**Set SMART Goals**

Adapted from: Mind Tools. “SMART GOALS: How to Make Your Goals Achievable.” *Mind Tools*, 4 Feb 2020, <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/smart-goals.htm>. Accessed 2 May 2022.

**S**pecific **M**easurable **A**ttainable **R**elevant **T**ime-bound

### 1. *Specific*

Your goal should be clear and specific, otherwise you won't be able to focus your efforts or feel truly motivated to achieve it. When drafting your goal, try to answer the five "W" questions:

* What do I want to accomplish?
* Why is this goal important?
* Who is involved?
* Where is it located?
* Which resources or limits are involved?

Example: Imagine that you are currently on a basketball team and you'd like to get better at basketball. A specific goal could be, "I want to improve my free throw percentage."

### 2. *Measurable*

It's important to have measurable goals, so that you can track your progress and stay motivated. Assessing progress helps you to stay focused, meet your deadlines, and feel the excitement of getting closer to achieving your goal. A measurable goal should address questions such as:

* How much?
* How many?
* How will I know when it is accomplished?

Example: You might measure your goal of getting better at basketball by keeping track of your accuracy rate over time.

### 3. *Achievable*

Your goal also needs to be realistic and attainable to be successful. In other words, it should stretch your abilities but still remain possible. When you set an achievable goal, you may be able to identify previously overlooked opportunities or resources that can bring you closer to it.

An achievable goal will usually answer questions such as:

* How can I accomplish this goal?
* How realistic is the goal, based on other constraints, such as financial factors?

Example: You might need to ask yourself whether improving your free throw accuracy is reasonable. Do you have the time to practice this skill? Are the necessary resources available to you? Is there room for improvement?

Tip: Beware of setting goals that someone else has power over. For example, "Be team captain!" depends on who else applies and on the coach’s decision. But "Get the experience and display the leadership capabilities that I need to be considered for team captain" is entirely down to you.

### 4. *Relevant*

This step is about ensuring that your goal matters to you and that it also aligns with other relevant goals. We all need support and assistance in achieving our goals, but it's important to retain control over them. So, make sure that your plans drive everyone forward, but that you're still responsible for achieving your own goal. A relevant goal can answer "yes" to these questions:

* Does this seem worthwhile?
* Is this the right time?
* Does this match our other efforts/needs?
* Am I the right person to reach this goal?

Example: You might want to become team captain, but is it the right time to focus on this, or do you need to improve your grades first? For example, if you want to play college basketball, would additional basketball practice cause your grades to suffer?

### 5. *Time-bound*

Every goal needs a target date, so that you have a deadline to focus on and something to work toward. This part of the SMART goal criteria helps to prevent everyday tasks from taking priority over your longer-term goals.

A time-bound goal will usually answer these questions:

* When?
* What can I do six months from now?
* What can I do six weeks from now?
* What can I do today?

Example: If you want to improve your free throw accuracy, you can choose a percentage you would like to hit in one month, three months, or six months.