



SMART tool: Setting SMART goals

When setting goals, make sure they are **SMART!**

SMART (in this instance) stands for: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic and **T**imed.

Specific

Your goal should be well defined so you have clear direction. For example, setting a goal of exercising more is a bit vague. Be more specific so you know exactly what you need to do. Jogging every morning is a much clearer goal.

Measurable

Measurable goals help you gauge your progress and track whether you accomplished your goal in the time set. Using the previous example, you could measure how many mornings a week you went jogging.

Achievable

Set a goal that you have the means to achieve. If you set a goal of jogging 10 kilometres each morning right from the outset but you are very unfit, you may set yourself up to fail. Remember it's your goal for yourself, not someone else's goal for you. Make it attainable.

Realistic

Ensure the goal is within your means by making sure you have the opportunity and resources you need. For example, if you hate jogging, then jogging daily is probably not a realistic goal for you. Walking to improve your fitness might be a more realistic approach.

Timed

Assign a timeframe to your goal, whether it is short-term or long-term. Having a deadline can help avoid procrastinating. For example, you may decide to start jogging as of the following Monday.

Example

GOAL: I want to start exercising to get fit.

SPECIFIC: I will go for a walk. 

MEASURABLE: I will walk every day. How and when will I know that the walking is making me fit? (Will I be able to walk three times around the block without getting breathless in four-weeks time?)

ACHIEVABLE: Do I have the time to walk every day?

REALISTIC: Do I even enjoy walking? Can I walk every day when I often have to work late?

TIMELY: What day am I going to start walking?