

SMART Objectives

Specific

Be clear, avoid ambiguity; describe precisely the result to be achieved. Provide sufficient details to prevent any confusion. By being specific, you will know exactly what you need to do: for example, read page X to page Y of the biology manual; sitting on the edge of the bed; walk from the bed to the chair; express frustration using “I”.

Measurable

The behaviour must be measurable and defined in concrete terms. You need to be able to observe it to confirm that the objective was achieved. An indicator will allow you to state that the objective is achieved. Otherwise, it is not very motivating for the person if she does not know where she is positioned regarding the result.

For example, “reading a chapter” does not measure whether the objective has been achieved; adding “and providing a one-page summary, in your own words” defines the successful completion of the objective.

Acceptable

The objective must be appropriate for you or, alternatively, must be agreed on by the patient or the person targeted to take on the action. The targeted person can then work towards achieving the objective. It must be developed while taking account of the person’s strengths and weaknesses.

Realistic

Set objectives that you can reach, that reflect your abilities or competencies, and that you will be able to complete. It is preferable to start with small objectives, progressively moving to increasing levels of difficulty and required efforts.

Timely

Determine a precise deadline, an exact date by which the objective must be achieved. For example, within three days, next week, at each meeting, etc.

(Lorio, n.d.)