

SMART Goals

Element	Description	Questions to ask to test the goal
<p>S</p> <p>Specific</p>	Goals should include specific information on the what, when, where and with whom.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the goal well-defined, including specific details on what should be delivered? Does the goal specify details such as what, when, where, how and with whom it should be delivered?
<p>M</p> <p>Measurable</p>	Goals should highlight how success will be measured e.g. research publications submitted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the goal include delivery details that can be quantified? Can progress and overall delivery be tracked through, for example, relevant quantities, scores or percentages?
<p>A</p> <p>Achievable</p>	Goals should not be too hard or too easy. Set goals that require something to strive for but not so unrealistic they cannot be reached.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the goal achievable in the context of the role, organisation and any constraints that may exist? Do you have the necessary skills, capability and/or resources?
<p>R</p> <p>Relevant</p>	Delivery goals should align with team, organisational unit and University priorities. Development goals should align with the career interests and direction of the individual. Consider how to align goals with strengths and interests.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the goal directly relevant to your role? Is the goal aligned to the broader goals or objectives of your organisational unit or team?
<p>T</p> <p>Timebound</p>	Goals should outline when each aspect of the goal will be realistically achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the goal include a timeline for delivery? Are specific dates included for deliverables, considering the various elements that might need to be delivered and dependencies on other elements

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Locke & Latham, are two authors noted for their goal-related research. Locke & Latham define goals as:

“
...the object or aim of an action, for example, to attain a specific standard of proficiency, usually within a specified time limit.”

Contemporary research demonstrates that goals drive improved performance for both individuals and teams by:



Top tips

For more literature on the importance of goal setting and impact on performance take a look at these articles:

- [*The development of goal setting theory: A half century retrospective*](#) (2019) by Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P.
- [*New directions in goal-setting theory*](#) (2006) by Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P.
- [*Role of performance goals in prose learning*](#) (1976) by LaPorte, R. E., & Nath, R.
- [*The effect of distal learning, outcome, and proximal goals on a moderately complex task*](#) (2001) by Seijts, G. H. & Latham, G. P.