

Setting Goals

SMART goals were developed by George Doran, Arthur Miller and James Cunningham in their 1981 article “There’s a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management goals and objectives” .

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART)

Specific: What are you trying to do? Who is going to be part of the team? Why are you trying to do this? Where is what you are trying to do taking place? When will you do what you need to do? Be specific, provide a clear picture and hold people accountable.

Measurable: How will you measure what you are doing? Is it by the number of people attending an event, the number of people navigating your webpage? How will you assess your achievement?

Attainable: With the tools that you have can you reach your goal? If not, what do you need? If you are trying to fundraise to buy winter coats for two-hundred children, can you obtain the amount of money needed to purchase the coats, can you find donors or establish a partnership with a local store?

Realistic: Can you *actually* meet the goals you are setting forth? Using the same example: if you only have three people in your organization, how much time and effort can the three of you give in order to fundraise for two hundred coats? If the objective is not realistic, what do you need to do to make it so or do you need to change the objective?

Timely: What is the timeline to meet your goals? Work backwards. Start with your final objective and backwards plan to create an outline. Backwards planning gives the big picture and helps identify all that needs to get done. Logistics can be tricky: transportation, room reservations, requisitions, purchases, advertising all require work in advance.

Goal setting can be daunting but can be key when executing a project. Once accomplished, goal setting provides a place for reflection and to identify areas for future growth or change.

Why Set Goals?

Goal setting can:

- add value to the work that you are doing
- help disseminate the workload more evenly
- allow you to assess your progress along the way
- help you figure out how to move forward if you encounter drawbacks
- manage your time more effectively which can diminish burn out or needless work for you or your group
- establish what you are trying to accomplish
- clarify the definition of success
- develop clear purpose which can help with recruitment of volunteers or community partners

- inform budget development and, identification of resources
- demonstrate that your organization is going to provide manageable tasks
- help you work smarter not harder