

# SETTING EFFECTIVE GOALS



## Why should I set goals?

Setting goals can help you stay focused with what you want to accomplish. Goal setting is a practice that can be used in all parts of your life including your school work. Long term goals can provide a vision for you while short term goals can provide motivation. SMART goals is a successful method for writing out goals.

---

## SMART Goals

Writing SMART goals helps provide clarity of the what, how, and when. You can attain almost any goal you set if you plan out the steps to reach it. SMART stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. SMART goals are clear and are easily understood.

### Specific

- ◆ The goal needs to state *what* is to be achieved, by *whom*, *where*, and *when* it is to be achieved.
- ◆ Not all of the questions will be applicable to every goal, but always ask all of the questions to evaluate how specific the goal is and to help make it clear.
- ◆ Ask yourself, *does your goal clearly and specifically state what you want to achieve?*

### Measurable

- ◆ The goal needs to state *how much*, *how many*, or *how will I know when it is accomplished?* Measurability applies to both the end result and the accomplishments along the way to reaching the goal.
- ◆ Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress towards your goal.
- ◆ Ask yourself, *how will I know if progress is being made on achieving my goal? Can I quantify or put numbers to the outcome?*

### Attainable

- ◆ The goal you set should be achievable. You need to believe you can reach your goal. If you do not think it is attainable than it is not a smart goal to set.
- ◆ Ask yourself, *what factors may prevent me from accomplishing my goal?*

### Relevant

- ◆ The goal needs to be relevant to what you want to achieve in the future. How does the goal align with other parts of your life?
- ◆ Ask yourself, *why is achieving this goal important to you? What effect will achieving this goal have on your life?*

### Time-bound

- ◆ The goal should have a time line or a deadline. This help with not putting the goal to the side and accomplishing it in a timely manner.
- ◆ Long term goals should be broken down into smaller specific goals.
- ◆ Ask yourself, *when will I reach my goal?*

# SMART GOALS

## Examples of SMART Goals

- I want to earn a 3.0 or higher this semester, with no grade below a B.
- I will fill out the whole study guide for Chapter 7 on Wednesday.
- I will go to Zumba class on Tuesday and Friday this week.

## Writing SMART Goals

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date by which you plan to achieve your goal: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your goal in one sentence? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The benefits of achieving this goal will be: \_\_\_\_\_

## Verify that your goal is SMART

**Specific:** What exactly will you accomplish? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Measurable:** How will you know when you have reached your goal?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Attainable:** Is attaining this goal realistic with effort and commitment?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Relevant:** Why is this goal important to you? \_\_\_\_\_

**Time-bound:** When will you achieve this goal? \_\_\_\_\_

## Action Plan

What specific steps do you need to take to achieve your goal:

Task/To Do Item: \_\_\_\_\_ Expected completion date: \_\_\_\_\_

## RESOURCES

University Counseling Service

3223 Westlawn South

319-335-7294

ucs@uiowa.edu

<http://counseling.studentlife.uiowa.edu/>

Academic Support & Retention

310 Calvin Hall

319-335-1733

uc-swatprogram@uiowa.edu

<http://uc.uiowa.edu/student-success/swat>

Works Cited:

[www.executive-and-life-coaching.com](http://www.executive-and-life-coaching.com)

<http://www.mindtools.com/page6.html>

[www.tacoma.washington.edu/diversity/programs/ssmp/SMART\\_Goals\\_worksheet.pdf](http://www.tacoma.washington.edu/diversity/programs/ssmp/SMART_Goals_worksheet.pdf)

[www.uiowa.edu/~fusstfdv/perfmgt/smart\\_goals.pdf](http://www.uiowa.edu/~fusstfdv/perfmgt/smart_goals.pdf)