

SMART Goals

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Goal Setting

- Setting goals is important for time management
 - Goals clearly define your objective → focused efforts
 - The process of setting goals helps to minimize unproductive efforts
- Setting *proper* goals is critical to success
 - Poorly defined goals
 - create frustration – “Why can’t I achieve that goal?”
 - mislead efforts – “Why did I do all of that work?”
 - hurt morale – “I can never achieve my goals!”
- How do you define an effective goal statement?

SMART Goals

■ Criteria for SMART Goals

- S = Specific
- M = Measurable
- A = Achievable
- R = Rewarding
- T = Timed

■ Effective goals should meet all of these criteria

Specific

- Goals should clearly define what you want to happen
- Specific goals help to focus efforts
- Answers questions: What, Why, How
 - WHAT are you going to do?
 - Use action words such as direct, organize, coordinate, lead, develop, plan, build etc.
 - WHY is this important to do at this time?
 - What do you want to ultimately accomplish?
 - HOW are you going to do it?
- Example
 - Don't: set a goal to lose weight or be healthier
 - Do: set a goal to walk 5 miles 2x/week

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Measurable

- Goal statement is a metric for success
- You have to be able to measure it in order to manage it and know you have met your goal
- Identifying short-term measures help to see progress toward the ultimate goal
 - Seeing progress along the way toward your goal helps to keep you motivated
- **Example**
 - Unmeasurable: Learn more about biosensors
 - Measurable: Read 3 biosensors papers each week

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Achievable

- Choose goals that you can achieve
 - Unachieved goals will hurt your motivation
- Do not set goals too far beyond your reach
 - A realistic goal should push you but not break you (emotionally, physically, etc.)
 - Realistic does not mean “easy”!
- Set goals that are challenging but can be attained with some effort
 - Aim for satisfying achievement
 - You can always set a “higher” goal later
- **Example**
 - “I want to become a world famous scientist.”
 - “I want to finish my PhD so I can do scientific research for a career.”

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Rewarding

- Your goals must be relevant to you and provide perceivable benefit to your life
- The rewards for successful efforts must be clear to you to keep you motivated
 - sometimes rewards come indirectly, as in helping your team or your community
- Reward yourself for achieving a goal in order to maintain your drive to finish other goals
 - proper motivation is vital to success
- Rewards are often not described goal statements but should be clear to the goal setter

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Timed

- Goals must have a timeframe (deadline) and be trackable over time
- An end point on your goal provides a clear target to complete your efforts
- Without a timeline, you may tend to keep putting off your work toward your goal
- Goal timeline must also be
 - measurable
 - attainable/realistic
- **Example**
 - “I will defend my PhD thesis.”
 - “I will complete one chapter of my dissertation each month.”

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