



Small Wins

by Paul Walsh

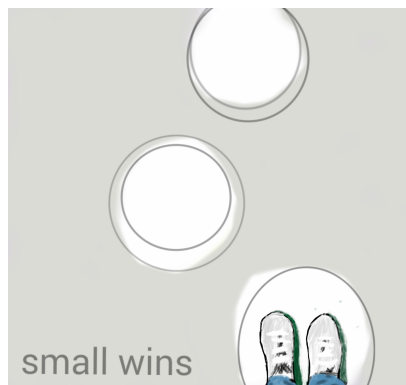
Language: Language of intentions (e.g. going to, plan to, intend to)

Activity: Learner Training/ Goal-setting/ Fostering Learner Autonomy

Level: A2+

Time: 10 min+

Materials: Materials -free



Introduction

This lesson is based on an article called '[The Power of Small Wins](#)' by Teresa M. Amabile and Steven J. Kramer. These authors emphasize the importance of baby steps or 'small wins' towards a clearly defined goal.

So what we should be doing in the language learning classroom is getting learners to set their own learning goals.

Procedure

1. Write 'Small Wins' on the whiteboard. Explain that this means small steps towards a goal. You can draw a dartboard with small arrows heading towards the bullseye to illustrate this.
2. Introduce language of intention with (exaggerated) examples: *I'm going to learn 250 new words this week/ I intend to..../ I plan to.....*
3. In pairs, learners should brainstorm 'Small Wins' for the upcoming week. These should be specific and realistic and should fit in with their daily lives. One example would be listening to songs while jogging, or learning 20 new words.
4. Learners should choose 2 or 3 'Small Wins' they want to accomplish that week. They should use

Follow up

5. Next week learners speak to each other about their 'Small Wins'.
6. Learners feedback in open class. Ask learners:

Did you find it difficult to achieve your 'Small Wins' this week? Why was that?
Are there any other ways you can try to achieve you goals?
Do you have any advice for each other?

Encourage learners to speak openly and learn from each other.

7. Set new 'Small Wins' for the following week.
8. Repeat every week .
9. Every month get learners to reflect on their 'Small wins' for that month.



Optional stages for Business English learners

1. Draw a two column table on the whiteboard. Write 'Managers' in one column and 'Workers' in the other. Tell the learners:

There was some research done on Motivation. They researched two groups - Managers and Workers and wanted to know the answer to the question 'What motivates people at work?' What do you think the managers said?

2. Write responses on the whiteboard in the 'Managers' column.

3. Ask:

What do you think the workers said?

4. Elicit responses. Answer:

They said that small steps towards a goal provided the most motivation- 'Small Wins'.

5. Go to stage 2 of the above plan.

Illustrations

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