RESOURCE FOR DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES

SMART is a well-known acronym for creating useful objectives. It stands for specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound. Below are full descriptions of each element of SMART and helpful diagnostic questions for evaluating the usefulness of your objectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym element</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Diagnostic Questions</th>
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| **Specific**    | Specific means that the objective is concrete, detailed, focused and well defined. The objective must be straight forwards and emphasize action and the required outcome. Specific also means that it's results and action-orientated. Objectives need to be straightforward and to communicate what you would like to see happen. To help set specific objectives it helps to ask:  
  
  - **WHAT** am I going to do? This are best written using strong, action verbs such as conduct, develop, build, plan, execute, etc. This helps your objective to be action-orientated and focuses on what's most important.  
  - **WHY** is this important for me to do?  
  - **WHO** is going to do what? Who else need to be involved?  
  - **WHEN** do I want this to be completed?  
  - **HOW** am I going to do this?  |
| **Measurable**  | If the objective is measurable, it means that the measurement source is identified and we are able to track the actions as we progress towards the objective. Measurement is the standard used for comparison. |
| **Diagnostic Questions** |  
  - What exactly are we going to do, with or for whom?  
  - What strategies will be used?  
  - Is the objective well understood?  
  - Is the objective described with action verbs?  
  - Is it clear who is involved?  
  - Is it clear where this will happen?  
  - Is it clear what needs to happen?  
  - Is the outcome clear?  
  - Will this objective lead to the desired results?  
  - How will I know that the change has occurred?  
  - Can these measurements be obtained?  |
For example, what financial independence means to one person may be totally different compared to what is means for another.

If you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it.

It’s important to have measures that will encourage and motivate you on the way as you see the change occurring, this may require interim measures.

Measurements (and the visible progress) go along way to help us to know when we have achieved our objective.

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<th>Achievable</th>
<th>Realistic</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<td>Objectives need to be achievable, if the objective is too far in the future, you’ll find it difficult to keep motivated and to strive to attain it.</td>
<td>Objectives that are achievable may not be realistic, however, realistic does not mean easy. Realistic means that you have the resources to get it done.</td>
<td>Time-bound means setting deadlines for the achievement of the objective. Deadlines need to be both achievable and realistic.</td>
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<td>Objectives, unlike your aspirations and visions, need to be achievable to keep you motivated.</td>
<td>The achievement of an objective requires resources, such as, skills, money, equipment, etc. to the task required to achieve the objective. Whilst keeping objectives realistic, ensure that they stretch you.</td>
<td>If you don’t set a time you will reduce the motivation and urgency required to execute the tasks. Agreed Time frames</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives need to stretch you, but not so far that you become frustrated and lose motivation.</td>
<td>Most objectives are achievable but, may require a change in your priorities to make them happen.</td>
<td></td>
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create the necessary urgency and prompts action.

Comparing well-written (useful) objectives with poorly written objectives:

**Specific**

Concrete
Use action verbs

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<th>Example #2: Original Objective:</th>
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<td>xyz supports professional development for staff.</td>
<td>The Learning to Teach Virtual Task Force will facilitate continuing education for instructors.</td>
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</table>

**Specific Objective:** xyz offers Project Management, CRM, and Intro to xyz classes quarterly with the goals of 80% of the divisional staff trained by June, 2008

**Specific Objective:** The Learning to Teach Virtual Task Force will create and update on a quarterly basis a web-based site that contains a list of continuing education opportunities for instructors.

**Measurable**

Numeric or descriptive
Quantity, quality, cost

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<td>The Conference Program Planning committee will increase attendance at its program.</td>
<td>The Committee will encourage nominations by members by creating a Web-based nomination form that will be published on the xyz Web site.</td>
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**Measurable Objective:** The Conference Program Planning committee will increase attendance at its 2008 Annual Conference program by at least 10% over 2007.

**Measurable Objective:** The Nominating Committee will receive at least five nominations by Section members through use of the new Web-based nomination form that will be created and published on the xyz Web site.

**Attainable**

Feasible
Appropriately limited in scope
Within the employee’s control and influence

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<td>Promote issues relating to bibliographic instruction and diversity.</td>
<td>The Education Committee will foster communication between practitioners and graduate school faculty working in the area of library instruction.</td>
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**Attainable Objective:** Complete an annotated bibliography of library instruction publications related to diverse populations for the xyz web site.

**Attainable Objective:** The Education Committee will organize a discussion forum to be held at xyz Conference 2008, and invite
| **Relevant** | **Example #1:**  
**Original Objective:** The Teaching Methods Committee will identify and promote teaching materials useful to practicing bibliographic instruction librarians.  
**Results-focused Objective:** The Teaching Methods Committee will post discussion notes from the xyz conference Discussion Forum 2007 "Share Your Teaching Toolkit: Best Practices in Library Instruction" on its Web site to promote teaching materials useful to practicing bibliographic instruction librarians. | **Example #2:**  
**Original Objective:** The Emerging Technologies in Instruction Committee will promote and facilitate the use of emerging technologies in bibliographic instruction.  
**Results-focused Objective:** The Emerging Technologies in Instruction Committee will develop documents that define, explain, and provide examples of uses of emerging technologies in order to assist educators who are considering or have already started integrating them in their courses. |
|---|---|
| **Time** | **Example #1:**  
**Original Objective:** The Communication Coordinator will update the "xyz Publications Policies and Procedures Manual," clarifying the various publications categories and the processes for creating, approving, and disseminating those publications.  
**Timely Objective:** The Communication Coordinator will update the "xyz Publications Policies and Procedures Manual" by the XYZ Annual Conference 2008, clarifying the various publications categories and the processes for creating, approving, and disseminating those publications. | **Example #2:**  
**Timely Objective:** The Task Force will revise the current Model Statement published in An Owner's Guide to the new Model Statement of Objectives for Academic Bibliographic Instruction (2007). The revision is being conducted in accordance with the 2006 Final |