

What is a SMARTER goal?

When the SMART acronym was first introduced to the world it stood for:

- S. - Specific**
- M. - Measurable**
- A. - Achievable**
- R. - Relevant**
- T. - Time based**



Eventually, the variant SMARTER was adopted to include:

- E. - Evaluate**
- R. - Reassess**

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Specific

What exactly do you want to achieve? The more specific your description, the bigger the chance you'll get exactly that. *Goal setting clarifies the difference between 'I want to be a millionaire' and 'I want to make \$50,000 a month for the next ten years by creating a new software product'.*

Questions you may ask yourself when setting your goals and objectives are:

- What exactly do I want to achieve?
- Where?
- How?
- When?
- How? What are the conditions and limitations?
- Why exactly do I want to reach this goal? Is it important enough to me that I feel immediately motivated to achieve it?

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Measurable

Measurable goals mean that you identify exactly what it is you will see, hear, and feel when you reach your goal. It means breaking your goal down into measurable elements. You'll need concrete evidence. *Being happier is not evidence; not smoking anymore because you adhere to a healthy lifestyle where you eat vegetables twice a day and fat only once a week, is.*

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Attainable

Is your goal attainable? That means investigating whether the goal really is acceptable to you. You weigh the effort, time and other costs your goal will take against the benefits and the other obligations and priorities you have going on.

If you don't have the time, money or resources to reach a certain goal you might not be able to attain it and that is not motivational. That doesn't mean that you can't take something that seems impossible and make it happen by planning smartly and going for it!

There's nothing wrong with shooting for the stars; if you aim to make your department twice as efficient this year as it was last year with no extra labour involved, how bad is it when you only reach 1.8 times?

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Relevant

Is reaching your goal relevant to you? Do you actually **want** to run a multinational, be famous, have three children and a busy job? You decide for yourself if the goal fits for you, or if your team has the bandwidth. If you're lacking skills, you can plan trainings. If you lack resources, you can look for ways of getting them.

The main question is why do you want to reach this goal? What is the objective behind the goal, and will this goal really achieve that?

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Time Based

Make a tentative plan of everything you do. Everybody knows that deadlines are what makes most people switch to action. Create deadlines for yourself and go after them. Keep the timeline realistic and flexible. Set yourself up for success.

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Evaluate

Did you make it all the way to Goal Attainment? Thank goodness you put those measures in place! This is how you'll be able to concretely demonstrate what was achieved.

S.M.A.R.T.E.R. Goal Setting: Readjust

Having a step at the end where you can look at your goal journey holistically and determine what you would do again, what you would leave out, and what you could try additionally will help with all of your future goal setting cycles. Live and Learn.

What is the difference between goals and objectives?

The words are often used interchangeably in error. The difference is actually quite a simple one. Objectives are the sub goals of your goals. That is, they are the steps you'll take to accomplish your goal.

Objectives need to be SMARTER too! For each objective statement include the aspects from SMARTER goal setting. Some will be more complex than others. Some will be very simple and involve maybe a single task.

