

Goal Setting & Development

You may have heard the acronym “SMART” Goals. It is a popular way of teaching and understanding how to set and accomplish goals. There are many different variations of SMART Goals as different people and organizations adapt its basic structure to meet their needs. The following is a variation of SMART Goals that has been revised to help you set and accomplish your specific goals as a student.

SPECIFIC:

Set some goals! Be clear, concise, and establish *WHY* you are working toward this goal. If your goal is to apply for a law internship...why? Well, because you want to be sure that entering the law field or going to law school is something you will enjoy.

MEASURABLE:

Quantifying your goals sounds like the most tedious or confusing part of creating goals, but it's not. In fact, making your goals measurable is great because you can reward yourself as you hit your *measurable* benchmarks! For example, if your goal is to apply for graduate school and your measurable tasks are to complete each task as follows: write a draft of my personal statement, have someone edit my personal statement, revise my personal statement, and turn in my personal statement, then after each task is accomplished, treat yourself. Go meet up with friends, call your mom (or dad, or parent like figure), or whatever else will motivate you to keep on going!

ACCOUNTABLE:

While most SMART Goals have the “A” represent “achievable,” we would like to believe anything is within your grasp (within reason) with your determination. So instead, how are you going to be *accountable* in achieving your goal? The loose definition of accountable is: your justified actions or decisions. If your goal is to get a 95% or better on your next Philosophy exam, an example of holding yourself accountable could be making the decision to study on Friday night instead of going out to dinner with friends.

RESOURCES:

Be resourceful! Identify what resources you need to achieve your goal. For example, if your goal is to receive a high GRE score, what will you need? Perhaps you will purchase a GRE study book, download a study app for your phone, form a study group, etc. Anticipate what you will need and write it down.

TIME-BOUND:

Big picture, when will you want to achieve this goal? By the end of the semester, next month, a year from now? For some goals it can be helpful to set smaller benchmarks. For instance, if you are writing a research project and your big picture goal is to finish by the end of the semester, set smaller goals for when you will finish collecting research, when you will write your outline, etc.

+FLEXIBILITY:

(Sorry this doesn't fit in with the SMART acronym, but it's the most important part!) Life is not linear. You cannot anticipate everything that will happen to you. When something does happen that is unplanned, be flexible. You can achieve your goals even with setbacks. Readjust, be kind to yourself, and keep moving forward.



Write Your Goals Down

Goal:	
Why this goal?	Completion Date:
Define tasks & steps to be completed: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____ 4) _____	Task 1 Deadline: _____ Task 2 Deadline: _____ Task 3 Deadline: _____ Task 4 Deadline: _____
What resources do you need?	
What evidences will show this goal has been completed?	
Create a reward for accomplishing this goal:	

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