

S.M.A.R.T Objectives

What are S.M.A.R.T. objectives?

S.M.A.R.T is both a mnemonic and acronym – it describes objectives that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time- bound.

The above words are also criteria for writing effective goals or objectives. Both “S.M.A.R.T. objectives and “S.M.A.R.T. goals” are often used in business, education, and other industries and in print.

Where do S.M.A.R.T. Objectives come from?

The first known use of the term “S.M.A.R.T objectives” is in the November 1981 issue of Management Review by George T. Doran. S.M.A.R.T. criteria for how to formulate objectives is often associated with Peter Drucker and his “management by objectives” concept. Since then, they have been used in employee performance management but also in education settings, businesses of all types, project management, and personal goal setting and development.^{1,2}

Where does SAFe use S.M.A.R.T. objectives?

- Team objectives written for a PI (planning interval)
 - This can be seen in these Scaled Agile Framework Articles: *PI Objectives*, *The Role of PI Objectives*, and *Pre- and Post PI Planning*
- Teams may also plan their iteration objectives (some teams refer to these as iteration goals) with S.M.A.R.T criteria during *Iteration Planning*

Examples of S.M.A.R.T objectives

| Personal Development: Run a 5k | Team PI objective: Customer Feedback Feature |
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| S.M.A.R.T. objective Practice running three times a week following a progressive training app; be able to run a 5k distance, without stopping, in 4 months in order to join 5k races/run groups | S.M.A.R.T. Objective Design feature for customers to give feedback on content; deploy limited release to most engaged segment on online learning to collect data and small group feedback on their use and engagement. |
| S = distance, practice, end result M = distance, practice frequency A = can be accomplished in given time with personal commitment R = prepares individual to join desired activities T = detailed time to achievement and milestones | S = Feature purpose, release for particular content and users M = can measure release, Customer engagement A = can be accomplished in PI, within team’s control R = Supports Customer Centricity T = detailed time to achieve (one PI) and collect initial |

¹ “SMART Criteria,” Wikipedia, Wikimedia Foundation Inc., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria

² Doran, G. T. (1981). “There’s a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management’s goals and objectives”. Management Review. 70 (11): 35–36.