

SMART GOAL SETTING MODEL

- S** = Specific
- M** = Measurable
- A** = Action Oriented
- R** = Realistic
- T** = Time Bound

SPECIFIC

Goals should be straightforward and emphasize what you want to happen. Specifics help us to **focus our efforts** and **clearly define what we are going to do**. Specific is the What, Why, How, and When of the SMART model.

WHAT are you going to do? Use action words such as direct, organize, coordinate, lead, develop, plan, build etc.

WHY is this important to do at this time? What do you want to ultimately accomplish?

HOW are you going to do it?

WHEN will you achieve the goal?

Ensure the goals you set are very **specific, clear and easy**. Instead of setting a goal to lose weight or be healthier, set a specific goal to lose 2cm off your waistline or to walk 5 miles at an aerobically challenging pace.

MEASURABLE

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. In the broadest sense, the whole goal statement is a measure for the project; if the goal is accomplished, that is a success. However, there are usually several short-term or small measurements that can be built into the goal.

Choose a goal with measurable progress, **so you can see the change occur**. What will you see when you reach your goal? Be specific! "I want to read 3 chapter books of 100 pages on my own before my birthday" shows the specific target to be measure. "I want to be a good reader" is not as measurable.

Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goals.

ACTION ORIENTED

When you make goals that you are excited about but fail to create an action plan to achieve them, they remain as dreams. Action is key in gaining making progress towards your goals. It is the difference between watching people succeed on their social media feed, saying that you want what they have, and hoping it to come true versus seeing a successful person, learning how they achieved, modifying it towards your goal and then implementing the plan. As a result, your goals must be action-able. You must be able

to put a plan together to achieve the goal, even if the steps are small at first. This is often a great way to build momentum... and gain **TRACTION!**

Goals you set which are too far out of your reach, you probably won't commit to doing. Although you may start with the best of intentions, the knowledge that it's too much for you means your subconscious will keep reminding you of this fact and will stop you from even giving it your best.

Remember that you cannot make **TRACTION** without **ACTION**. Plan for the incremental gains towards your goals and set benchmark goals in order to measure if you are on track or need to readjust your goals. For instance, if you aim to lose 20lbs in 3 months, you can set benchmark goals that can be implemented immediately (e.g. eat one less fast food meal in week one, have one all healthy meal day in week three, eat healthy meals three days a week by week 9, etc.)

The ability to start is what stops most people and having action oriented goals with benchmarks helps you to remain motivated.

REALISTIC

This is not a synonym for "easy." Realistic, in this case, means "**do-able.**" It means that the learning curve is not a vertical slope; that the skills needed to do the work are available; that the project fits with the overall strategy and goals of the organization. A realistic project may push the skills and knowledge of the people working on it but it shouldn't break them.

Devise a plan or a way of getting there which makes the goal realistic. The goal needs to be realistic for you and where you are at the moment. A goal of never again eating sweets, cakes, crisps and chocolate may not be realistic for someone who really enjoys these foods.

For instance, it may be more realistic to set a goal of eating a piece of fruit each day instead of one sweet item. You can then choose to work towards reducing the amount of sweet products gradually as and when this feels realistic for you.

Be sure to set goals that you can attain with some effort! Too difficult and you set the stage for failure, but too low sends the message that you aren't very capable. **Set the bar high enough for a satisfying achievement!**

TIME BOUND

Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by next year. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a **clear target** to work towards.

If you don't set a time, the commitment is too vague. It tends not to happen because you feel you can start at any time. Without a time limit, there's no urgency to start taking action now.

Time must be measurable, attainable and realistic.

Everyone will benefit from goals and objectives if they are SMART. SMART, is the instrument to apply in setting your goals and objectives.