## How to Write SMART Goals:
## A Guide for Managers and Employees

### What are SMART Goals?
- Statements of the important results you are working to accomplish
- Designed in a way to foster clear and mutual understanding of what constitutes expected levels of performance and successful professional development

### What is the SMART criteria?

| S | Specific | What will be accomplished? What actions will you take? |
|---|---|---|
| M | Measurable | What data will measure the goal? (How much? How well?) |
| A | Achievable | Is the goal doable?  Do you have the necessary skills and resources? |
| R | Relevant | How does the goal align with broader goals? Why is the result important? |
| T | Time-Bound | What is the time frame for accomplishing the goal? |

### How do I decide the right scope for my SMART Goals? (How big? How many?)

SMART goals are meant to address all of your major job responsibilities.
Remember, goals are intended to focus attention and resources on what is most important so that you can be successful in achieving your priorities. SMART Goals are goals for your day-to-day job.

- Common types of goals are to:
  - Increase something
  - Make something
  - Improve something
  - Reduce something
  - Save something
  - Develop someone (yourself!)

### Where to start?
1. Start by thinking about your whole job and the broad areas (or "buckets") of responsibility and results for which you are accountable.
2. Develop a goal statement for each bucket.  To get the scope right, remember to focus on end results not tasks.

3.  Goals should be high level enough to encompass the core outcomes for which you are responsible, but specific and clear enough so you will be able to measure success.
4.  Goals should be on-going job responsibilities and any new projects, assignments, priorities, or initiatives that are specific to this performance cycle.
5.  Having too many goals can be an indicator that your goals are scoped at too low a level and are focused more on tasks than on end results.
6.  If it seems that your goals are becoming too numerous and task-oriented, it may be helpful to consider combining several goal statements into a broader outcome area.

**How to write your S-M-A-R-T goal**

**S – Specific**

When setting a goal, be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think about this as the mission statement for your goal. This isn't a detailed list of how you're going to meet a goal, but it should include an answer to the popular 'w' questions:

- Who – Consider who needs to be involved to achieve the goal (this is especially important when you're working on a group project).

- What – Think about exactly what you are trying to accomplish and don't be afraid to get very detailed.

- When – You'll get more specific about this question under the "time-bound" section of defining S.M.A.R.T. goals, but you should at least set a time frame.

- Where – This question may not always apply, especially if you're setting personal goals, but if there's a location or relevant event, identify it here.

- Which – Determine any related obstacles or requirements. This question can be beneficial in deciding if your goal is realistic. For example, if the goal is to open a baking business, but you've never baked anything before, that might be an issue. As a result, you may refine the specifics of the goal to be "Learn how to bake in order to open a baking business."

- Why – What is the reason for the goal? When it comes to using this method for employees, the answer will likely be along the lines of company advancement or career development.

- "S" actions may include:

| Oversee | Update | Write |
|---|---|---|
| Coordinate | Upgrade | Process |
| Supervise | Develop | Provide |
| Manage | Create | Maintain |
| Plan | Implement | Reconcile |
| Support | Evaluate | Direct |
| Transition | Produce | Administer |

- Note that this list does not include verbs like "improve," "reduce," or "increase" (e.g. "Improve customer service" or "reduce cost." These imply the direction that you want a result to move in, but don't do much to explain the role or specific action that you will take to accomplish this change.

## M – Measurable

What metrics are you going to use to determine if you meet the goal? This makes a goal more tangible because it provides a way to measure progress. If it's a project that's going to take a few months to complete, then set some milestones by considering specific tasks to accomplish. Milestones are a series of steps along the way that when added up will result in the completion of your main goal.

- As the "M" in SMART states, there should be a source of information to measure or determine whether a goal has been achieved.
- The M is a direct (or possibly indirect) indicator of what success for a particular goal will look like.
- Sometimes measurement is difficult and managers and employees will need to work together to identify the most relevant and feasible data sources and collection methods.
- Data collection efforts needed to measure a goal can be included in that goal's action plan.
- Even if a perfect, direct measurement source is not immediately feasible for a given goal, the discussion about the desired end result (why this goal is important) and what the measurement options are (what success might look like) is an important and valuable part of performance planning.
- Measurement methods can be both quantitative (productivity results, money saved or earned, etc.) and qualitative (client testimonials, surveys, etc.).

- Some typical data types and data collection methods may include:

| DATA TYPES | DATA COLLECTION METHODS |
|---|---|
| Quality/accuracy rates | Automated reports |
| Amounts produced | Audits, tests |
| Revenue generated | Surveys |
| Productivity rates | Work products, samples |
| Customer Satisfaction | Other documents |

**A – Achievable**

This focuses on how important a goal is to you and what you can do to make it attainable and may require developing new skills and changing attitudes. The goal is meant to inspire motivation, not discouragement. Think about:

- how to accomplish the goal,
- if you have the tools/skills needed,
- if not, consider what it would take to attain them.

**R – Relevant**

Relevance refers focusing on something that makes sense with the broader business goals. For example, if the goal is to launch a new program or service, it should be something that's in alignment with the overall business/department objectives. Your team may be able to launch a new program, but if your division is not prioritizing launching that type of new programs, then the goal wouldn't be relevant.

**T – Time-Bound**

Anyone can set goals, but if it lacks realistic timing, chances are you're not going to succeed. Providing a target date for deliverables is imperative. Ask specific questions about the goal deadline and what can be accomplished within that time period. If the goal will take three months to complete, it's useful to define what should be achieved half-way through the process. Providing time constraints also creates a sense of urgency.

**The Easiest Way to Write S.M.A.R.T. Goals**

When it comes to writing S.M.A.R.T. goals, ask yourself and other team members a lot of questions. The answers will help fine-tune your strategy, ensuring the goals are something that's actually attainable. Utilize the template provided in the appendix as a guide.