

Making Goals SMART

GOALS are very broad “targets,” which describe an end result you are aiming to accomplish, rather than the steps along the way. Therefore, most successful projects will have only a few broad goals. There may, however, be several good strategies that move you toward each goal.

Writing clear, achievable goals is important to accomplishing what you want to do.

No one knows exactly the origin of the “SMART” process, but it has been associated with Peter Drucker and his seminal work, *The Practice of Management* (1954), and has been popularized in the education field by Rick and Becky DuFour in their extensive work with Professional Learning Communities.

SMART is an acronym for:

Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-based, Time-bound

SMART Goals, then, have these characteristics:

Specific: Goals should be strategic and include details (what, who, how, etc)

Measurable: Decide how you will know if you’re making progress toward a goal.

Attainable: Is the goal realistic, given the resources available, other considerations?

Results-based: What outcomes are anticipated?

Time-bound: State when you expect to accomplish the goal.

Here is an example of a general goal:

“Improve student reading and math scores.”

Here is that same goal re-written as a SMART Goal:

“Within the next two years, increase by fifty percent the number of 6th and 7th grade students scoring at proficient or advanced levels in reading and math. (Currently, only one-third of students score at those levels.)” (Conzemius, 2002, pp. 5-6)

“Because SMART goals provide a basis for assessing progress, and a tool for assuring that team efforts are focused on strategically important targets, they become the engine that drives continuous improvement and learning.” (Conzemius, 2002, pp.5-6)

SMART Goals and Your CONNECT-ED PLC Action Plan/Grant Request

In the draft of your PLC action plan/grant request, look at the “Goals” section and be sure your goals are written as SMART goals.

Reference:

Conzemius, A. and O’Neill, J., 2002, *The Handbook for SMART School Teams*. Solution Tree, Bloomington, IN.