



The Process of Goal Setting

The process of goal setting involves many skills. The Case Manager in supportive housing projects works with the tenant to create a plan of action for reaching the tenant's goals.

- Listen to the person and reflect back what is heard to clarify and check understanding.
- Acknowledge that every person has different goals and ideas of how to reach those goals. Goal setting is an individual process.
- List and discuss obstacles to reaching goals.
- Separate problems and break them down into component parts.
- Explore every aspect of the problem after separating out the different components.
- Empathize with the person's feelings about goal setting and unmet goals. Many people living in supportive housing have experienced significant interference with their ability to achieve their goals.
- Prioritize issues to be addressed.
- List and discuss all possible options for dealing with problems as well as all steps for reaching the tenant's goals. Steps should be achievable, even if the long-term goal seems out of reach.
- Work with the individual to select the best options for problem solving and reaching goals.
- Goal setting is a fluid process and setbacks are to be expected. Be prepared to change goals and/or steps to reaching them.
- Discuss steps in terms of a realistic time frame.
- Positively reinforce all achievements along the path towards reaching goals.

Note: This document is included within the *Supportive Services* section of CSH's *Toolkit for Developing and Operating Supportive Housing*, which is available at www.csh.org/toolkit2. This document has been adapted from the HUD-funded curriculum *Case Management Services*, which is available at www.csh.org/training.