How to Guide – SMART Goals

What is a SMART goal?

SMART goals are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound. When we use the **SMART** acronym to create our goals, we know we have a meaningful goal that can be measured. Using the SMART framework allows you to clarify your ideas, focus your efforts, and allocate your time in a way that promises the most return with the highest chance of achievement.

S	M	A	R	T
Specific	**Measurable**	**Attainable**	**Relevant**	**Time Bound**
Well defined with a specific outcome	Progress and outcome can be tracked	Realistic with a high likelihood of success	Meaningful and connects to overall vision/mission	Has a clearly defined start and end date

What makes a good SMART goal?

The best SMART goals are those that closely align with the organization's performance dimensions. They should challenge you while still being achievable and easily measurable. For example, if career development is a priority, an excellent SMART goal could be "to complete an advanced course in digital marketing within the next six months."

Common types of goals:
- Increase
- Reduce
- Make / Create
- Improve / Enhance
- Save

What are some example SMART goals?

- **Quality and Safety.** Reconcile department financial reports by the 15th of every month with no increase in reconciliation errors.

- **Customer Experience.** Increase percentage of trays cleared from inpatient rooms within 60 minutes of serving from 80% to 95% by end of Q3.

- **People Engagement.** Improve by 25% in 2024 on the question 'There are no substantial obstacles at work to doing my job well' in 2024 by conducting Stay Interviews with each team member to clarify roles and identify barriers.

- **Efficiency.** Reduce the average hold time to schedule appointments by 1 minute by the end of Q4.

- **Research and Education.** Reduce overtime in the department from 150 hours per month to 50 hours per month by the end of the fiscal year with no increase in incident reports.

- **Individual Development.** Attend one professional development event each quarter on the topic of communication to strengthen interactions with patients and customers.

ORGANIZATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT & LEARNING

How to Write Your SMART Goal

S – Specific

Be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think about this as the mission statement for your goal.

❓ What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?

"**S**" actions may include:

Oversee	Update	Write
Coordinate	Upgrade	Process
Supervise	Develop	Provide
Manage	Create	Maintain
Plan	Implement	Reconcile
Support	Evaluate	Direct
Transition	Produce	Administer

M – Measurable

You should have some clear definition of success to help you evaluate progress and achievement. This often answers, "how much" or "how many" and highlights how you'll know you achieved your goal.

❓ How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?

"**M**" types and tools may include:

Data Types	Tools to Collect Data
Quality/accuracy rates	Automated reports
Amounts produced	Audits, tests
Revenue generated	Surveys
Productivity rates	Work products, samples
Customer Satisfaction	Other documents

A – Achievable

Your goal should be challenging, but still reasonable to achieve. Reflecting on this component can reveal any potential barriers you may need to overcome to achieve success.

❓ Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?

R – Relevant

What you are trying to achieve with your goal should be meaningful to you and align to broader organizational efforts. A goal that is relevant should not only be a priority but also worthwhile to you.

❓ Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with organizational efforts / initiatives? Why do I want to work on this goal?

T – Time-Bound

Every goal needs a target date, something that motivates you to achieve it. It's important to set a specific timeframe to achieve your goal and be realistic on what can be accomplished within your timeframe.

❓ What's the deadline? Is the timeframe realistic?