

# MEHN Goal Setting

It is recommended you follow the SMART format for goal setting, to make sure you set specific and meaningful targets.

For example:

“I had a goal to lose weight, so six months later I hopped on the scales and found that I lost 100 grams, so technically I had satisfied my goal!”

But did it really satisfy what you wanted to achieve? A better example of a weight loss goal would have been:

“I want to decrease my body weight by five kilograms in 10 weeks time (XX/XX/XX) to help me keep up with my nephews when they come to stay with me. Once achieved, I will reward myself by getting a full body massage.”

Example Strategies:

- Commit to three half hour bike rides per week
- Commit to three half hour weight training sessions per week
- Reduce alcohol intake to two mid strength beers per sitting
- Only drink alcohol on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday
- Have a high fibre cereal Monday - Saturday of the week
- Only dine out (lunch/dinner/breakfast) twice a week

Criterion for weight loss over 10 weeks:

- Poor: 0-1.9kg
- Average: 2-3.9kg
- Good: 4-5.9kg
- Excellent: 6kg+

The above goal is very specific, as it states what is going to be achieved (lose weight). It clearly states the motivation for achieving the goal (to keep up with nephews). There are strategies in place to work towards achieving the goal. It is measurable as there is a numerical value to the goal (5kg's) and it's attainable as it's based on a weight loss of 0.5kg's per week over the 10 weeks. There is a set criterion to establish how the end result meets expectations. The strategies selected are attainable, as they are well within the person's capabilities and, importantly, there is a set time frame to achieve the goal by and a reward for making the achievement.

[www.mehn.org.au](http://www.mehn.org.au)

The **SMART** format for goal setting:

1. Specific
2. Measurable
3. Attainable
4. Reward
5. Time bound

### **Specific**

By writing down specifics it helps you to clearly define what we are going to achieve.

Specific is the What, Why, and How:

WHAT are you going to do?

WHY is this important to achieve?

HOW are you going to do it? (Your strategy that you need to commit to)

### **Measurable**

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. Choose a goal with measurable progress, so you can see if a change has occurred. You can add another field to gauge how successful you've been eg. poor, average, good, or excellent.

### **Attainable**

If you set goals too far out of reach, then you probably won't commit to achieving them. Sometimes you need to break goals down so you can check your results more frequently to make sure you are on track. Even though you might start with the best intentions, feeling that the goal is too hard can stop you from giving it your best effort. But it shouldn't be too easy! A goal should stretch your abilities slightly so that you feel you can do it, if you really give it a go. And your success should hopefully keep you motivated!

Attainable is not another word for 'easy'. In this case, it means achievable. The tools and skills you need should be available and should compliment your strategy. An attainable target may push the capabilities and resources available however shouldn't exceed them.

The goal needs to be realistic for you at this moment in your life. Don't get caught up in trying to be as fit as you were in your youth. You might have once been able to run 10 km in under 40 minutes, but this might not be appropriate for your age/condition now.

Another unrealistic goal is to "never again eat sweets, cakes, crisps and chocolate". There is no need to banish these items. They are simply reward items that should be enjoyed in moderation. Instead, try limiting them to just once/twice per week. Pick a sweets night, or a drinking night. Or you could have quota of how many portions you eat in a week.

### **Reward**

To achieve your goals sometimes sacrifices have to be made. The result at the end of the day is hopefully worth it! Just to make sure, pick a reward for when you achieve you goal. A reward will help give you that little bit extra motivation.

### **Time**

Set a time frame for the goal. A set time period makes it easier for you to commit by giving you a clear target, and helping you to assess your progress along the way. Without a time limit, there's no urgency to start making the changes.



# My SMART Goal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SPECIFIC**

WHAT am I going to do?

WHY is this important to achieve?

HOW am I going to do it?

## **MEASURABLE**

How will my goal be measured?

How will I know when my goal is accomplished?

## **ATTAINABLE**

Is my goal a challenge but still realistic to achieve?

Actions required to achieve my goal:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## **REWARD**

My treat for achieving my goal is:

## **TIME**

Is my goal trackable?

When will my goal be reached? \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_