



Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service  
Oklahoma State University

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# Pathways to Success

A Basic Living Skills Curriculum

## Making Successful Choices

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Revised 2010



## Making Successful Choices

Today you will learn how to:

1. Explore how you feel about your future;
2. Think about what you will face as you make changes in your life;
3. Decide some of your future goals;
4. Plan how you will reach these goals.



Where are you now? Where do you want to be?  
Do you feel your life is the “pits?” What can you  
do to make changes in your life?



Remember this saying in the next few weeks and  
months.

*“No one plans to fail,  
they just fail to plan.”*



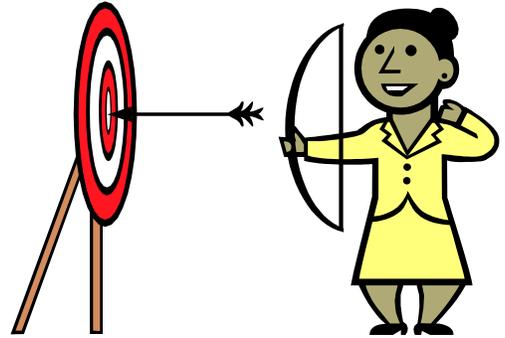
What are **YOU** aiming to do in the  
future?

Some skills are important for a person’s  
success. However, you need to know what  
you want. Knowing what you want is a **goal**.  
Knowing your goal helps you do things to  
help you reach the goal. Reaching the goal is  
success!

## You Can Be In Control

Set Goals + Make Decisions + Take Actions = **Success**

Life is a series of choices. Making a decision can be hard to do. Often there are many things to choose from. For example, when looking for a job you must think of several things -- What are your skills? What do you like doing? What jobs are out there? Where is the job located? Can I live on the wage I get paid? What are the job benefits?

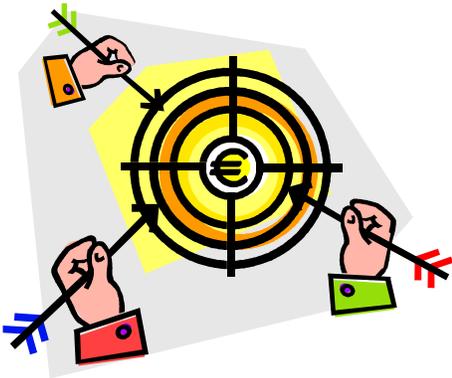


Every time we spend money, we make a choice -- Yes, to buy or No, I'll wait to buy later. Handling money is a series of choices. Do I need this item or do I want it? None of us have enough money to buy everything we want. First, we must think of our needs.

Many things influence the choices we make. Our age, values, family, friends and what has happened to us in the past.



A **value** is what we think is important. No two people have the exact same values. Values affect what we do.



If 10 people were given a \$100 bill, they may use it 10 different ways. How would you use a \$100? List the ways you would use the money.

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A **goal** is an aim or it is what we want to do. Goals are plans for the future. Each of us has many things we want to do.

Some goals take a short time to get done, maybe less than 6 months. These are called **short-term goals**. For example, find a job, find a place to live, or buy clothes for work. You may have many short-term goals. List some of your short-term goals in the chart below.



### Setting My Short-Term Goals (Less Than 1 Year)

Goal	Date to Reach Goal	What Will It Cost



You may have listed many short-term goals. Now you must decide the goals that are most important to you. Pick 2 of the goals. Place a large \* to the left of these 2 goals on page 5. Ask yourself, do you have the money to reach the goal?

Some goals take longer to get done. You need to put in more time, money and work than for short-term goals. These are called **long-term goals** because the goal may take 1, 3 or 5 years to reach.



In the chart below write down some of your long-term goals.

### Setting My Long-Term Goals (More Than 1 Year)

Goal	Date to Reach Goal	What Will It Cost

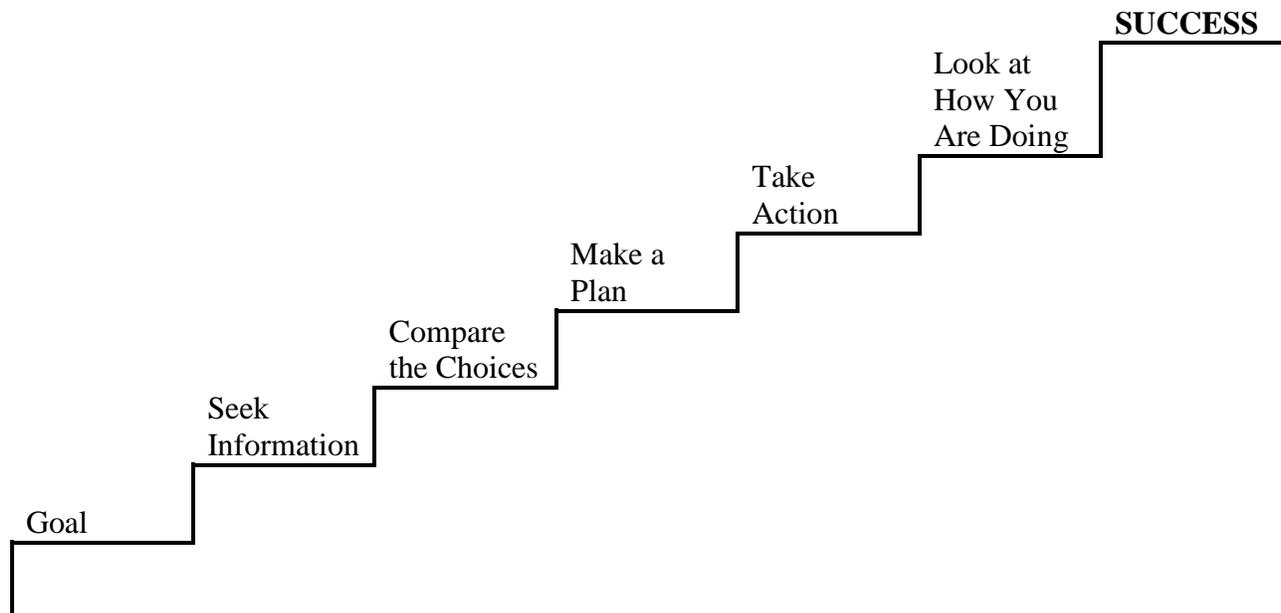
## Ask Yourself

Can I do the long-term goals on page 6? Which goals are the most important to me? Are the goals my choice or is someone pushing me to do the things? Place a large \* to the left of 2 goals on page 6.

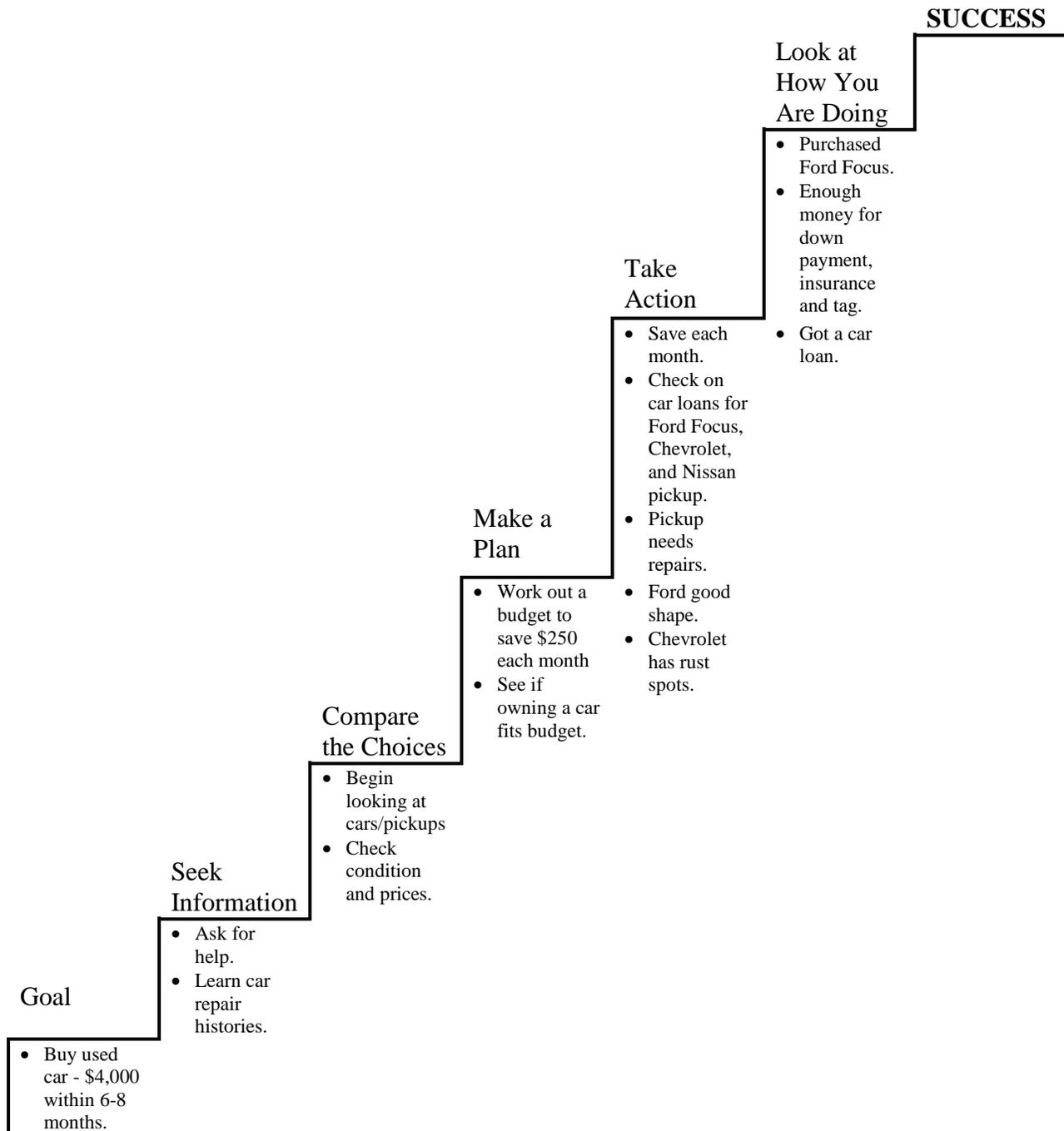


Many people want things **NOW** and are not willing to wait until later. The use of credit causes many people to buy everything **NOW**. This attitude can lead to serious money problems. Sometimes two people may have very different values. One person wants many things **NOW**. The other person may wish to save money for a long-term goal.

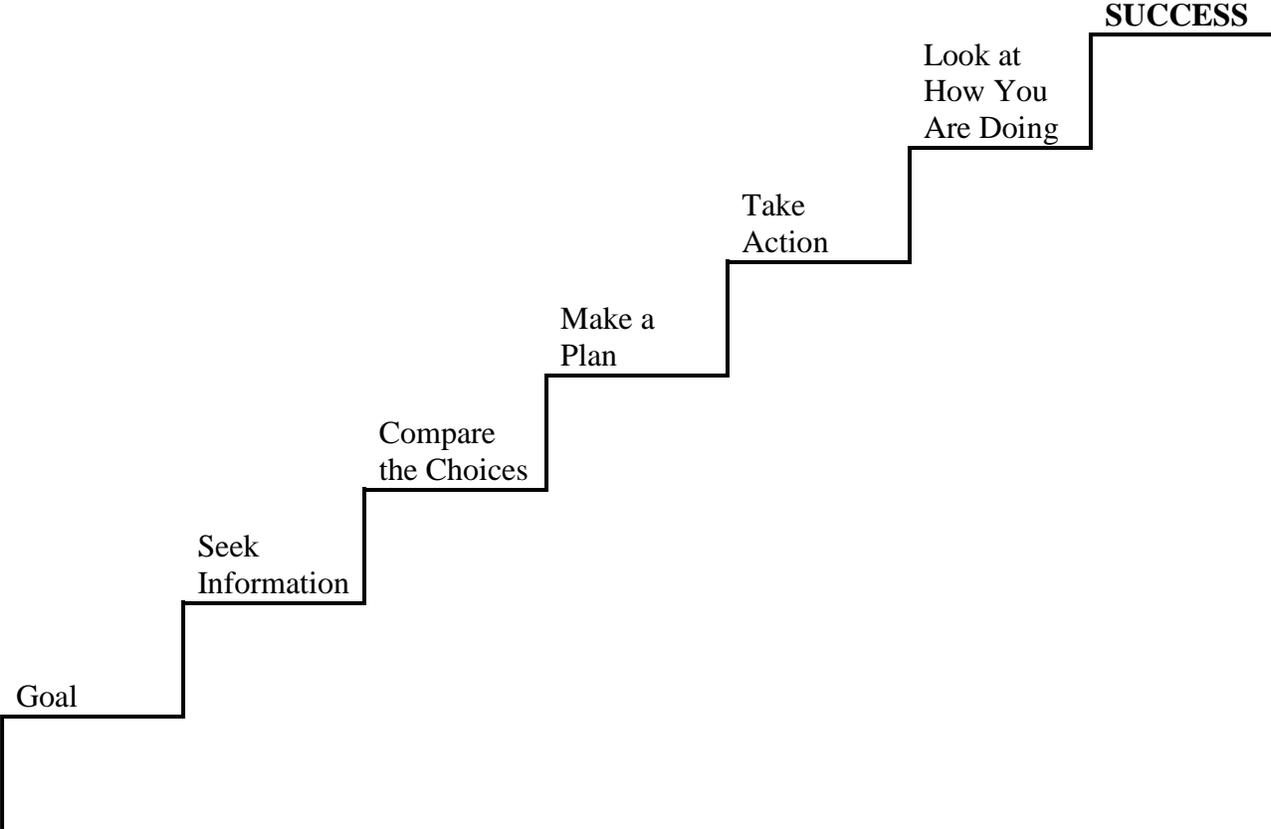
To reach goals, you need to look at the good and bad sides of a possible decision. The following steps will help you look at your decision.



The following example shows how to look at choices while reaching a goal. Dave decided to buy a used car for under \$4,000 within the next 6-8 months. He cannot buy the car now because he does not have the money for a down payment.



Now it is your turn! Think about an important goal you want in your near future. Fill in the spaces of the steps to reach a goal.



After setting a goal to reach, you need to say:

*“I can do it.*

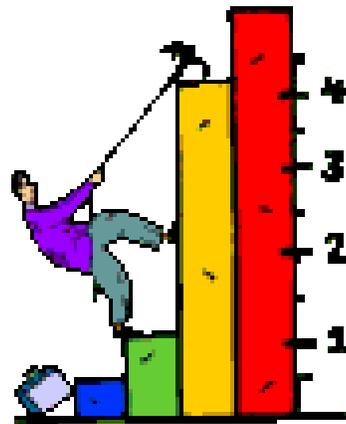
*“I know it will take time.*

*“I’ll stick with my plan until the goal is reached.”*

### What You’ve Learned Today

- ✓ Choices I make now will affect the choices I make in the future.
- ✓ Setting goals gives one a plan of action.
- ✓ Need to decide what is most important.
- ✓ Reaching a goal is success.

What other things did you learn?



*“No one plans to fail,  
they just fail to plan.”*