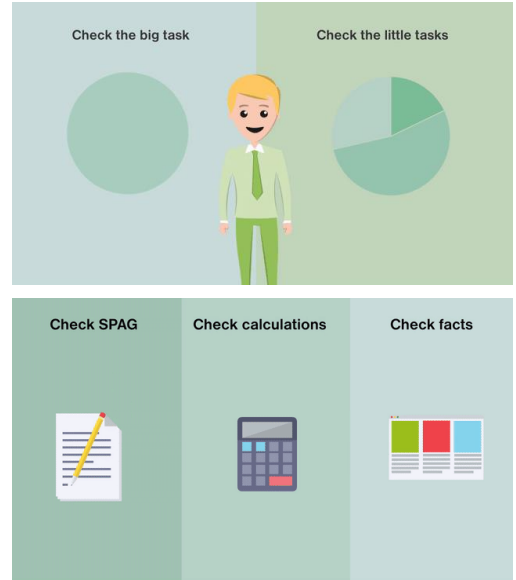
Paying attention to detail in written work

Something that sits alongside working carefully is paying attention to detail. This means thinking about what you are doing as you are doing it and making sure that you are getting things right as you are doing them.

It also means thinking about not just the main things you need to do in the task but all of the smaller bits too. That might include making sure that:

In written work:

- You don't have any spelling or grammar mistakes when you are writing something.
- You double-check any numbers that you use or calculations that you make.
- You check facts that you include.



Paying attention to detail in other work

In other work:

- You read instructions carefully and don't skip any steps.
- You test your work before waiting for someone else to check it.

Paying attention to detail also means thinking not just about the tasks that you are doing, but thinking about the wider things that are going on too. We often have not only our immediate task to concentrate on, but also have to be aware of all of the other things that might be going on around us. If we are not paying attention, we might easily miss something – whether we're learning, or doing our work.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think of a friend or relative who you haven't seen recently and surprise them with a gesture that shows you care.
- Try out a new recipe or make something new, taking care to follow all the instructions.
- If someone asks for your help with something, make sure you ask questions to check the details.
- Organise your work or study space so that you have the equipment you need ready and there aren't any distractions which will stop you from working carefully.



Reflection questions

1. What does it mean to work carefully?

2. When do you pay attention to detail?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 3

I work with pride when I am being successful.

To achieve Step 3, you will show that you recognise and take pride when you are successful.

In the previous step, the focus was on how to work with care and attention. The shift here is to think about success criteria as an important part of being able to recognise when you have been successful, and then to take pride in your successes.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How you know when you have been successful
- How can you take satisfaction in your success



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

Feeling success

In [Step 1](#), we introduced the idea of knowing what doing well looks like for you. We looked at there being two aspects to this:

- The positive emotional response that you get from doing well – which can include feeling happy, excited or relaxed.
- The other signs that you are doing something well, like positive feedback, or the feeling that you are getting better at something.

This is an important starting point, but we can build off this when we think about what we mean by being *successful* more broadly.



Seeing success

Being successful is about achieving what you set out to do. This means that there are two parts of knowing if you've been successful:

- Being clear what it looks like to do something successfully.
- Being able to see at the end whether you have done that or not.

We need both of these parts to know if we are successful. We can think of this as setting success criteria for ourselves – what do we need to do for us to have completed the task *successfully*.



Quick question

List some examples of when you have been successful.



What you need to know

Examples

For example, we might be looking to design a new product. We can only know if we have been successful if we start out by deciding (or being told) what the product needs to be able to do at the end. This might mean that it can store 1 litre of water, be dropped from a height of 2 metres without breaking, and be made out of recyclable materials. We can check against these success criteria once we have finished the product to know if we have been successful.

As another example, we might be writing a report. Our success criteria might be that it gives four different models of environmentally-friendly waste disposal, recommends the best one for us, and is no longer than two pages. This makes it clear whether we have been successful or not.

As a final example, we might be in a competition. Our success criteria might be to reach the final and to improve on our score the last time we entered. We can know then whether we have been successful or not.

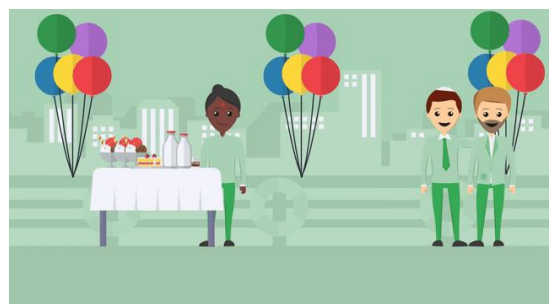
In the previous step ([Step 2](#)) we looked at the ideas of working carefully and paying attention to detail. This is still an essential part of being successful, *but it is not enough*. We also need to keep ensuring that we are working towards the success criteria we have set.



Taking satisfaction in success

It is also important to celebrate and to take satisfaction when we have been successful.

When footballers score a goal, they all celebrate together and share congratulations. When projects are completed, there is often a celebration. When businesses hit their targets, they might pay people bonuses.





What you need to know

Pride and motivation

These are all examples of taking pride in achievements. Taking pride in achievements is vital because it gives you a reward for the hard work that usually has to go into being successful at something. Because of the effort that goes in, it is essential to balance that out by taking enjoyment from having done something well at the other end.

If we don't spend the time to enjoy and take satisfaction in our achievements, then we feel less motivated to try hard to achieve our success criteria in the future. On the other hand, if we know that we will feel good about achieving success, then we will be more willing to put in hard work now to get that feeling later on.



Quick question

List some emotions, behaviours or body language you might show if you were feeling proud.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Set yourself a success criterion for your day and one or two criteria for your week. Ask yourself at the end of the day and week what you feel proud of? How will you celebrate your success?
- Before you start a task, check what your success criteria are? Have these been set by someone else or can you try setting your own? What will you need to do to know you have been successful? Keep checking these as you are working to help you stay on track.
- Think back to a recent celebration. What were you celebrating? What made you feel proud?
- When you are working with a group, for example on a project or as part of a team, discuss how you can celebrate your success.



Reflection questions

1. How do you know when you are successful?

2. Why is it important to take satisfaction in success?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 4

I work with a positive approach to new challenges.

To achieve Step 4, you should show that you can take a positive attitude to new challenges.

In earlier steps, you built some of the foundations of this step. You have shown you can recognise and take pride in success, as well as knowing when something is too difficult or dangerous to attempt.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- Why new challenges are a good opportunity
- How to find opportunities for stretch



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



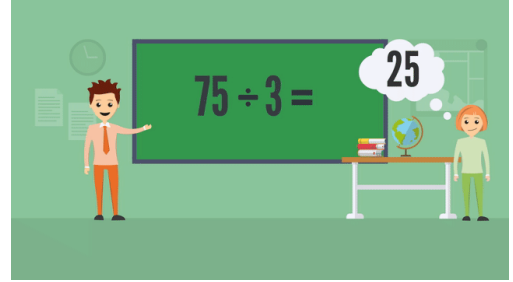
What you need to know

Finding new challenges

In the previous step, we explore the idea of being successful – that is, being able to achieve success criteria. We saw that it was essential to take pride and enjoy that success.

Over time though, we mustn't just stick to safe challenges – only doing things where we think that we are very likely to achieve the success criteria. It might feel that we are very successful initially, but eventually we will take less satisfaction from doing the same things over and over again.

The bigger problem is that if we only do the same challenges or activities over and over again we will stop learning.



Learning through challenges

When we first do an activity or use a new skill, we tend not to be very good at it. We find it difficult because we have to think hard about how to do it, and we will often make mistakes. Over time though, we get better at it – it starts to feel more natural and we are more successful.

This is because we have learnt how to do the task well, and we will be able to do that task again in the future with success. This expands the range of what we can do and means that we can be confident in lots more situations.

Anything that we have learnt to do in our lives started off being difficult – whether learning to read and write, swim, ride a bicycle, cook, or any number of other skills we have built over time. By working hard at them, and adding those skills to our toolkit, we are much better able to be successful in lots of different situations in the future.



Quick question

Describe an example of when you found a task or activity difficult at the start but you have worked to improve.



What you need to know

Spotting or creating challenges

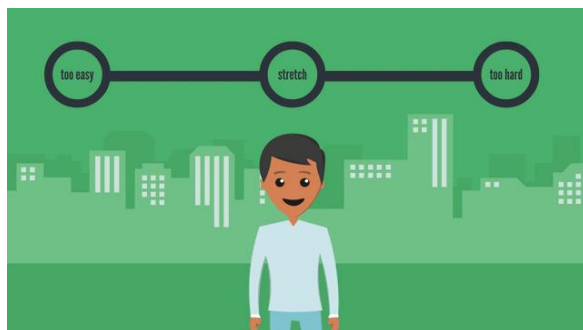
Sometimes we will be given challenges to work on – particularly in education where teachers will often think hard about what the next thing to learn is to give the right level of challenge. However, in education, it is still good to push ourselves to try difficult tasks, and outside of education – in the workplace, or our broader lives – we have to take even more responsibility for finding challenges for ourselves.

In finding or setting ourselves challenges, we need to get the balance right:

- Too easy, and we will just be doing something that we already know how to do – we might be successful, but we won't be learning.
- Too difficult, and we might place ourselves in a situation that is dangerous (see [Step 0](#)) or where we have no chance of success, no matter how hard we work at something.

Instead, we need to find our *stretch zone*. This is the area where the level of challenge is just right – where we have enough support to help us be successful, but not too much to make it easy. In our stretch zone, we should feel like it what we are doing is difficult and needs us to think and work hard – but it should not feel impossible.

The reward of working in our *stretch zone* is lots of learning – and therefore being able to get better.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- When we find something very easy or repetitive, we sometimes use the expression 'I could do this in my sleep'. What would you say you find very easy? Challenge yourself to take it to the next level and stretch yourself.
- If you are working in a group, offer to take responsibility for something new or different from what you would usually do (e.g. being the note taker or timekeeper).
- During the week, look for opportunities to try a new challenge in your stretch zone or ask someone to help suggest ideas. You could try cooking a new recipe, improving your personal best in a game, recycling instead of buying something new, starting a new book, reducing your screen time or practising a foreign language. Remember to make sure it's not too easy but not impossible either.



Reflection questions

1. Why is it important to be willing to take on new challenges?

2. How can you find challenges that work for you?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 5

I set goals for myself.

To achieve Step 5, you will show that you can set goals for yourself.

Earlier steps focused on building up to this by introducing the notion of what success looks like through success criteria, then the importance of both taking pride in that success but also the importance of seeking out new challenges to support learning. This step combines those elements by introducing the setting of goals.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to set goals in a stretch zone
- How to know if a goal has been achieved



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

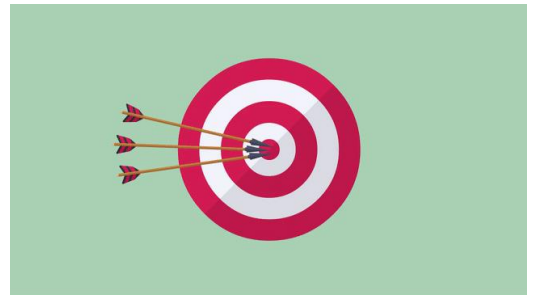


What you need to know

What is a goal?

A goal is something that we want to happen, and that we will work towards achieving.

We might set goals in lots of different areas of our lives. For example, we might decide that we want to learn a new language, score more goals for our football team, or pass an examination.



Different types of goals

There are different types of goals that we might set ourselves:

- *Short term goals:* These are things that we can achieve quite quickly – for example, in a day or a few hours. These might be things like learning some new vocabulary, mending something, or baking a cake.
- *Mid-term goals:* These are longer goals – perhaps they take a few days, a week or even a month. For example, we might want to improve our fitness or our accuracy at scoring in basketball. Mid-term goals take sustained effort to achieve.
- *Long-term goals:* These are goals that might take a lot longer to achieve – for example, that might be a promotion in work, achieving a particular qualification or something in our personal lives. These are goals that we need to work at for a longer time period and which it might be hard to see progress on day-to-day.



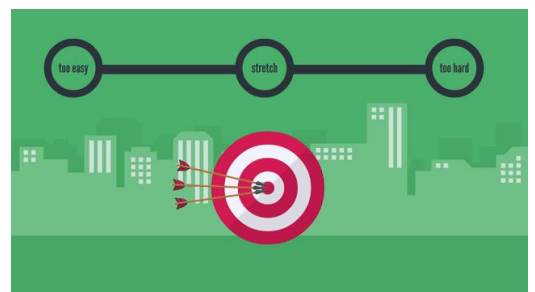
All three of these different types of goals are important, but we need to think about them differently. For mid-term and long-term goals, we also have to think about breaking these into smaller goals to keep us motivated to keep trying.

Setting goals in a stretch zone

When we set ourselves goals, it is vital to think about whether they are goals in our *stretch zone*. We explored this in the previous step, but you know if a goal is in your stretch zone if it is:

- Not so easy that you are sure that you will achieve it.
- Not so difficult as to make it dangerous or impossible to achieve.

Setting goals in your stretch zone give you the best chance of being successful and learning a lot along the way.



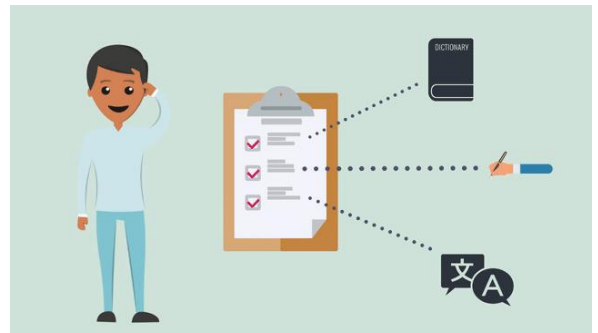


What you need to know

Knowing if a goal is achieved

We have already come across *success criteria*. A goal sets out *what* we are trying to achieve, while the success criteria will be our measures of *whether* we have achieved it or not. Therefore the two should work together.

For example, you might set a goal of learning a new language. This could be a great long-term goal, but difficult to know whether you are being successful. So, you could break this goal down into shorter-term goals – like being able to learn some important vocabulary, conjugate verbs in the present tense, and have a short conversation.



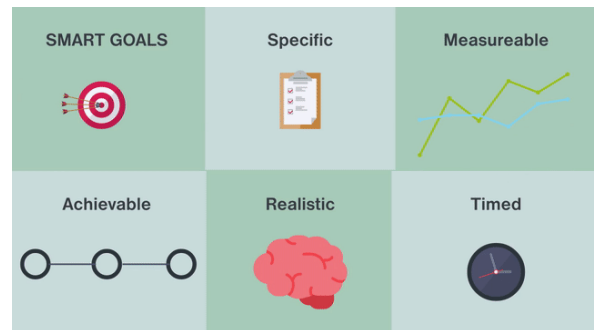
SMART targets

Even then, it is helpful to start setting clearer *targets*. The best targets are those that are SMART. This means that they are:

- Specific – it is clear exactly what you are trying to do.
- Measurable – you can measure whether the target has been met or not.
- Achievable – it is in your stretch zone – not too hard or too easy.
- Realistic – it is something that makes sense to do.
- Timed – you know when it needs to be done by.

For example, you could create a target towards learning a language as 'being able to accurately write 50 important words in the language from memory in two weeks' time'.

Putting numbers and deadlines on goals is particularly helpful because it means we can see exactly what success looks like and also see very clearly whether we have been successful.



Quick question

Explain why it's important to set yourself goals.



What you need to know



Quick question

What type of goals have been set for you before?

- ☐ Short-term
- ☐ Mid-term
- ☐ Long-term

Describe what the goal/s were and whether you achieved them.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- What is something you've always wanted to try? Set yourself a realistic goal and time frame to achieving it.
- Make a note of different goals you would like to achieve on sticky notes. Arrange the goals into categories: short-term, mid-term and long-term, thinking about the time it would take to achieve those goals.
- For example, your long-term goal might be to pass an exam next year, your mid-term goal could be to complete half of the topics in 6 months and your short-term goal could be to study a new chapter each day.
- Create a list or chart of the goals you are working towards, for education, work or life. What are your success criteria? Keep it updated with your progress so you can see and celebrate your success.
- Take a target you have been set or set yourself recently – is it a SMART target? Check that it is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed.



Reflection questions

1. What is a goal? How do we set goals in our stretch zone?

2. How do goals and success criteria fit together?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 6

I set goals informed by an understanding of what is needed.

To achieve Step 6, you will be able to think about goals based on broader needs, not just your personal development.

In the previous step, the focus was on setting goals for yourself. By nature, these were primarily focused on your own personal development. The shift here is to think about the needs of your organisations or teams too.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to identify the needs of others – individuals, teams and organisations
- How to build these needs into goals



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



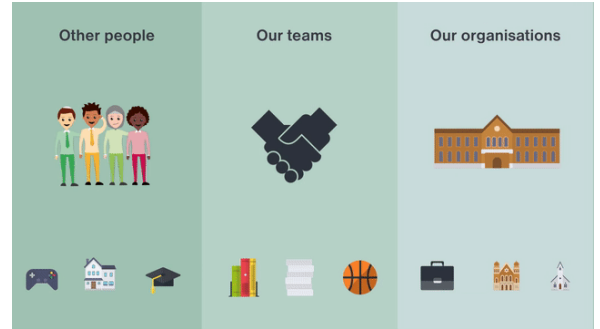
What you need to know

Identifying needs

So far, we have looked at setting goals for ourselves based on what we need.

However, we also need to think about what else is going on when we set goals – not just what is important to us but to others as well. These might include:

- *Other individuals* – whether relatives, friends, teachers or students in education, or colleagues, customers and stakeholders in the working world.
- *Our teams* – perhaps we are part of a group which has shared goals. In education, that might be a learning group or a class. In the world of work, it might mean teams of colleagues that we're part of, or other partners. In the wider world, that might mean our family or group of friends.
- *Our organisations* – most of us are part of organisations which have goals – although some might be more clearly expressed than others. In education, that probably means a school, college or university. In the world of work, that will be the company or organisation. More widely, that might be our town or city, or other groups we are part of like religious groups.



Personal contribution to a team goal

We are all connected to lots of other people in these ways, and so we should think about what our contribution should be to the goals these other groups might have.

For example, how can we support other people? Perhaps we could help a friend who is struggling at something to get better, and that could be our goal. Or we could look at the goals of our team and think about how to make a contribution to that. Or we could look at our organisation's goals and think about whether what we are doing helps.





What you need to know

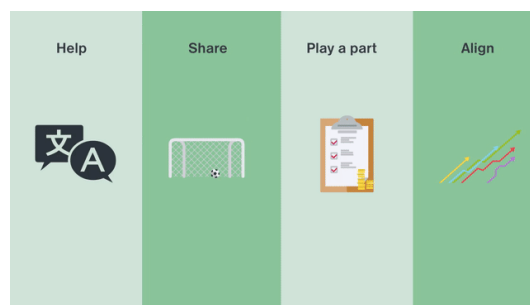
Building needs into goals

As we think of our part in ever bigger groups of people, we have to be realistic about what we can contribute. We are unlikely to be able to achieve a goal for a whole organisation through our efforts, but we can play a part.

There are several ways we can build others' needs into our goals:

- *Create a goal that is directly about helping someone else.* For example, you could have a goal to help a friend to learn a new language – when they make progress that will be partly your success.
- *Share a goal with someone else.* Some goals might need to be shared – for example, in a sports team, you might have a shared goal with another defender not to let in more than one goal in each match. You both need each other to achieve this goal.
- *Take on part of a bigger goal:* For more significant goals, perhaps of a team, you might need to take part of that goal and focus on that. If each person does this, then the different parts of your efforts might all add up to overall success. For example, if you want to set up a fundraising event, one person might be in charge of finding a good location, another person in charge of getting donations, and another person making sure people turn up.
- *Align your goals with a bigger goal:* In an organisation, sometimes goals are massive. In this case, we might align our goals to make sure that achieving our goals should support the bigger goal – and crucially, that they are not going in opposite directions.

As we develop goals for ourselves, we should always be thinking about what the effect of those goals is on others.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Ask those around you, friends, family, teachers or colleagues, what is important to them and what goals they are working towards? How could you help support those goals? Create a goal to help someone else.
- Speak to a friend or relative and choose a goal you can share. Could you learn something new together like a team sport or game?
- Find out about volunteering opportunities in your organisation or community. How can you support their bigger goals?



Reflection questions

1. How can you identify the needs of other people when setting goals?

2. How can you create goals based on the needs of others?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 7

I set goals, ordering and prioritise tasks to achieve them.

To achieve Step 7, you will show that you can start turning goals into action by ordering and prioritising the tasks that are needed.

In the previous steps, the focus was on how to develop goals, first by thinking about what you want to achieve, and then thinking about the wider needs of others, whether in groups or organisations. This step looks at how to start to work towards achieving those goals.

Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to identify tasks to be done
- How to put these tasks into a logical order



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

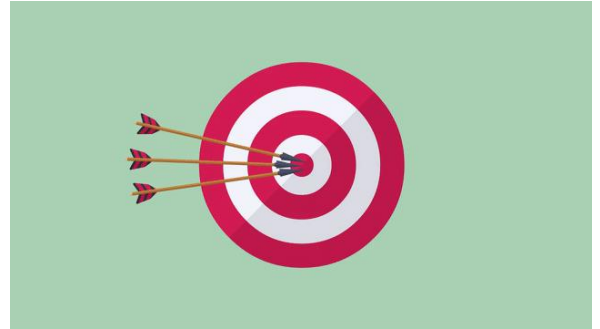
- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

Achievable goals

So far, we have been thinking of goals as what needs to be achieved. We have looked at targets as how to see whether a goal has been achieved or not.

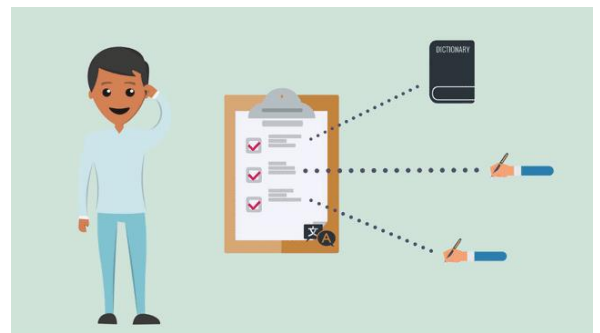


Tasks to be done

Tasks are the pieces of work that need to be done. Achieving any goal required lots of individual tasks to be done. Mid- or long-term goals might mean completing tens or even hundreds of tasks to achieve them.

For example, if our goal is to learn a new language, then one of our targets might be to remember 50 pieces of vocabulary accurately. Our tasks might then be to write out the 50 pieces of vocabulary with their translations, then to writing each out further times, then to cover them and to try to write them again, and then to check whether we had written them accurately. We might repeat these tasks several times until we are accurate.

If we are serious about achieving goals for ourselves, we need to be able to break those goals down into the tasks that we need to complete.



Quick question

Imagine your goal is to run 10km in 60 minutes. What are some of the tasks you might undertake in order to achieve this goal?



What you need to know

Putting tasks into a logical order

The order of tasks matters. There are several ways to think about how to order tasks:

- *Dependency*: It might be that some tasks can only be completed in a particular order. For example, you can't ice a cake before it has been baked, and you can't bake a cake before all of the ingredients have been mixed together. If something needs to be done before you can do the next task, then this gives you a logical order.
- *Priority*: In some cases, when there are lots of tasks to do and no dependency, then we will want to think about which tasks are most important. For example, we might have twenty ideas about how to get people to come to an event – if we're not sure whether we might have time to do all twenty, then it makes sense to start with the ones we think will have the most significant effect.
- *External dependencies*: It might be that some tasks rely on something or someone else out of your control to complete them. For example, you might need your oven to be fixed before you can bake a cake. In this case, you could organise tasks to get things ready and then wait until your oven is repaired to moving on to the baking stage. Alternatively, you might need someone to permit you to do something – there will be some tasks that you cannot do until that permission has received, so you should plan around that.
- *Parallel tasks*: In some cases, it might be possible to work on more than one task at a time. For example, while the cake is baking, we might be making the icing in preparation for the cake coming out of the oven – or we might be making a cup of tea to have when the cake is ready. In organisations, individuals are often working on different tasks alongside each other.

We can use these principles to help us to arrange tasks into the order that makes it most efficient to complete them and so to achieve our goals.

We can also think about how long tasks are likely to take, so that we can put them on a timeline, and work out how long achieving a goal is expected to take as a result.





What you need to know



Quick question

Using the example of running 10km in 60 minutes, put the tasks you suggested in a logical order below. Give a brief explanation for your order.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Before making a meal, think about the order in which you will complete the tasks. What will need to be done first? What tasks can be done while it is cooking or in the oven?
- Before going out, make a list of the tasks which need to be done. What order should you follow? Which tasks are most important? You could tick these off as you go or add them to a calendar or timetable.
- If you have different tasks due, make a note of the deadlines you need to complete them by and how long you think they will take to do. Work out which tasks are the priority and organise them into an order.
- If you find yourself with some spare time while waiting for something, think about a task you could complete in that time (phoning a friend, going for a walk, studying, checking emails or tidying up).



Reflection questions

1. How do tasks link to goals?

2. How can we organise the tasks that need to be done?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 8

I set goals and secure the right resources to achieve them.

To achieve Step 8, you will show that you can set goals, and then be able to secure the right resources to meet them.

In the previous step, you focused on how to set goals, ordering and prioritising tasks to achieve them. This step expands on that, by introducing the idea of having the right resources to complete tasks.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to identify the resources needed for a task
- How to secure those resources



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

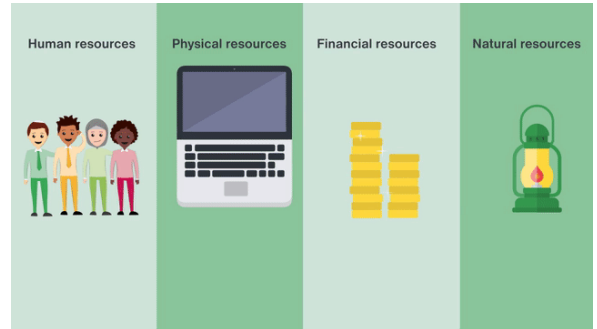
Identifying the resources

Resources are those things that we need to use to complete a task.

Lots of things can be described as resources, and we can divide them up into different categories:

- *Human Resources*: These are things that humans bring to complete a task. These include: the time and effort of people who can complete tasks, and their knowledge, skills and experience.
- *Physical Resources*: These are tangible things that we might need to be able to complete tasks. These include: machines, technology, buildings or physical spaces.
- *Financial Resources*: This is the money that we might need to pay for things we might need to complete the tasks.
- *Natural Resources*: These are the materials that we might need to complete the task like water, gas, minerals and lots of other things.

We are likely to need a combination of different resources to complete a task.



Quick question

Choose a resource category.

- ☐ Human
- ☐ Physical
- ☐ Financial
- ☐ Natural

Using the goal example from Step 7 (running for 10km in 60 minutes), what tasks would fit into the resource category you have chosen?



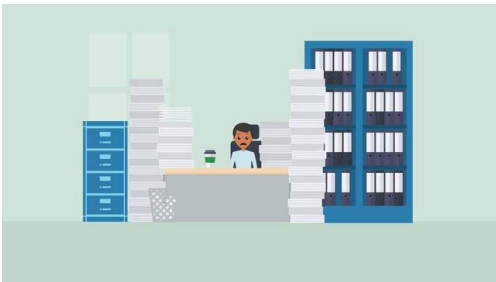
What you need to know

Securing the resources

To turn a plan into reality, we need to know not just the resources we need, but also how to secure them. Securing them might not mean owning the resource – we might hire or borrow the resource instead for the time we need it to complete the task.

How we do this depends on the type of resources:

Resources	How we might secure them
Human resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It might be that you can provide the effort required if you have the right expertise and enough time.• If not, you might need to persuade other people to help you out – sometimes you pay people for their time; other times you might be able to convince them to help you without paying.
Physical resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you need special equipment for a short time, then you might be able to hire this. However, if you use up the resource through use, then you will have to purchase it.• In terms of space, you might be able to hire that space, or you might be able to borrow it.
Natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Natural resources are the raw materials that you need to produce something. We usually will need to purchase these, although we might be able to recycle something already existing, or to have them donated if we need.
Financial resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial resources are the money you need. How much finance you need will depend on the other resources that you need to secure.• You might be able to fund this work yourself, you might need to borrow from someone else, or if you might be able to secure the budget from your organisation if you can convince them it is a good idea.



As you can see, there are several ways to secure the resources you need. It is also worth remembering that if you can't obtain particular resources, there might be other ways of achieving your goals without them, or by changing some of the tasks you decide to carry out.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think of an event you have coming up and make a list of the resources you will need and how you will secure them.
- Before you start a piece of work, write down the different resources you will need and make sure you have everything ready.
- Challenge yourself to make something (like a card or gift) which only uses resources you have already and can recycle.
- Make a snack or meal with ingredients you have available at home.
- Adaptor design a new game to play with items from around the house. Is there somebody who can help you?
- Think of something you are saving up for or planning in the future. What will you need to achieve your goal? How will you get those resources?
- Find out which resources can be hired in your local area, this could be a library, events space, sports or music equipment, tools for home improvements, or even transport.



Reflection questions

1. Why do we need resources to complete tasks?

2. What does it mean to secure resources?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 9

I set goals and plan to involve others in the best way.

To achieve Step 9, you will have to identify where you need to involve other people in your plans and how to engage them with the effort.

In earlier steps, you explored how to set goals and start to develop plans by thinking about the required tasks and resources. Although the previous step touched on the importance of human resources, involving others in plans is worth additional focus.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- The support others could give you
- Who the right people are to support you at different times
- How to engage people with plans



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

Why you might need to involve other people

Sometimes, we cannot complete our goals by ourselves. This is particularly true for bigger goals, or long-term goals.

Other people can play a critical role in bringing plans into action. They might offer support in many different forms:

- Advising on your goals or plans.
- Making connections or introductions to other people who can help.
- Helping you to secure the resources that you need, including financial resources.
- Completing some of the tasks.
- Sharing the goal with you if it is something you want to achieve together.
- Setting your goal to start with – perhaps if they in a position of authority.



Who to involve in your plans

Involving the right people to support you to achieve your goals is essential. You will want to think about how they might be able to help you by thinking about:

- Do they have particular skills, expert knowledge or experience of what you are trying to do so? If so, they might be good for advice or to help.
- Do they have strong networks of people they know who might be able to help you or provide you with resources, even if they can't directly? If so, they might be good for connections.
- Do they control particular resources that you might need – like a space you need, a physical asset like a machine or technology? In which case, they can help you to secure that resource.
- Do they also have a strong interest in achieving the same goal – for example, if you are on a team together? In this case, you might be able to work together to share the goal.
- Do you need them to give permission for you to work towards your goal – perhaps because they are in a senior position? In this case, you will need to get them to agree to what you want to do.





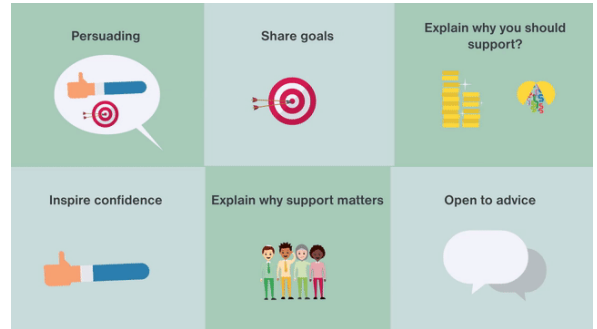
What you need to know

How to engage other people

When you engage people to support your plans in any of the ways above, you will need to convince them. Convincing them is like persuading them so that they make the decision that they want to help you out.

There are several parts to persuading people to support you:

- *Showing them why the goal that you are working towards is worthwhile:* What will be different if you achieve the goal? Why does it matter to you personally? How have you already shown that you are committed to achieving the goal?
- *Explaining why helping you will be good for them:* What will their reward for helping you? This might be financial if you are paying them for their help, or it might be that your achieving your goal helps them to complete one of their goals, or it might just be that they can take satisfaction out of seeing the goal completed.
- *Giving them confidence that you can do it:* If people are going to help you, they want to know that you are likely to be successful. How can you show that you are likely to be successful? What have you done in the past that was similar?
- *Showing how their support will make the difference:* Why do you need them to help you? What would be the problem if they did not help you?
- *Being open to their advice:* Show that you are prepared to change or improve your plans if they have good advice.



Quick question

When someone is trying to get you to support them, which of the above parts do you find most persuasive? Why?



What you need to know

Traps to avoid

There are also some traps to avoid:

- Just telling people they should help you, or presuming that they should.
- Trying to make people feel guilty about not helping you or threatening them to help.
- Assuming that people will know any of the answers to the questions above without you talking about it.

If you use these ideas, then you are much more likely to be able to get the support you need to achieve your goals.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Take a goal you are working on which will need the support of one or more others (for example, making something, painting a room, setting up a stall or event to raise money for charity). Who can you go to for help? How will you engage their support? What support will you need from them exactly?
- If you find you are stuck for ideas, think about who you know or could go to for advice? Do you know someone who has had a similar experience?
- Think of a new skill you would like to learn, ask your friends, peers or family if they can introduce you to someone who can help.
- Plan a day out with friends or family. Think about who you will involve for support and the resource you will need. How can you engage them by planning an exciting day they will enjoy?



Reflection questions

1. How do you know what someone listening to you is thinking or feeling?

2. How can you adapt your language, tone and expression to your audience's reaction?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:



Step 10

I create plans that are informed by my skill set and that of others.

To achieve Step 10, you will be able to identify your own skill set and those of others, and reflect that in your plans.

In earlier steps, the focus was on setting goals, and gradually building those out into plans by identifying the tasks, resources and other people required to achieve them. The focus is now on the creation of more detailed plans.



Building blocks

The building blocks of this step are learning:

- How to identify our own skills and those of others
- How to build this understanding into our plans



Step self-reflection

1. In one sentence, share what you currently think this skill step looks like in action.

2. When required, how often do you demonstrate this step?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always



What you need to know

What is a skill?

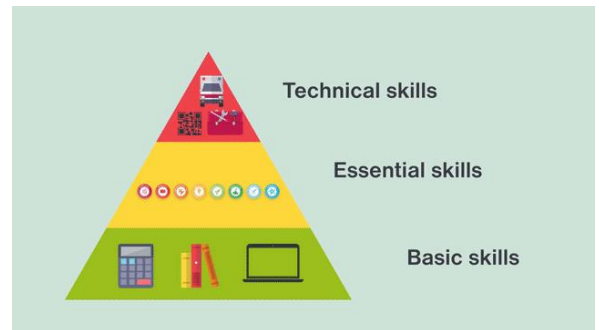
A *skill* is the ability to *do* something. As you've seen, there are a huge variety of skills from being able to balance, to playing chess, to making or building something. We use so many skills every hour that we hardly notice them. Indeed, when we have mastered a skill, it can often seem so easy that we forget that we are doing something that other people can't do.



Types of skills

We can think about three broad types of skills:

- **Basic or foundational skills:** These are the skills that are the foundation for everything else, and include numeracy (the ability to work with numbers), literacy (the ability to read and write) and basic digital skills (like being able to access the internet and find information).
- **Essential skills:** These are the skills we focus on in the Skills Builder Framework – those skills which we need to do almost anything, and which support the application of technical knowledge and skills. We define these as listening, speaking, creativity, problem solving, staying positive, aiming high, leadership and teamwork. However, the steps show that there are lots of smaller skills that make up these bigger themes.
- **Technical skills:** Those skills which are specific to a particular subject specialism, sector or role. These are hugely diverse as a group, where some are skills held by quite a lot of people, like driving, and others that are highly specialist like writing computer code.



Quick question

Consider the technical skills you have. Note down some examples.



What you need to know

Identifying skills

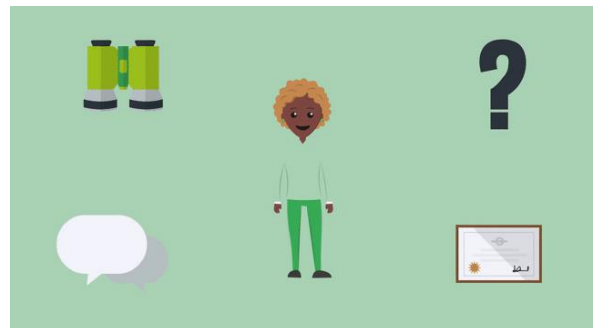
We can identify skills in a number of ways

- Sometimes our *interactions* with people help us to build up a sense of their essential skills and how well they can do things like listen, speak, solve problems or work with other people.
- We might also *observe* how people carry out tasks, and we can use this as a way of seeing what skills they can put into use, and with what level of mastery. This can be done in a real-life situation, or through a simulation.
- *Interviews* are another way to explore the skills that people have. This is the method used most often by companies when they are recruiting and often asks people for examples where they have used different skills to work out whether they have them or not.
- Qualifications or certificates are a final way of identifying skills and are particularly important for some technical skills where real expertise is involved, or where there is danger if mistakes are made.



Getting the full picture

None of these methods is entirely failsafe. People may be lucky or unlucky when you are observing them, our intuitions about people are often wrong or biased, some people are good at interviews while others are not, older certificates or qualifications might not reflect someone's current skill level. Using a combination of approaches, though, can be most helpful in getting a sense of what someone else can do.



Quick question

Consider a friend, colleague or peer. What are some of their skills? How do you know?



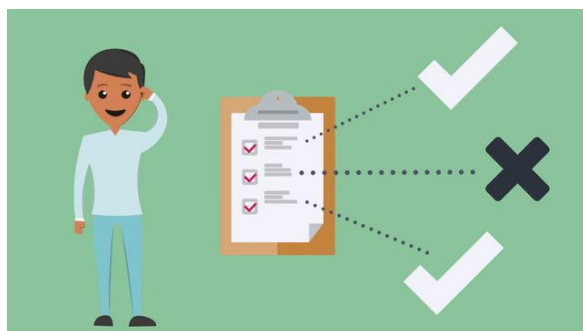
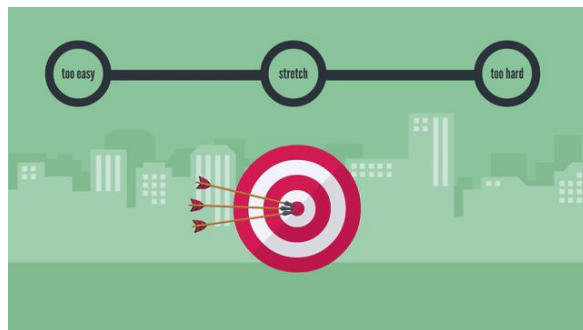
What you need to know

Building skills into plans

A goal is something that you want to achieve, and a plan is how you will get there. Since putting a plan into action is all about doing, the ability to do is crucial.

There are two ways of thinking about skills:

- *The first is when you are setting your plans and making your goals.* Back in [Step 5](#), we explored the idea of working in your stretch zone. This is only possible if you know the level at which you are working in your skills, and so an understanding of your skills will inform how you set your goals. In this case, your plans can be informed by your skills and those of others involved.
- *The second is when your goal is already set, and you need to find people to help.* In this case, you need to identify where there are gaps in the skills that you need to deliver a plan successfully. It is essential to be honest and thorough about these gaps. You can then try to find the right people to help fill those gaps.



Situational learning examples

How to practise this skill step

To best practise this step of Aiming High, apply what you have learnt to a real-life situation. Choose one or more of the activities below, remind yourself of the key points in the step, and have a go!

- Think about the last time someone came to you for advice? What skills were you able to support them with? How can you use this strength to create plans?
- Ask a friend or relative to give you a 'mock interview'. You could use a list of typical interview questions you can find online to help you. Practise talking positively about your skill set and how you plan to improve the skills you find more challenging.
- When working on a group project, offer support by using your strengths (e.g. finding resources, making connections, writing, design, etc.)
- Make a list of the tasks and skills you will need for your plan (e.g. a school project, work plan or occasion at home). Tick off the tasks you can complete yourself and make a note of the gaps in the skills you will need from others.



Reflection questions

1. What do we mean by skills?

2. Why is it important to think about skills when making plans?

3. Describe how you practised this skill in real life.

4. How might this step support you in your setting and/or beyond?

5. How confident do you feel to continue using this step in the future?

- ☐ 1 – Not at all confident
- ☐ 2
- ☐ 3
- ☐ 4
- ☐ 5 – Very confident

6. Please include any other examples of when you have used this step in your life.

Step signed off by:

Generously supported by Newham Council

