S.M.A.R.T. Goals & Objectives

In your academic career at OHSU as well as in your professional career as a nurse, you are asked to set goals and monitor your progress as you work towards them. These S.M.A.R.T. Goals & Objectives apply to multiple nursing situations, such as setting goals for your professional development and self-care, as well as helping patients set measurable and attainable health goals. Writing clear and strong statements using the S.M.A.R.T. format takes practice, but when you are able to clarify and outline your goals, you will ultimately better serve your organization, team, and patients.

What are S.M.A.R.T. Goals?

Letter	Description
S **SPECIFIC**	Objectives should be well-defined and clear to other team members and to stakeholders who also understand the program or plan, the "who" and the "what." **Prompts:** What exactly will you do? Who will execute the action? What is the action? What do you intend to impact? Who is responsible for carrying out the action? What are you intending to impact? Who is your target population?
M **MEASURABLE**	Measures show success, improvement, or impact over time. **Prompts:** How much and in what direction will the change occur? What data will be used to prove the target is met? Where will this data come from? Is there another measure that would be more appropriate to use instead?
A **ACHIEVABLE**	Objectives should be within reach for your team or program, considering available resources, knowledge, and time. **Prompts:** How can this objective be accomplished? Given the current timeframe or environment, can this objective be achieved? Should we scale it up or down? What limitations stand in our way?
R **RELEVANT**	Consider if and how successfully completing an objective will be relevant to achieving the goal. Why is this relevant? **Prompts:** Will this objective lead to achieving your/this organization's goals? Is it meaningful to stakeholders? Who cares if you do or do not work towards this objective?
T **TIME-BOUND**	Objectives should be achievable within a specific timeframe that isn't so soon as to prevent success, or so far away as to encourage procrastination. **Prompts**: When will this objective be achieved? Is this time-frame realistic? Should it be closer or further in the future?

Example Sentence Structures

- [Who] **will do** [what] **resulting in** [measure] **by** [when].
- **By** [when], [who] **will do** [what] **resulting in** [measure].
- **By** [when], [measure - includes who and what].
- [Measure – includes who and what] **by** [when].

Examples of actual S.M.A.R.T Objectives

❌ **Not S.M.A.R.T. objectives**	⭐ Better S.M.A.R.T. objectives
Formal 90% of youth participants will participate in lessons on assertive communication skills. This objective is not SMART because it is not specific or time-phased. It can be made SMART by specifically indicating who will do the activity, by when, and who will participate in lessons on assertive communication skills.	**Formal:** By the end of the school year, district school-based nurses will have delivered lessons on assertive communication skills to 90% of youth participants in the middle school HIV- prevention curriculum.
Personal Goal/Reflection: I will try to exercise regularly at a new time, because I think I will feel less stressed and pressured by my obligations. This objective is not SMART because it is not specific, measurable, or time-based. It can be made SMART by adding a specific time period, who is responsible, and how the goal will be measured.	**Personal Goal/Reflection:** I will work out 4 times in the evening for 1 week and keep a log of my progress; each day I will reflect on my session and general mood before and after my workout.

For more tips, tricks, and ideas for building SMART goals and objectives, request a consultation with the writing coaches at the SON Office of Learning & Writing Support (www.ohsu.edu/school-of-nursing/learning-writing-support/request-consultation).