

Use Smart Goals to Kill Procrastination and Achieve Success

There isn't an individual or company on the planet that doesn't want to experience success in life. Success, however, can never be met unless goals are first set into place. Without goals, most people simply lack the focus and direction required to overcome obstacles and move forward. Goals not only motivate, they act as benchmarks for determining whether achievements are actually being met.

Knowing where you want to go and making specific plans for getting there will help you succeed.

Although the concept of setting goals is one accepted by the majority of people, how to actually go about doing it is something that mystifies many. Goals must be sharp and clearly defined for an individual to be able to measure achievement. Having specific steps outlined helps forward progress, and being able to check off each step as it is accomplished helps to raise self-confidence and renew commitment to reach the end.

Just what are SMART goals?

There are goals, and then there are really *powerful* goals. In order to create the second kind it's best to use the SMART mnemonic. SMART usually stands for:

- **S** – Specific
- **M** – Measurable
- **A** – Attainable
- **R** – Relevant
- **T** – Time-bound

The SMART method prevents any vagueness that can and will get in the way of achieving a goal. Instead of a vague goal such as “Become a millionaire,” a more powerful goal to achieve would first be to “Pay off debt by the end of the year.”

SMART goals are beneficial to small businesses.

SMART goals are as beneficial to businesses as they are to individuals. Setting tightly-focused goals that are measurable allows the team to work as a cohesive unit with one agenda in mind.

Helps create an action plan with a specific timeframe. When it comes to project management, action plans are necessary in order to give a framework in which to work. Action plans offer an efficient means for completing activities within a certain timeframe and ensure no steps are ignored or forgotten.

“Specifics” give employees clear directions to follow and goals to strive for. Specific, highly descriptive goals force team leaders and members to focus on clear outcomes one at a time.

The “measurability” makes it easy for employers to track progress. One of the most beneficial qualities of SMART goals is that they are measurable. These types of goals can be broken down into increments or numerical and financial terms. Since outcomes can be measured, it’s easier to understand if efforts are paying off or not.

“Attainable” goals can help to encourage managers and staff to grow. Since SMART goals are attainable, that is they can be achieved within certain constraints of time and budget and other external variants, they provide a way for team members to feel pride and self confidence which allows the team to grow together.

Being “realistic” is vital for small businesses that are working under a limited budget. SMART goals are realistic ones. They can absolutely be achieved within the timeframe set provided team members keep momentum moving forward and take all of the necessary steps. This is different than setting vague goals that are more of wishes than actual goals.

Being “timely” will help you see what is working and what can be adjusted. Many business owners prefer to align SMART goals with accounting periods so that results may be measured against sales or contracts, but, in general, SMART goals can be measured over periods ranging from a few weeks to entire quarters.

SMART goals improve time management. Many teams are faced with daunting tasks that can take many months to complete. SMART goals allow team leaders to set up a series of milestones and benchmarks so that short-term goals can be focused on, one at a time, and schedules can be more easily maintained.

Goal setting is an important process in reaching any success. SMART goals are not just important, they are powerful in their ability to keep individuals focused and motivated.