

# SMART GOALS GUIDE

A vital component of high performance is clarity of expectations. SMART goals are a framework for setting objectives and clarifying expectations in a way that is **SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ACHIEVABLE, RELEVANT**, and **TIME-BASED**.

Review this Guide to learn about SMART goals and use the SMART Goals Worksheet to construct your own in collaboration with your manager.



## 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. Specifics encompass the what, why, and how of the SMART model. Diagnostic questions include the following:

What are you going to do? Use action words such as direct, organize, coordinate, lead, develop, build, etc. Is the outcome clear?

Why is this important to do at this time? What do you want to ultimately accomplish? How does this align with University values, goals, or strategy?

How are you going to do it? ("By...")



## MEASURABLE

**If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.** In the broadest sense, the entire goal statement is a measure for the project; if the goal is accomplished, then it 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. How will you see when you reach your goal? Be specific. "I want to read three books of 100 pages or more before my birthday" shows the specific target to be measured. "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 the continued effort required to reach your goals.

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## ACHIEVABLE

You probably won't commit to achieving goals you set which are too far out of your reach. A goal needs to stretch you slightly so you feel you can do it and it will need a real commitment from you. For instance, if you aim to lose 20 pounds in one week, we all know that isn't achievable. But setting a goal to lose one pound the first week, and subsequently aiming to lose a second pound the next week will keep it achievable for you. It is also measurable. The feeling of success which this brings helps you to remain motivated.



## RELEVANT

Does it align with the team and University's larger goals and values? How will the result matter? When an organization is able to achieve performance consistently and to reach its desired outcomes, then momentum builds within the organization and beyond. High performance begets high performance. The expectation of the organization becomes success. Each person's role and the expectation to perform provide motivation and support for moving the organization forward. **A relevant goal can answer "yes" to these questions:**

Does this seem worthwhile?

Is this the right time?

Does this match our other efforts/needs?

Am I the right person to reach this goal?



## TIME-BASED

Set a time frame for the goal: for next week, in three months, by June 30, etc. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a clear target to work toward. It also makes the goal measurable. 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 and attainable.**

# SMART GOALS WORKSHEET

Employee Name:

Department:

Manager Name:

Date:

|                | <b>SPECIFIC</b>               | <b>MEASURABLE</b>                   | <b>ACHIEVABLE</b>   | <b>RELEVANT</b>  | <b>TIME-BASED</b>                           |
|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
|                | What do I want to accomplish? | How do I plan to track my progress? | Is this goal realistic and achievable? How do I plan to achieve it? | How is this goal relevant to my position, team, or organization? | How long will it take to achieve this goal? |
| <b>GOAL #1</b> |                               |                                     |   |  |   |
| <b>GOAL #2</b> |                               |                                     |   |  |   |
| <b>GOAL #3</b> |                               |                                     |   |  |   |