



# SMART Goals\*

Have you ever said to yourself, “I want to get in better shape,” or “this year I will do better in my classes,” and then failed to achieve your goal? This type of goal setting fails because the goals are too broad and too vague. How will you go about achieving the goal? How will you know when you have reached your desired outcome? Well thought-out goals, by contrast, can motivate and guide you to reach your ultimate vision. This guide will help you to set goals for your officer role or program!

We will first identify the five characteristics of a good goal. We will then lay out an action plan for achieving each goal.

---

A SMART goal is:\*

S = Specific

M = Measurable

A = Attainable

R = Realistic

T = Time Phased

---

## Specific

“Specifics help us to focus our efforts and clearly define what we are going to do.”\*

Example: Instead of, “I will recruit more volunteers” write, “I will recruit five more volunteers by October fifteenth.”

## Measurable

“If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.”\*

For some goals, like the quantitative example above, you will know when you have accomplished your goal. For less concrete goals, “establish concrete criteria for measuring progress. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goals.”\*

Example: “My goal is to build more community among my volunteers. I will know this has occurred when attendance at social events increases by 50%.”

---

\* Revised from: Goal Setting Guide (<http://www.goal-setting-guide.com/smart-goals.html>)





# Public Service Academy Mission, Vision and Goals

---

## Attainable

Research shows that people work hardest to achieve goals that are moderately challenging. People give up quickly if goals are impossibly out of reach, or easily completed. Remember that in setting goals for your program, you must expand your thinking about attainability to your entire team! What will be a challenging, but not impossible, goal for your team to work towards together?

Example—Too Difficult: “I will write 200 pages of curriculum material for my tutors during winter break.”

Example—Too Easy: “I will tell my tutors to look online for curriculum materials.

Example—Just Right: “I will create a 3-5 page reference list of good books and websites where tutors can find curriculum material.”

## Realistic

A realistic goal is one that makes sense in context. Perhaps you could raise \$10,000 to install a permanent computer lab for your camp, but does this make the most sense? There are many other ways that you could focus your time and energy and that might make a bigger difference for your program.

Example: “I want to leave a legacy for my program. I would love to leave a computer lab, but the program really needs a director binder to ensure continuity. I will create a 25-30 page director binder before I step down next month.”

## Time Phased

“Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by [graduation]. Putting an end point on your goal gives you a clear target to work towards. If you don't set a time, the commitment is too vague. It tends not to happen because you feel you can start at any time. Without a time limit, there's no urgency to start taking action now.”\*

## Set Program Goals!

It may seem silly, but one of the most important steps to achieving any goal is to write it down. This ensures that you clarify the goal enough to record it, and that you have something to look back at later in the year!

Go to the SMART Goal Setting Worksheet. Set three to five (3-5) goals for your program in the coming semester (this number is challenging, without being overwhelming). Use a separate worksheet for each goal.

