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An Acronym By Any Other Name

By Brenda Townsend Hall

I don't know about you but I loathe acronyms. Yes, I know they have a convenience factor but they

also seem to me to be potentially sinister, redolent of George Orwell's Newspeak. Our field has its fair share of them and woe betide anyone who uses one wrongly. Never, for example, say ESL or TESL when you mean ESOL or TESOL. Why? because you might unwittingly insult a learner by referring to ESL (English as a second language) when the learner might be a speaker of several languages with English some way down the pecking order: it is politically more correct to refer to English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). So important has this distinction become that the heavy hand of officialdom in the UK now requires people seeking British citizenship to demonstrate that they have at least ESOL Entry Level 3 from the national "skills for life" curriculum (strange distinction, after all we hardly need "skills for death"). Exam boards now dutifully provide ESOL qualifications that seem to have eclipsed the old EFL certificates, making English as a foreign language somehow less relevant.

So have EFL and TEFL lost status? Not exactly, but they imply the use of English in international situations, perhaps among non-native speakers. They still get a look in, but to teach English as a "foreign" language requires different emphases. For example, TESOL would require the teacher to concentrate on situations and contexts that the learners would meet in everyday life in an Anglophone country. TEFL, on the other hand, suggests an orientation towards travel and global situations. I don't dispute that these distinctions have their uses but the trouble is that you can see the potential for all sorts of new acronyms on the horizon. When we will start to teach EIL (English as an international language) or EIB (English for international business)? I'd happily settle for good, old-fashioned ELT (English language teaching).

Brenda Townsend Hall, a contributing editor to ESLeemployment, is a writer in the fields of English for business, cross-cultural awareness and business communications. Interested in receiving TEFL job listings weekly for free? To learn more visit

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The SMART Way to Set Goals

By Jude Wright

Goal setting is equal parts art and science. Many people create goals that simply don't work. If you're in business, you don't have the luxury of creating goals that don't work. You need to work effectively and you need goals you help you do it.

Here is a great way to create good goals that work... that keep you on track. They're called SMART goals and the acronym SMART will help you to remember the things that each goal needs to be:

* **Specific:** Your goal needs to be stated in a way that is clearly defined. Saying, I should work more, is not a goal that will be kept. However, saying, I am going to work a total of 8 hours each day, is a goal that is much clearer and specific.

* **Measurable:** This is closely related to the above attribute except that it also includes a way to make sure you are on track. A goal that says, I want to make more money, isn't measurable. However, a goal that says, I want to earn \$6000/month, is a far more measurable goal. It's easy to see, at the end of the month, whether or not you achieved it.

* **Actionable:** This means that your goal should be something that you need to do yourself in order to accomplish it. If you want to increase your income this year, it's not realistic to say, I'm going to win the lottery this year, because you have no control over whether you will win the lottery or not. However you might say, I'm going to increase my sales efforts by cold calling 10 people each day, which is something you can take action on yourself.

* **Realistic:** Goals that are actually achievable are much better and far more motivating. You'll feel better about yourself when you do hit goals than if constantly shoot for them and fall short. Realistic goals should not be so easy that you hit them every single time but should not be so hard that you never reach them at all.

* **Time-oriented:** Similar to the measurable attribute, your goal should have a timeframe for you to accomplish it in. Deadlines help people achieve their goals. If you anchor your goal to a time, you'll be able to watch your progress.

You can remember this with the acronym, SMART, so that when you're creating goals, you can create better goals for yourself. This is a popular goal-setting acronym in business, although occasionally the words are changed slightly to reflect the needs of the business.

Jude Wright is the owner of twenty websites. She finds her i-Marketing Organizer, found at

<http://judewright.com/organizer.htm>

, invaluable for keeping all of her Internet marketing information

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