

Goal-setting for Strategic Planning

Goal setting is a critical component of strategic planning that provides organizations with a clear sense of direction and purpose. During the goal-setting process, organizations must consider their vision, mission and values to ensure alignment and coherence with their long-term aspirations. Strategic goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely (SMART) to track progress effectively. Setting challenging yet attainable goals helps motivate stakeholders, fosters a sense of commitment and aligns efforts towards a common purpose, facilitating collaboration across partnerships and/or levels within the organization.



Strategic Action Areas

One or more ways to use the mission statement in order to achieve the vision



Goals

General statements of what needs to be accomplished to implement a strategy



Objectives

Specific milestones with a specific timeline for achieving a goal



Action Plans

Specific actions or activities used to achieve a goal within the constraints of the objective

Adapted from: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/agdm/wholefarm/html/c5-09.html>



What is a goal?

Strategic plans need goals statements to accomplish and implement their strategies.

Goals show where the organization wants to be, provide a specific target or state an end result of something that is desired. Goal statements help organizations interpret their vision statement into something more time-sensitive and meaningful by adding in quantifiable or qualitative results. In other words, goal statements translate the vision by making the focus of the organization actionable.

Strategic goals are long-term, big-picture objectives for an organization, not short-term tactics that address a current problem or challenge (which might fit under strategic objectives and action plans). Some organizations prefer to write simple goals and objectives while others may be more complicated with multiple layers.

» Why write a goal?

Strategic goals can make a significant impact on the success and productivity of a team by influencing how and where a team's energy and resources are used. Some examples of the benefits of strategic goals:

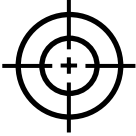




- Define priorities
- Guide resource allocation
- Direct the creation and maintenance of budgets
- Influence the formation of teams or committees
- Provide focus and motivation for employees
- Provide comprehensive data used to measure a team's results

» Helpful starting words

- Increase...efficiency
- Capture...a bigger market share
- Improve...
- Innovate...new solutions
- Simplify...instruction materials
- Streamline...
- Maintain...a positive company culture
- Prioritize...team projects over individual tasks
- Decrease...
- Launch...
- Create and implement...
- Empower...
- Strengthen and enhance...
- Optimize...
- Celebrate...
- Integrate...embrace...
- Cultivate...

» Goal statement examples

- Increase employee satisfaction rating by 10% by the end of 2026.
 - Increase sales revenue by 15% in the next five years.
 - Decrease the number of customer complaints by 30% by the end of 2026.
 - Reduce IT costs to 2% of company revenue by the end of 2025.
 - Record 5,000 volunteer hours by next quarter.
 - Settle all vendor accounts by the end of the calendar year.
 - Diversify company revenue streams by the end of 2025.
 - Create and implement a communication skills training program by the end of 2027.
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Specific 	Measurable 	Achievable 	Realistic 	Timely 
S	M	A	R	T
g	o	a	i	s
What do you want to do with this goal?	How will you know when you have achieved this goal?	Can you reach this goal with the available resources?	Are we willing and able to work on this goal?	When do you want to actually achieve this goal?
Well-defined, clear and unambiguous	Has specific criteria measuring progress toward completion	Attainable with the available time, resources and skills	Relevant to our purpose and mission	Well-defined timeline, including start date and target date
<p>Answer the 5W's:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who is involved? 2. What do we want to accomplish? 3. When do we want to achieve this goal? 4. Where does this goal take place? 5. Why is this goal important? 	<p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How many? • How much? • How do we know if we have reached the goal? • What is the indicator of progress? 	<p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we have the resources and capabilities to achieve this goal? If not, what are we missing? • What is the motivation for this goal? • Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve? 	<p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the goal reachable, given the time and resources? Is this the right time? • Are we able to commit to achieving the goal? • Are we the right people to work on this project/task? 	<p>Answer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this goal have a deadline? • By when do we want to achieve our goal?

Template for writing a SMART GOAL

» Write an initial goal (write the goal in mind):

» Now, thinking about your goal, write specific items to accomplish, who needs to be included, and why it should be a goal:

» Next, write about how to measure progress to know if we've successfully met our goal:

» Then, write about what skills and resources are needed to make the goal achievable:

» Next, write about the realistic possibility and relevance to our purpose:

» Finally, write about the timeliness of this goal, including a deadline:

» Now, review what you have written above and craft a new SMART goal statement based on the answers:

Adapted from https://www.ucop.edu/local-human-resources/_files/performance-appraisal/How%20to%20write%20SMART%20Goals%20v2.pdf