

# Yearn to Achieve Big Goals by Reaching Small Milestones

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Goals give you motivation and a sense of direction. Not having a goal can make you feel empty and unenthusiastic about living. When you set goals, you give yourself targets to aim for. Your life becomes more fun, valuable, and worth living.

## The S.M.A.R.T Criteria

If you're having a hard time setting goals for yourself, you can try using the SMART criteria. The term was first seen published in the November 1981 issue of *Management Review* by George T. Doran.

S – Specific

M – Measurable

A – Achievable

R – Realistic

T – Timely

A SMART goal can help you focus better and improve your chances of reaching your goal.

**Specific** goals are well-defined. They are clear and unambiguous.

To create a specific goal, you have to consider the “5 W’s”: who, what, when, where, and why. Answer the following questions with complete honesty:

- a. Who is involved in this goal?
- b. What do I want to accomplish?
- c. When do I plan to achieve this goal?
- d. Where do I plan to achieve this goal?

- e. Why do I want to achieve this goal?

Remember that your goal has to be *specific*.

A general goal is something like “I want to earn a lot of money.” Now, this sounds very unambiguous, right? How much is “a lot”? A specific amount was not indicated.

A specific goal would be “I want to earn at least \$150,000 this year.”

**Measurable** goals have certain criteria that let you measure your progress as you reach for them. It is crucial to measure your progress to see how far along you are to reaching your goal.

So, to make your goal measurable, you have to ask yourself the following questions:

- a. How many or How much?
- b. How do I determine when I’ve accomplished my goal?
- c. What is my progress indicator?

For example, your goal is to lose weight. Now, you cannot simply say “I want to lose weight”. You have to be specific. So, you have to say “I want to lose 2 lbs. per week.”

Then, you have to make your goal measurable. So, you need to take action and track your progress. In order to lose 2 lbs. per week, you have to burn about 500 to 1,000 calories more than you consume per day. You can hit the gym and go on a diet. Be sure to consult your doctor as well.

**Achievable** goals are attainable and not impossible to achieve. Although challenging, they are well-defined.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- a. Can I achieve this goal using the resources that I have?
- b. If I cannot achieve this goal using my available resources, what could I be missing?
- c. Has this goal been achieved by other people before?

**Realistic** goals align with your reality. They are relevant and within your reach. They can be obtained using the resources available.

To determine if you have a realistic goal, ask yourself:

- a. Is this goal within my reach?
- b. Is it attainable using resources that I have?
- c. Am I able to commit to reaching this goal?

**Timely** goals are achieved within a specific timeframe. They give you a sense of urgency.

To ensure that your goal is timely, ask yourself:

- a. Does this goal have a deadline?
- b. What is the exact date and/or time that I should have achieved this goal?

Setting SMART goals gives you a sense of direction. They set you up for success by helping you become more organized and prepared.