

CREATING S.M.A.R.T. GOALS

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Time-bound

Specific: Goal objectives should address the five Ws ... who, what, when, where, and why. Make sure the goal specifies what needs to be done with a timeframe for completion. Use action verbs ... create, design, develop, implement, produce, etc. *Example: resolve accounting discrepancies within 48 hours.*

Measurable: Goal objectives should include numeric or descriptive measures that define quantity, quality, cost, etc. How will you and your staff member know when the goal has been successfully met? Focus on elements such as observable actions, quantity, quality, cycle time, efficiency, and/or flexibility to measure outcomes, not activities. *Example: secure pledges from ten new donors by the end of each week.*

Achievable: Goal objectives should be within the staff member's control and influence; a goal may be a "stretch" but still feasible. Is the goal achievable with the available resources? Is the goal achievable within the timeframe originally outlined? Consider authority or control, influence, resources, and work environment support to meet the goal. *Example: obtain the XYZ professional certification within two years.*

Relevant: Goals should be instrumental to the mission of the department (and ultimately, the institution). Why is the goal important? How will the goal help the department achieve its objectives? Develop goals that relate to the staff member's key accountabilities or link with departmental goals that align with the institutional strategic goals. *Example: develop and implement a diversity recruitment plan that increases the number of diversity candidates by ten percent.*

Time-bound: Goal objectives should identify a definite target date for completion and/or frequencies for specific action steps that are important for achieving the goal. How often should the staff member work on this assignment? By when should this goal be accomplished? Incorporate specific dates, calendar milestones, or timeframes that are relative to the achievement of another result (i.e., dependencies and linkages to other projects). *Example: check the fire alarms and emergency lighting in all buildings every six months.*