

Steps to Designing a SMARTER Goal

Step one	Analyze the data to uncover strengths and areas for growth. List between one and three areas for growth. Prioritize your list.
Step two	Complete the SMART checklist for the goal with the highest priority.
S	<i>Make the goals specific!</i> The more specific the better. Your goals must provide clarity and concise aim in the right direction. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What exactly do we want to achieve? • How exactly will we achieve it? • What specific challenges might we face?
M	<i>Make the goals measurable!</i> Having a goal you can measure precisely makes the goal easier to achieve. Provide yourself with a timeline and benchmark your progress. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a timeline for this goal? • Will we have checkpoints along the way? • How will we know if we have accomplished the goal?
A	<i>Make the goals achievable!</i> The goals you set need to be realistic. Sometimes the best way to achieve <i>big</i> goals is to set smaller targets as stepping-stones. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this goal realistic? • Can we feasibly achieve it in the given timeframe?
R	<i>Make the goals relevant!</i> Every goal should have a purpose. Much like learning targets link to the standard, smaller goals should link to bigger learning goals. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does everyone buy into the reason behind the goal? • Is the goal aligned to bigger learning goals?
T	<i>Make the goals timely!</i> Set deadlines for your goals. Consider setting check-in points to monitor your progress. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When is our deadline? • How many checkpoints should we have? • What can we achieve in . . . ?
Step three	Set a time to come back together (before the final deadline) for your check-in, and complete the remaining boxes.
E	<i>Evaluate the goals!</i> Do not wait until the end of your timeline to check your progress. Evaluating your goals helps you stay focused along the way. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How close are we to the goal? • What obstacles are we facing?
R	<i>Reward and readjust the goals!</i> Do not panic and give up if you are not where you hoped to be. Celebrate your growth. (Even teachers need to celebrate!) Then, based on the data you gathered, make some adjustments, and keep moving toward the goal. Consider these questions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we work around our obstacles? • What specifically can we adjust?

Source: Adapted from Conzemius, A. E., & O'Neill, J. (2014). The handbook for SMART school teams: Revitalizing best practices for collaboration (2nd ed.). Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.