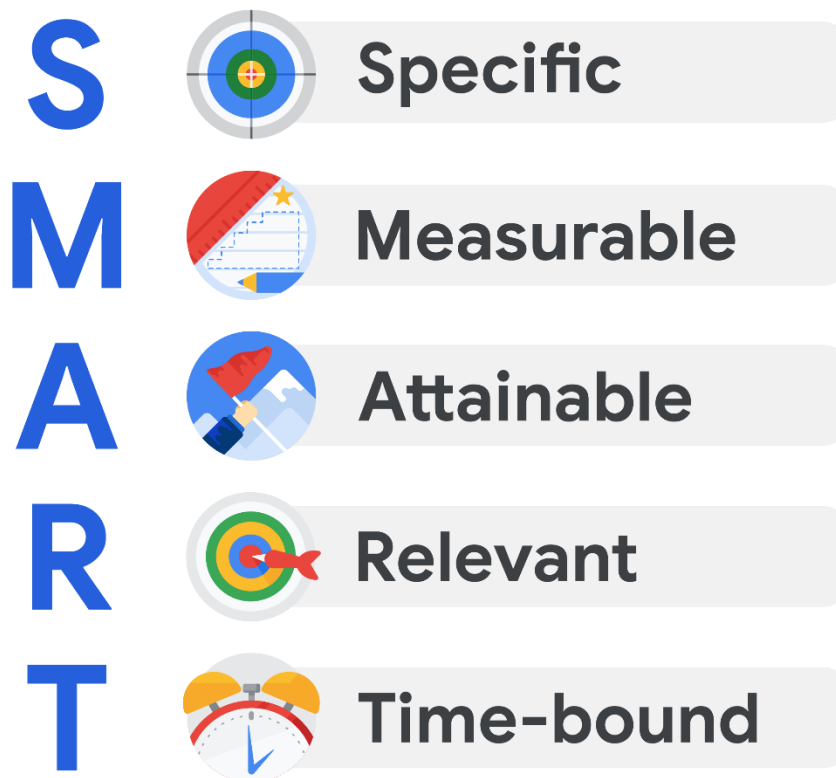


SMART goals: Making goals meaningful

In this lesson you are learning to define and create measurable project goals and deliverables. Now, let's focus on SMART goals.

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals are very helpful for ensuring project success. As you start your career in project management, you may not directly set the project goals, but you should be able to clarify and understand them. SMART goals help you see the full scope of a goal, determine its feasibility, and clearly define project success in concrete terms.

Let's recap what we discussed in the previous video by taking a look at a breakdown of the criteria for SMART goals below:



- **Specific:** The objective has no ambiguity for the project team to misinterpret.
- **Measurable:** Metrics help the project team determine when the objective is met.
- **Attainable:** The project team agrees the objective is realistic.
- **Relevant:** The goal fits the organization's strategic plan and supports the project charter.
- **Time-bound:** The project team documents a date to achieve the goal.

You may see variations on what each letter in the "SMART" acronym stands for. (For example, you may see "actionable" or "achievable" instead of "attainable" or "realistic" instead of "relevant.") However, the general intent of each of these terms—to make sure the goal is within reach—is always similar.

Focusing on the "M" in SMART

Let's take a moment to zoom in on the **M** in SMART, which stands for **measurable**. Having measurable goals allows you to assess the success of your project based on quantifiable or tangible metrics, such as dollar amounts, number of outputs, quantities, etc. Measurable goals are important because they leave little room for confusion around expectations from stakeholders.

Not every metric will have value, so you will have to determine which metrics make sense for the project. For example, measuring how many meetings the software engineers on your project attend on a weekly basis may not be the most valuable metric for a productivity goal. Alternatively, you might measure other aspects of the engineers' productivity, such as a particular number of features created per engineer or a specific number of issues flagged per day.

Defining a SMART goal

Let's explore an example related to making a personal goal measurable. Imagine you are looking to make a career change, and you set a goal to complete a Google Career Certificate. You can **measure** the success of this goal because after completing the entire program, you will receive a certificate—a tangible outcome.

Now, let's determine how to make the remaining elements of this goal SMART. In this example, your **specific** goal is to attain a Google Career Certificate. You can make this goal **attainable** by deciding that you will complete one course per month. This goal is **relevant** because it supports your desire to make a career change. Finally, you can make this goal **time-bound** by deciding that you will complete the program within six months.

After defining each of these components, your SMART goal then becomes: Obtain a Google Career Certificate by taking one course per month within the next six months.

SMART goal one

The original goal indicates that Office Green will boost its overall brand awareness through Plant Pals, but it doesn't indicate how they will do it, whether it's possible, why it's important, or when they will get it done. The SMART goal addresses all these questions, which increases Office Green's chances of reaching their aim:

"Office Green will boost brand awareness with a new marketing and sales strategy and website update that will increase page views by 2K per month by the end of the year."

- **Specific:** Office Green will update their website and launch a new marketing and sales strategy to boost awareness of their brand.
- **Measurable:** The goal includes a metric of 2K new page views per month.
- **Attainable:** They have a year to reach this goal and the target of 2K new page views per month is in line with prior marketing campaigns.
- **Relevant:** Greater brand awareness can mean new customers, which supports the overall project goal of a 5% revenue increase.
- **Time-bound:** The deadline is at the end of the year.

SMART goal two

The original goal indicates that Office Green will raise their customer retention rate, but it doesn't indicate how they will do it, whether it's possible, why it's important, or when they will get it done. The SMART goal addresses all these questions, which increases Office Green's chances of reaching their aim:

“Office Green will raise their overall customer retention rate by 10% by the end of the year by implementing a new Operations & Training plan for the Plant Pals service.”

- **Specific:** Office Green will implement an Operations & Training plan that will improve on existing customer service standards and boost efficiency.
- **Measurable:** The goal includes a metric of a 10% increase in retention.
- **Attainable:** They have a year to reach this goal and many former and existing customers are interested in the new service. It has the potential to help them keep customers who may be thinking about leaving for a landscaper with more services.
- **Relevant:** Increasing customer retention can lead to more sales, which supports the overall project goal of a 5% revenue increase.
- **Time-bound:** The deadline is at the end of the year.

Creating OKRs for your project

In this lesson, you are learning to define and create measurable project goals and deliverables. This reading will focus on creating effective objectives and key results (OKRs) and how to implement them into your project.

What are OKRs?

OKR stands for objectives and key results. They combine a goal and a metric to determine a measurable outcome.

Objectives	Key results
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defines what needs to be achieved• Describes a desired outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The measurable outcomes that objectively define when the objective has been met

Objectives: Defines what needs to be achieved; describes a desired outcome. Key results: The measurable outcomes that objectively define when the objective has been met

Company-wide OKRs are used to set an ultimate goal for an entire organization, whole team, or department. Project-level OKRs describe the focused results each group will need to achieve in order to support the organization.

OKRs and project management

As a project manager, OKRs can help you expand upon project goals and further clarify the deliverables you'll need from the project to accomplish those goals. Project-level OKRs help establish the appropriate scope for your team so that you can say “no” to requests that may get in the way of them meeting their objectives. You can also create and use project-level OKRs to help

motivate your team since OKRs are intended to challenge you to push past what's easily achievable.

Creating OKRs for your project

Set your objectives

Project objectives should be aspirational, aligned with organizational goals, action-oriented, concrete, and significant. Consider the vision you and your stakeholders have for your project and determine what you want the project team to accomplish in 3–6 months.

Examples:

- Build the most secure data security software
- Continuously improve web analytics and conversions
- Provide a top-performing service
- Make a universally-available app
- Increase market reach
- Achieve top sales among competitors in the region

Strong **objectives** meet the following criteria. They are:

- Aspirational
- Aligned with organizational goals
- Action-oriented
- Concrete
- Significant

To help shape each objective, ask yourself and your team:

- Does the objective help in achieving the project's overall goals?
- Does the objective align with company and departmental OKRs?
- Is the objective inspiring and motivational?
- Will achieving the objective make a significant impact?

Develop key results

Next, add 2–3 key results for each objective. Key results should be time-bound. They can be used to indicate the amount of progress to achieve within a shorter period or to define whether you've met your objective at the end of the project. They should also challenge you and your team to stretch yourselves to achieve more.

Examples:

- X% new signups within first quarter post launch
- Increase advertiser spend by X% within the first two quarters of the year
- New feature adoption is at least X% by the end of the year
- Maximum 2 critical bugs are reported monthly by customers per Sprint
- Maintain newsletter unsubscribe rate at X% this calendar year

Strong **key results** meet the following criteria:

- Results-oriented—**not** a task
- Measurable and verifiable
- Specific and time-bound
- Aggressive yet realistic

To help shape your key results, ask yourself and your team the following:

- What does success mean?
- What metrics would prove that we've successfully achieved the objective?

OKR development best practices

Here are some best practices to keep in mind when writing OKRs:

- Think of your objectives as being motivational and inspiring and your key results as being tactical and specific. The objective describes what you want to do and the key results describe how you'll know you did it.
- As a general rule, try to develop around 2--3 key results for each objective.
- Be sure to document your OKRs and link to them in your project plan.