

Plan Your Work, Work Your Plan

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New tutors often ask, "How do I get started?" Even experienced tutors can get lost in exercises and activities and not have a clear picture of where these will lead. It can be difficult to take what a learner wants to be able to do (**goal**) and decide upon a course of action (**objective**). Use the following three points as a guide to approach tutoring with a well thought-out plan. **Design goals** (*what you're going to achieve*), **assign objectives** (*how you're going to achieve it*), and **work your plan** (*do what you said you were going to do*).

Design Goals

This involves you, your learner and your program's learner-coordinator. Use intake and assessment data in addition to talking with your learner to get a clear picture of his level and the goal or goals you will be working on together. Use the Roles and Goals Sheets to record dates that goals are set and met.

Design Objectives

Some goals may need to be broken down into manageable segments. Do this by asking questions about the goal and suggesting skills needed to perform it. Keep breaking down the goal until you get to one the learner can do well. This becomes the baseline. Move up from there to identify your first goal. In our example, the learner's ultimate goal is getting a better job. Here are the steps you would follow:

1 Break goal down into manageable segments:

- Fill out job application
- Read directions, etc.

2. Choose one:

- Fill out a job application

3. Does this need to be broken down further? Yes:

- Understanding job application questions
- Printing vs. cursive writing
- Reading and using abbreviations
- Knowledge of personal, school, and work history

4. Determine how close your learner is to mastery of each skill. Rearrange skills, putting the least known at the top and the most known at the bottom. *The skill at the bottom - the one the learner knows best- is his baseline.*

- Understanding form questions
- Reading and using abbreviations
- Printing vs. cursive writing
- Knowledge of personal, school, and work history

In this example, the learner knows his history. He also knows how to print but prefers cursive and usually mixes printing and cursive when he writes. **A goal, therefore, is to get him comfortable and consistent with printing.**