Introduction to the Roles and Goals Process

California Library Literacy Services are different from traditional schools. Library literacy services discover what each learner wants to accomplish and uses a learner's real-life goals to design a learner-centered—rather than a curriculum-centered—course of instruction that is implemented through tutoring one-to-one and in small groups.

Goal setting helps learners:

- Think about what they most want to accomplish, what brought them to the program;
- Define what they want to work on with their tutor;
- Take ownership of their instruction;
- Stay focused on what is most important in their lives;
- Motivate themselves; and
- Build self-confidence, based on the successful achievement of personal goals.

Research has shown that, "Goal setting increases motivation, affects behavior, and serves to energize learners to persist."[1] Also, "…adults should be engaged with curricula relevant to them, they are self-directed and they need an understanding of their own literacy skills." [2]

The Roles and Goals Form

Program staff members, volunteer tutors, and learners use the Roles and Goals form as a tool to talk about learners' goals. Once program staff and tutors discover what a learner wants to accomplish, they can use that information to plan lessons and choose instructional resources that correspond to the learner's specific goals. For example, if a learner sets the goal of "use technology more effectively", then at least a portion of the tutoring session will be spent at the computer or other device practicing these skills.

The Roles and Goals form is completed by a program staff after talking with a learner, one-on-one during the intake process, about what the learner would like to achieve. The form is not a checklist to be completed by the learner.

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[1] Cabral-Marquez, C. (2015). Motivating Readers: Helping Learners Set and Attain Personal Reading Goals. *Reading Teacher, 68(6), 464-472.*

[2] Rodrick, K, (2017). Instructional Strategies for Adult Literacy Education. *Proceedings of the Multidisciplinary Academic Conference, 420-429.*

Checking In

At least every six months, literacy staff will check in with tutor/learner teams to see how they are progressing toward the learner's goals. Staff will send the tutor a copy of the learner's master Roles and Goals form. At that point, the tutor/learner team will indicate whether they have made progress toward or met some goals, and they will add new goals and record unanticipated achievements as needed. This six-monthly cycle occurs for as long as a learner is in the program.

Using the Data

The Roles and Goals process doesn't only guide instruction. The data on learners' accomplishments is aggregated locally and statewide to demonstrate the impact that library literacy services have in California. With this collected information, local libraries can demonstrate the effectiveness of literacy services to stakeholders like City Councils, County Boards of Supervisors, the State Legislature, and potential funders.

The data can also be used to guide program development. If your learners aren't meeting their goals, you may need to provide additional support to your tutor/learner teams. If you notice that a number of learners set goals within the Community Member and Citizen role, you might identify community projects for learners to participate in.

The Roles

The Roles and Goals form is divided into four areas of the adult learner's life—four different roles that the learner might play. Learners should set a goal in at least one of the four areas, and may or may not have goals in all four areas.

Lifelong Learner
We are all lifelong learners and this is especially true for adults who have chosen to seek out library literacy services in order improve their literacy skills. Goals in the Lifelong Learner role might include tangible things such as "learn the alphabet, letters and sounds," "use new technology skills," or "write a note, message of text." Less tangible goals like reading for pleasure (newspapers, magazines, books) or writing creatively (letters, poems, stories, or essays) might also be important to a learner wanting to grow as an individual.

Worker
For those seeking employment, the Worker goals might include: "search for a job," "apply for a job." or "interview for a job." For those already employed, goals might include "use work-related technology," "perform current job tasks better," or "read/write work-related materials." to pursue a new career opportunity.

At Home and as a Family Member

Family Member goals focus on domestic concerns. Family members are not limited to those living in the same household, but might include the network of people who act as a family. In this category, goals might include: "read medicine labels," "pay bills," or "help children with homework." Many of the revised goals in this section focus on communication skills. Whether the learner is communicating with educators (the school system), medical professionals, or with other family members, these goals recognize the importance of understanding others, and making yourself understood through verbal and written communication.

Community Member and Citizen

The Community Member and Citizen role centers on the learner's relationship to their neighborhood, community, country, and world. Community Member goals might include: "get involved in the community," "get a driver license," "access community resources", "prepare to vote," "vote," and "become a citizen." Also, the experience of adult learning might motivate a learner to set the goal, "speak to others about the library literacy program."

There may be some overlap between the roles. For instance, a learner might want to use new technology both as a worker and as a lifelong learner. We ask that you be patient with the constraints of the form and do the best you can to represent the learner's goals and interests.