Purpose

Develop a career plan

Need for balance

Liebig model of plant health

- Several requirements: all must be present
- Any one component can be the limiting factor
- Imagine a rain barrel having staves of different lengths

*Liebig's Law of the Minimum*: plant growth is limited by the scarcest resource, not by the total of all resources. See, e.g., http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_the_Minimum
Need for balance

Liebig model of career health

• Several requirements: all must be present
• Any one component can be the limiting factor
• Imagine a rain barrel having staves of different lengths

Need for balance

Liebig model of career health

• Can you accurately describe your strengths and weaknesses?
• Which component is the limiting factor in your career?
• Are you working on your strengths?
• Can you manage your weaknesses?

SMART Objectives

The SMART criteria can be used to set goals

• Specific
• Measurable
• Achievable
• Realistic
• Time-bound

This week’s readings have more background
**Specific**

Is the goal understandable to other people?

Is it well-defined?

- Job title(s): real positions in real companies
- Technical specialization
- Management roles?

*Short term goals need to be more specific than long term goals.*

**Measurable**

What is your measure of success?

- Title? Salary? Location? Name of company?
- Would not achieving the goal be obvious?

*Work for some company in the northwest*  
*versus*  
*Work for Bioject in Tualatin, Oregon*

*Hold yourself accountable by setting a goal that would be obvious if you missed it.*

**Attainable**

Can *you* get to the goal?

- Do you have the necessary attributes?
  - Work habits, training, grades
- Is this a competitive goal (e.g. becoming an astronaut)?
- Could others with your background achieve this goal?

*Big goals can be attained, but will likely need achievable intermediate goals.*
Realistic

Are your priorities aligned with the goal

• Have you demonstrated similar commitment in the past?
• Do other commitments compete for your time?

Are resources and time frame consistent with the goal?

Unrealistic goals guarantee failure. Set goals that teach you how to succeed.

Time-bound

Good goals have deadlines

Five-year career goal has built-in time limit

• Time limit will help determine realizability
• Set intermediate milestones

Ten and twenty year goals should also be developed

Use time to measure progress. Are you willing to keep yourself on track?

Are goals necessary?

No.

• Many engineers have successful careers without planning.
• Career plans will change.
• One’s ability to predict the future is limited.
Are goals helpful?

No doubt.

• Setting goals can make you more conscious of choices.
• Setting goals can make you active, not passive.

Many people prefer to act willfully, and not accept what happens to fall their way.