

Introductory Slide

Welcome to the College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario's (CMLTO) video on best practices to develop your annual learning goals! This video is designed to help Registrants create meaningful goals that are relevant to their practice. We'll go over the Professional Portfolio, highlight the benefits of setting goals, provide tips for you to self-reflect on your MLT practice, and share examples of learning goals. As a reminder - Practising Registrants must create two goals every year for their Stage 1 Professional Portfolio and they're due by March 31st!

Professional Portfolio

Here's a quick look at the different components of the Professional Portfolio and when they must be completed by every year.

The Stage 1 Portfolio includes your Professional Profile, the PRISM video and quiz, an Activities & Standards of Practice Assessment, and the Learning Goal Development section. Each component is mandatory and must be completed and submitted for review by March 31st.

The Stage 2 Portfolio includes your Professional Development Activities and Learning Goal Reflection sections. If you are randomly selected for audit, you will be required to submit your portfolio to Quality Assurance staff for review. Also, all Practising Registrants must self-declare during annual renewal that their Professional Portfolio is up to date. This means all sections must be filled out every year.

Now that we know what's in the portfolio, let's talk about where you're headed next — your goals.

What are the benefits of setting goals?

A goal is defined as "the object or aim of an action" that an individual is trying to accomplish.⁷ Research shows that setting clear goals increases workplace performance, focus, and motivation among professionals, including MLTs, by directing their efforts toward planned and meaningful tasks.^{4,5,7,11} This approach will lead you toward ongoing professional growth and development.^{4,5,7,11}

By creating specific learning goals, Registrants can set a clear path to success and can easily track their progress.¹¹ This keeps you up to date with the latest advancements in medical laboratory technology, encourages self-reflection, and promotes continuous learning. Lastly, it promotes high standards of practice, ensures public protection, and supports the ongoing growth of the MLT profession^{3,8,9}.

Graphics Slide

Do you have trouble creating goals every year? Are you unsure where to start? Or you don't know what is considered an acceptable goal?

Self-Reflection Questions

It's understood that developing goals can be challenging. In order to help you, CMLTO has developed a set of self-reflection questions and goal examples to help you think of different goal ideas. These questions will help you critically assess your practice, including identifying strengths, areas of improvement, interests, and challenges you may face, so you can create goals that align with your ongoing professional needs or interests. We encourage you to ask yourself:

1. What topics or concepts would you like to learn more about in your practice but have not had the opportunity to?

Some potential examples include learning more about specific testing methods, validation techniques, accreditation processes, record-keeping best practices, and disease education

2. Are there any challenges or changes in your MLT practice that you need support or further learning to overcome?

Some potential examples include working at a new employer or in a new role or department, collaborating with new team members, or returning to work after leave.

3. Are there any soft skills you would like to improve on that would benefit you as an MLT?

Some potential examples of skills include communication, teamwork, time management, emotional intelligence, customer service, networking, and public speaking.

4. What skills would you like to work on to increase your effectiveness or productivity as an MLT?

Some potential examples include increasing the number of samples processed per shift, delegating tasks to others, developing leadership skills to support your lab, or advancing your Excel skills.

5. In preparation for your upcoming retirement, how are you and your workplace preparing for this?

This could include training the MLT taking over your role, knowledge translation, and finishing up any projects and tasks in your role.¹

Learning Goal Examples

Setting goals is an important step in advancing your MLT practice. To help you get started, here are some examples to guide you in creating impactful goals that are tailored to your unique practice.

Remember, goals should follow the SMART approach – meaning they are:

- Specific: define exactly what you are trying to achieve
- Measurable: state how you are going to track your goal progress

- Achievable: it should be attainable and reasonable given your MLT role or duties
- Realistic: it should be relevant to your practice, and
- Timely: it should have a defined and sensible timeframe.^{2,6,10}

This approach provides a structured framework for setting and achieving your goals by providing yourself with a clear objective to work toward.¹⁰ It helps provides direction, increase motivation, focus, clarifies what is important, and ultimately enhances your likelihood of achieving your goals.¹⁰ Some goal examples that may apply to you could include:

1. I would like to learn more about POCT and its applications in hematology, as it is being implemented at my workplace.
2. I would like to refresh my knowledge of anaerobic bacteria in microbiology as we are seeing a significant rise in the number of *C. difficile* cases.
3. I want to enhance my teamwork and communication skills through advancing my understanding of effective ways to deliver and receive feedback from others.¹

Summary

Setting specific and meaningful goals is essential for advancing your MLT practice and supporting your ongoing professional development. As a self-regulated healthcare professional, you are taking steps toward improving your knowledge, skill, and judgement, and ensuring long-term success in your practice. For further information on learning goals and the Professional Portfolio, please visit the CMLTO website.

Resources

1. College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario (CMLTO). CMLTO Professional Portfolio – Learning Goal Development Guideline. CMLTO. [learning_goals_guideline.pdf](#)
2. College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario (CMLTO). CMLTO Professional Portfolio Tip Sheet. CMLTO. [professional_portfolio_tipsheet.pdf](#)
3. College of Medical Laboratory Technologists of Ontario (CMLTO). Standards of Practice for Medical Laboratory Technologists, September 2017. Accessed on March 24, 2025, from: [CMLTO Standards of Practice for MLTs](#)
4. Latham, G.P. (2004). The Motivational Benefits of Goal-Setting. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 18(4), 126-129. [10.5465/AME.2004.15268727](#)
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6. Lawlor, K. B., & Hornyak, M. J. (2012) Smart Goals: How the Application of Smart Goals can Contribute to Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes. *Developments in Business Simulation and Experiential Learning*, 39, 259-260.
7. Locke, E.A, & Latham, G.P. (2002). Building a Practically Useful Theory of Goal Setting and Motivation: A 35-year Odyssey. *American Psychologist*, 57(9), 705-717. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.57.9.705>
8. *Medical Laboratory Technology Act, 1991*, (MLT Act). Accessed on March 27, 2025, from: [Medical Laboratory Technology Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 28 | ontario.ca](#)
9. *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, (RHPA). Accessed on March 27, 2025, from: [Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991, S.O. 1991, c. 18 | ontario.ca](#)
10. *Smart goals*. Corporate Finance Institute. (2023, November 19). <https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/smart-goal/>
11. Sutton, J. (2024, December 12). 12+ *benefits of goal setting – why goals are important*. Positive Psychology. <https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-goal-setting/>