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Using the SMART methodology when writing goals ensures clarity, shared expectations and motivation to achieve goals. While there are a number of interpretations of the acronym, the most common one is that goals should be **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **R**elevant, and **T**ime-bound.

When you use SMART, you can create clear, attainable and meaningful goals, and develop the motivation, action plan, and support needed to achieve them. Specifying who, what, where, when and why for the goal and ensuring shared understanding of expectations will result in clearer goals and success.

Applying the SMART acronym in reverse, starting with defining the time, will result in clear, challenging goals that motivate. By starting with the time-bound criteria, you can determine if the goal is relevant and attainable within a specific time frame.

	S	**Specific, significant, stretching** • Goals should be clear and define what is expected or what to accomplish. • Answer the 5 Ws: What, Why, Who, When, Where, and How. • Avoid generalities and use action verbs as much as possible (i.e. lead, develop, plan, build, direct, etc).
	M	**Measurable, meaningful, motivational** • Establish specific criteria and milestones along the way that will enable tracking progress towards goal achievement. • Understanding how the goal is assessed helps with staying focused and motivated.
	A	**Attainable, agreed upon, achievable, action-oriented, acceptable** • Goals should be reasonable given the situation and capabilities, yet stretch abilities and provide learning opportunities. • Access to resources and ongoing coaching support can ensure successful goal achievement.
	R	**Relevant, realistic, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented** • Where appropriate, link the goal to higher-level departmental or organizational goals - the results that we're striving to achieve. This helps ensure understanding how individual goals and actions contribute to the attainment of the higher level goal. • Align to individual's role and responsibilities, as well as their unique needs, interests and motivators.
	T	**Time bound, time-based, timely, tangible, trackable** • The "by when" to guide the goal to success and timely completion. • Include deadlines, dates, frequency and milestones. • Consider other activities and priorities that must be accomplished in the same time period.

Questions to ask when writing SMART goals

Here are some questions that you may ask yourself when setting SMART goals:

T **Time-bound**
- When does the goal need to be completed?
- What are the deadlines, dates, frequency and milestones?
- Should it be broken down into smaller goals?

R **Relevant**
- Is the goal relevant to both the individual and the organization?
- How is it aligned to strategy and other goals (i.e. organizational, department, and individual)?
- Is development needed?

A **Attainable**
- What is the effort required for achieving other goals?
- Do the skills required to achieve the goal exist?
- What resources and support are available?

M **Measurable**
- How will you demonstrate and measure the extent to which the goal has been met?
- What are the quantitative or qualitative measures?
- Answer: How much? How many? How will you know when it is accomplished?

S **Specific**
- What specifically do you want to accomplish?
- What is the business result of achieving the goal?
- Answer: What is the outcome? Why is the goal relevant? Who shares or is impacted by the goal? When does the goal need to be achieved by? and How will the goal be achieved?

An example of a SMART goal

For Q1 2018, I will increase new customer leads by 15% over Q1 2017 actuals.
I will achieve this goal by working daily with Sales Operations data, completing a minimum of 15 new lead generation live calls per day to drive a target of 10 qualified new customer leads identified each week.

Time-bound	By the end of Q1 2018.
Relevant	The organization goal is to increase new customer acquisition in 2018 by 8%. My team's goal is to increase new customer leads by 15%.
Attainable	I will accomplish my goal by working with sales operations data and committing to a set number of calls each day.
Measurable	Increase new customer leads by 15%, which will come through completing 15 new calls each day to drive 10 qualified customer leads each week.
Specific	Call targets to complete each day to drive new leads each week.

What's next?

Now that you are more familiar with writing SMART goals, here are additional resources to help with successful goal setting and management.

1 [How to excel at goal management](#)

2 [5 Great Articles On Goal Setting](#)

3 [Employee goal setting template](#)

4 [Setting goals in TalentSpace](#)

5 [Assigning goals to multiple employees in TalentSpace](#)

6 [Updating your goals in TalentSpace](#)

Also, check these sites out for other helpful resources.

- [Champions HQ](#)
- [Saba Support](#)
- [Saba Talent Management](#)
- [Saba Blog](#)