**NAME**
SMART tool

ACCREDITED TO
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SOURCE
Public Domain

INTRODUCTION

The SMART tool is useful for defining the desirable aim of a project in a clear and concise way. It is the acronym of five words that are the criteria for setting the objectives of the mission and the outcome you wish to achieve. For more information, go to the "Explore" stage of the Shape resources.

S M A R T

| specific | measurable | attainable | realistic | timely |
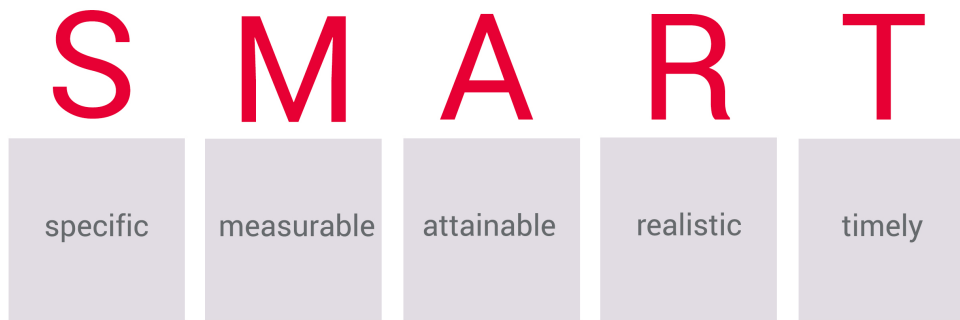
NOTES

To write your aim you can use the SMART tool, often used in project management. This tool highlights the 5 key aspects you should think about before finalising you aim:

Specific

Target a specific area for improvement.
There are several key factors which should be present in the objectives that are set in order for them to be effective. They should be specific. In other words, they should describe specifically the result that is desired. Instead of "better customer service score," the objective should be "improve the customer service score by 12 points using the customer service survey."

Measurable

Quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress.
The second example is much more specific and also addresses the second factor—measurable. In order to be able to use the objectives as a part of a review process it should be very clear whether the person met the objective or not.

Attainable

The next important factor to setting objectives is that they be attainable. For instance, an objective which states "100% customer satisfaction" isn't realistically achievable. A goal of "12% improvement in customer satisfaction" is better — but may still not be achievable if it's assigned to the wrong person.

Realistic

This leads into the next factor—realistic. Realistic objectives are objectives that recognize factors that cannot be controlled. Said another way, realistic goals are potentially challenging but not so challenging that the chance of success is small. They can be accomplished with the tools that the person has at their disposal.

Timely

The final factor for a good objective is that it is time-based. In other words, it's not simply, "improve customer service by 12%," it's "improve customer service by 12% within the next 12 months." This is the final anchor in making the objective real and tangible.

Key learning

Setting organised objectives to help team members make a greater positive impact on the organisation may seem daunting but is simply a matter of taking a few forwards steps and following a simple recipe for success.

USEFUL LINKS

- http://www.techrepublic.com/article/use-smart-goals-to-launch-management-by-objectives-plan/