

S.M.A.R.T. Goal Setting

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely Goals

S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. It's a simple tool used to put your goals into action. First, let's take a look at each of the S.M.A.R.T. acronym's components in regards to goal-setting.

SPECIFIC: Goals should address the five Ws... who, what, when, where, and why. Make sure the goal specifies what needs to be done with a timeframe for completion. Use action verbs... create, design, develop, implement, produce, etc. to jump start your goals.

Example: Resolve accounting discrepancies within 48 hours.

MEASURABLE: Goals should include numeric or descriptive measures that define quantity or quality. How will you and/or anyone else know when the goal has been successfully met? Focus on elements such as observable actions, cycle time, efficiency, and/or flexibility to measure outcomes, not activities.

Example: Secure pledges from ten new donors by the end of each week.

ATTAINABLE: Goals should be within a person's reach; a goal may be a "stretch", but still feasible. It may be a challenge, but it's still possible to attain. You can attain almost any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. When you consider authority of control, influence, resources, work environment, etc., goals that seem far out of reach eventually move closer and become more attainable.

Example: Obtain my accounting licensure within two years.

REALISTIC: To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work with. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be. But be sure that every goal represents substantial progress. A high goal is frequently easier to reach than a low one because a low goal exerts low motivational force. Some of the hardest jobs you ever accomplished actually seem easy simply because you had a passion for them and you stretched yourself to reach them.

Example: Develop and implement a diversity recruitment plan by December 2015 that increases the number of diversity candidates by ten percent.

TIMELY: Goals should identify a definite target date for completion. Ask yourself, "By when should this goal be accomplished?" Incorporate specific dates, calendar milestones, or timeframes that are relative to the achievement of your goal.

Example: Run 400 miles by the end of the 2014-2015 academic year (May 2015).

S.M.A.R.T. Goal Planner

What is my goal?

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Is my goal S.M.A.R.T.?

Specific: What specifically will I achieve?	
Measurable: How will I measure it?	
Achievable: Can I actually meet this goal?	
Realistic: Is this goal possible? Does it stretch me?	
Timely: By what date(s) will I achieve it?	

What resources do I need?

✓

What milestones do I want to recognize?

What rewards will I give myself?

✓

How will I hold myself accountable?

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Is there anything else I need to consider regarding my S.M.A.R.T. goal?

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