

Fig. 2. How to Write Measurable (SMART) Objectives

Goals vs. Objectives

A **goal** is a broad, brief statement of intent that provides focus or vision for planning. They are non-specific, non-measurable, and usually cannot be attained.

Goal Example

“Participants will have sustained weight loss.”

Objectives are meant to be realistic targets for the project and can help you focus your project on what matters. They are written in active tense and use strong verbs (i.e. plan, write, conduct, etc.). They will always answer the following question:

WHO is going to do **WHAT, WHEN, WHY** (what does it demonstrate), and **TO WHAT STANDARD?**

SMART Objectives

The **SMART** acronym can be very helpful in writing objectives:

Specific—*What exactly are we going to do, with or for whom?*

Be precise about what you are going to achieve.

Measurable—*Is it measurable & can WE measure it?*

Quantify your objectives.

Achievable—*Can we get it done in the proposed timeframe for this amount of money?*

The objective must be realistic given available resources, time period, etc.

Results-oriented—*Will this objective lead to the desired results?*

The outcomes/results of the project directly support the overall goal.

Time-limited—*When will we accomplish this objective?*

A clear statement of when the objective will be achieved.

To develop SMART objectives that will help you reach your goal, fill in the blanks:

By _____, _____ **will have** _____
[WHEN - time-bound] [WHO - specific] [WHAT - specific]
as measured by _____.
[MEASURE (number, rate, percentage of change and baseline) – measureable]

SMART Objective
Example

“By December 31, 2012, 33% of wellness program participants enrolled for at least 3 months during 2012 will meet their weight loss goals, as measured by monthly weigh-ins.”