

Goal Setting Using the SMART Acronym

Goal setting is a process of determining what the participant’s goals are, working towards them and assessing whether their goals are met. A prevalent process for setting goals uses the SMART acronym: **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**ealistic, and **T**imely. This process is recommended when writing participant-centered goals, however it is not mandatory.

<p>S Specific</p>	<p>A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. Provide enough detail so that there is no indecision as to what exactly the participant should be doing.</p> <p>An example of a general goal would be, "<i>Increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.</i>" But a specific goal would say, "<i>By the end of next week, increase fruit and vegetable consumption by including a serving at one meal per day.</i>"</p>
<p>M Measurable</p>	<p>Participant should choose a goal with measurable progress, so the participant can see the change as it occurs. A measurable goal has an outcome that can be assessed either on a sliding scale (1-10), or as a hit or miss, success or failure.</p> <p>Based on our example, "<i>By the end of next week, increase fruit and vegetable consumption by including a serving at one meal per day</i>" would be a measurable goal because we are measuring if the participant consumed fruits and vegetables one meal per day.</p>
<p>A Attainable/Achievable</p>	<p>An achievable goal has an outcome that is realistic given the participant’s current social, economic, or cultural resources and time available. Goal achievement may be more of a stretch if the outcome is difficult to begin with.</p> <p>Our example of a goal was to "<i>By the end of next week, increase fruit and vegetable consumption by including a serving at one meal per day.</i>"</p> <p>Is consuming a serving of fruits and vegetables one meal a day possible for the participant? If not, then this would not be an attainable goal.</p>
<p>R Realistic</p>	<p>Start small so the participant can experience the joy of meeting their goal. Gradually increase the intensity of the goal after having a discussion with the participant, parent or caretaker to redefine the goal.</p> <p>Is our example goal "<i>By the end of next week, increase fruit and vegetable consumption by including a serving at one meal per day</i>" realistic for a WIC participant’s food budget? If not, then we might want to redefine the goal with the participant’s assistance.</p>
<p>T Time Bound</p>	<p>Set a timeframe for the goal: for next week, in three months, by six months.</p> <p>In our example "<i>By the end of next week, increase fruit and vegetable consumption by including a serving at one meal per day</i>" setting an end point for the goal gives the participant a clear target to achieve.</p>