

## SMART Goals

**S**

Goals should be **specific**.

Your goal should have its expected outcome stated as simply, concisely and explicitly as possible. A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six “W” questions:

- Who: Who is involved?
- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Where: Identify the location.
- When: Establish a time frame.
- Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- Why: Specific reasons or purpose of goal.

**Goal Needs Work:**  
I want to work with people.

**Goal is Much Better:**  
I want to plan social and educational programs for children and adolescents.

**M**

Goals should be **measurable**.

How will I know when it is accomplished? A measurable goal has an outcome that can be assessed either on a sliding scale (1-10) or percent (0-100%), or as a yes/no or success/failure.

Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the satisfaction of reaching your goal.

**Goal Needs Work:**  
I want to do well in my classes.

**Goal is Much Better:**  
I want to earn a 3.0 GPA this year with no grade below a B.

**A**

Goals should be **action based**.

How will the goal be executed or followed through? Don’t expect a goal to happen on its own or for a goal to spontaneously appear completed. Decide on what specific actions or procedures need to be completed in order for the goal to be realized, and then get to work.

**Goal Needs Work:**  
Have schoolmates at homecoming game to support the team.

**Goal is Much Better:**  
Advertise with posters, promote on the AM announcements and ask schoolmates to attend.

**R**

Goals should be **realistic**.

**This is not a synonym for “easy.” Realistic, in this case, means “do-able.”**

To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be. Too difficult and you set the stage for failure, but too low sends the message that you aren’t very capable. **Set the bar high enough for a satisfying achievement!**

**Goal Needs Work:**  
I wish to thoroughly review each career listed in the Occupational Outlook Handbook.

**Goal is Much Better:**  
I will spend time in the Career Resource Lab researching careers associated with my Communication major.

**T**

Goals should be **time-defined**.

Trackable goals allow you to monitor your progress.

Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by twelfth grade. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a **clear target** to work towards.

If you don’t set a time, the commitment is too vague. It tends not to happen because you feel you can start at any time. Without a time limit, there’s no urgency to start taking action now.

**Goal Needs Work:**  
I want to get in shape.

**Goal is Much Better:**  
I will start running three times a week and be in better shape by the first day of summer vacation.