

Effective Goal Setting – SMART Goals



Creating SMART goals is a great way to ensure that the objectives we desire to meet are attainable. If the goals we set are not clearly defined and measurable, chances are they will never be met. These types of goals are more often met because they encourage you to define your objectives and set completion dates. SMART goals are also easy to use without the need for special tools or training.

Let's take a dive into the details of SMART goals...

1. Specific

Your goals should be clearly defined. If they are not, it will be difficult to focus your efforts or even feel motivated to achieve them. When creating goals, it can be helpful to think through the following questions:

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

2. Measurable

The ability to track progress is incredibly important. Measurable goals allow for this tracking. Assessing your goal progress helps you stay focused, meet deadlines, and creates excitement as you near goal completion.

Measurable goals should answer questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?

- How will I know when it is accomplished?

3. Achievable

Successful goals must be realistic and attainable. They should stretch your abilities, but still be possible. If you are unable to plan or visualize how you will meet the goal, it is likely that the goal will not be met. Make sure to take into consideration not only your own limitations, but limitations beyond your control such as organizational vision, other departmental initiatives, financial constraints, etc...

4. Relevant

The key to this step is ensuring that this goal matters to you, your department, and/or the organization. Make sure your goals help drive the TCU towards its vision.

A relevant goal should be able to answer "yes" to the following 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?
- Is it applicable to the organization's current environment?

5. Time-bound

Every goal needs a targeted completion date. It is vitally important to have a timeframe you are working within to complete your goal. Having this date will help combat the temptation to allow the day-to-day to take complete priority over the longer-term goals. When considering the timing for your goals, ponder the following questions:

- When does the goal need to be met?
- What can I do to work toward the goal now?
- Where does my progress need to be 6 weeks from now?
- Where does my progress need to be 6 months from now?