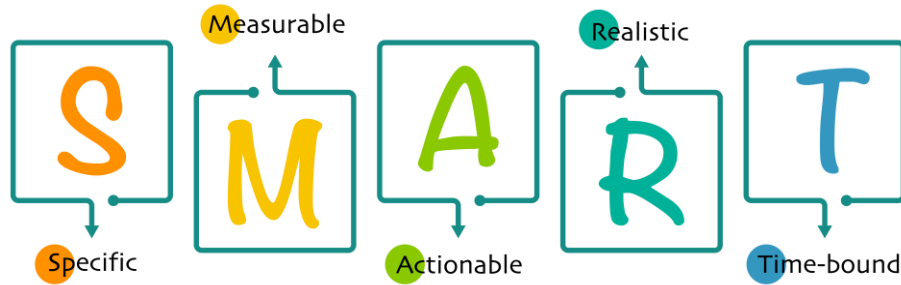# SMART Goals
Quick Reference Guide

What are SMART Goals?

Setting goals involves creating a plan to motivate and guide individuals to the desired end result. The SMART methodology is a goal-setting tool used make aspirations more achievable. The acronym stands for:

Measurable
Realistic
S M A R T
Specific
Actionable
Time-bound

Specific

Goals that are specific are much easier to accomplish. General goals feel overwhelming and make it hard to get started. If your goal answers the 5 W's – Who? What? When? Where? Why? – then it's probably fairly specific. For example, the goal "get healthy" isn't specific enough. But if you break it down to "I want to lose 15 pounds in 3 months by going to the gym 3 days a week," it's both specific and more attainable.

Measurable

A goal that is measurable allows you to track progress along the way. It answers the questions "how much?" or "how many?". Break your broad goal into smaller chunks with mini deadlines to ensure you stay on track. For example, if you want to lose 15 pounds in 3 months, set a monthly goal to lose 5 pounds. The small victories build excitement and help you maintain motivation.

Actionable

Actionable goals are those that you yourself have the ability to complete with available resources. Ensure when planning your goal that it contains an action verb explaining how the goal will be accomplished. For the weight loss example, specifying you will go to the gym 3 days a week makes it actionable. It defines *how* the goal will be accomplished.

Realistic

If a goal isn't realistic, it's unlikely to be achieved. It should challenge you but still be something you can commit to based on the other things currently going on in your life. For example, a goal to lose 40 pounds in a month isn't realistic.

Time-bound

Goals that are time-bound give a sense of urgency for completion. You need to define both a start and end date. It's not always feasible to start on a goal immediately. For example, if you have a vacation coming up in 2 weeks, you probably don't want to start a diet today.

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