

## Creating S.M.A.R.T. Goals

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**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**ttainable  
**R**ealistic  
**T**imely

**S specific** - A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

- \*Who: Who is involved?
- \*What: What do I want to accomplish?
- \*Where: Identify a location.
- \*When: Establish a time frame.
- \*Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- \*Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be, "Get in shape." But a specific goal would say, "Join a health club and workout 3 days a week."

**M 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 continued effort required to reach your goal.

To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as.....How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

**A ttainable** - When you identify goals that are most important to you, you begin to figure out ways you can make them come true. You develop the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them. You begin seeing previously overlooked opportunities to bring yourself closer to the achievement of your goals.

You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because your goals shrink, but because you grow and expand to match them. When you list your goals you build your self-image. You see yourself as worthy of these goals, and develop the traits and personality that allow you to possess them.

**R ealistic** - To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both *willing* and *able* to work. 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 they were a labor of love.

Your goal is probably realistic if you truly *believe* that it can be accomplished. Additional ways to know if your goal is realistic is to determine if you have accomplished anything similar in the past or ask yourself what conditions would have to exist to accomplish this goal.

**T imely** - A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there's no sense of urgency. If you want to lose 10 lbs., when do you want to lose it by? "Someday" won't work. But if you anchor it within a timeframe, "by May 1st", then you've set your unconscious mind into motion to begin working on the goal.

**T** can also stand for **Tangible** - A goal is tangible when you can experience it with one of the senses, that is, taste, touch, smell, sight or hearing. When your goal is tangible you have a better chance of making it specific and measurable and thus attainable.

Retrieved from <http://topachievement.com/smarts.html>, June 2, 2011

**The following questions can be helpful when setting SMART goals. Please review and think about them. Feel free to jot down notes.**

**1. Long - Term Goal**

- Where do you see yourself in 5-10 years?
- What kind of work would you like to do? What career do you want?
- Why was choosing this goal important to you?
- What satisfaction does it provide, other than money?
- What relationship does this class have to reaching your goal?

**2. Intermediate - Range Goals**

- What do you need to accomplish in the next 2-5 years in order to reach your long-term goal or to help you formulate a long term goal? For example, do you need to explore one or more areas of interest? Who can help you do this? What kind of information will be helpful to you?
- What do you need to do to this year to make progress toward defining a goal or toward focusing your efforts? For example, can you identify the resources available to help you make decisions?

**3. What is your short-term academic goal for this semester?**

- State at least one goal specifically: “I want to get an A- in ENG 101” or “I want to get a 2.5 GPA.” It is not acceptable to say, “I want to get good grades,” (because “good” is not specific) or “I want to learn as much as I can” (because that is not specific).
- Make sure the goal is something you can complete by the end of the semester. It is not acceptable to say, “I want to learn as much as I can at UMD” because you’d need more than one semester to accomplish the goal.
- Make sure the goal is measurable. For example, you could say, “I want to earn at least a C+ in Accounting” because you could measure your progress with each quiz/test grade. It is not acceptable to say, “I want to work as hard as I can” or “I want to earn good grades” because you can’t measure your progress (how much is “hard as I can”? If I get a 70 on a test, is that “good”?).

**4. Plan to Achieve Your Short –Term Semester Goal**

- What strategies will you use to help you reach your goal? BE SPECIFIC. Examples:
  - Study 2 hours every day
  - Go to the Writing and Reading Center for help
  - See my instructor during office hours
  - Study with a friend
  - Use the Cornell note taking method (info in Writing and Reading Center)
  - Use content maps to organize information to study
  - Create a monthly assignment calendar to plan to meet due dates for all courses.
  - Create a weekly study schedule that lists specific courses/projects you will work on.

## **Personal Development Plan (You will use this plan to complete Journal #1.)**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

There is a direct relationship between how well you follow a specific, four-year personal development (SMART GOALS) plan and your ability to meet professional objectives upon graduation. The purpose of this journal is to enable you to create, follow, and mark progress in college by using a personal development plan. Although you will complete this planning process during your first week of class, you will be encouraged to follow through on implementing and revising your plans by utilizing the support network dedicated to sustaining your growth and success in the personal development process during each subsequent semester.

- **Write Your Vision Statement** (Image of the ideal. It is future looking, inspirational, and creates the most desirable scenario):
- **Write Your Mission Statement** (A brief, clear, concise statement of your purpose and desires, and the primary methods through which you intend to fulfill that purpose. It is somewhat uplifting but more practical than the vision.)
- **Write 3 Goals for your first year including objectives and action plans for each goal**
  - **Goals:** Statements of desired future states, long-term and possible, and based on mission and vision. Typically few in number, with a target date.\_
  - **Objectives:** Short-term, specific, measurable outcomes statements\_
  - **Action Plans:** Series of short-term tasks to be completed that will result in the achievement of the objectives or outcomes.

**Goal 1:**

**Objectives:**

**Action Plan:**

**Goal 2:**

**Objectives:**

**Action Plan:**

**Goal 3:**

**Objectives:**

**Action Plan:**