Writing Effective Goals

Think of goal setting in terms of the acronym SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-framed).

- **Specific**
  1. Is easy to understand
  2. Specifies desired future results
  3. Identifies actions to be taken or results to be achieved that will contribute to the achievement of a larger objective within a time period
  4. Uses concrete action verbs

- **Measurable**
  1. Describe how each goal will be measured
  2. Answer the questions
     a) How will I know when the result has been achieved?
     b) How will I verify the achievement/performance of this goal?
     c) To what level do we need to achieve this result?
  3. Identify the qualitative factors involved and sets measures for them

- **Achievable**
  1. The goal is realistic even with all the other commitments within the unit
  2. The goal is within the individual’s/unit’s/team’s control and influence

- **Relevant**
  1. The goal is in alignment with the mission of your department, unit, or work group [organization]
  2. The goal relates to broader objectives that your department wishes to achieve

- **Time Framed**
  1. There is a specific time frame to achieve this goal (beginning and end date)
  2. May include interim steps and a plan to monitor progress
  3. May establish a time frame for short and long-term goals

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1 [http://www.yale.edu/hronline/focus/goal.html](http://www.yale.edu/hronline/focus/goal.html)