

SMART Goals

Consider the questions and information below to help you develop SMART goals.

Specific: To set a specific objective you could consider:

- Who is involved?
- What do I want to accomplish?
- What is your time frame?
- What are the requirements and constraints?
- What is the purpose or benefits of accomplishing the objective?

Measurable: Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each objective you set. To determine if your objective is measurable ask questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

Attainable: The objectives should be both possible and realistic while still being challenging. Having an objective that pushes you and allows for personal growth can lead to improvements in your practice.

Relevant: The objective is not only within reach of skill levels but also has meaning and relates directly to your practice and your ability to meet your standards. When an objective is relevant, it increased your commitment and motivation to meet the objective.

Timely: Having a time frame established allows you to monitor your progress, stay on track, make adjustments to meet the overall objective, and gain momentum with each accomplishment along the objective path.

Helpful Action Verbs

It is also helpful to start each learning goal with an action verb that indicates an observable outcome, such as:

- to demonstrate
- to apply
- to communicate
- to organize
- to develop



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- to create
- to plan
- to coordinate
- to identify
- to learn
- to teach
- to implement

Your learning goal(s) may focus on various outcomes, such as:

- knowledge;
- understanding (application of knowledge);
- higher level thinking skills (critical thinking, problem solving);
- affective outcomes such as attitudes, feelings and emotions; and
- performance outcomes (task or behaviour).

Adapted with permission from The Nova Scotia College of Nursing.