

Writing SMART Objectives

To use an objective to monitor your progress, you need to write it as a SMART objective. A SMART objective is

1. Specific.

- Objectives should provide the “who” and “what” of program activities.
- Use only one action verb, because objectives with more than one verb imply that more than one activity or behavior is being measured.
- Avoid verbs that may have vague meanings to describe intended outcomes, like “understand” or “know,” because it may prove difficult to measure them. Instead, use verbs that document action, like “At the end of the session, the participants will list three concerns...” Remember, the greater the specificity, the greater the measurability.

2. Measurable

- Objectives should quantify the amount of change expected. It is impossible to determine whether objectives have been met unless they can be measured. The objective provides a reference point from which a change in the target population can be measured clearly.
- Preferable measurable verbs:

Apply	defend	illustrate	relate
analyze	demonstrate	integrate	report
arrange	describe	interpret	restate
assess	design	list	review
categorize	diagram	name	revise
classify	discuss	organize	select
compare	discriminate	plan	solve
compile	distinguish	predict	sort
compute	employ	prepare	translate
contrast	evaluate	rate	use
construct	explain	recall	utilize
create	formulate	recite	write
critique	identify	recognize	

3. Achievable

Objectives should be attainable within a given time frame and with available program resources.

4. Realistic

Objectives are most useful when they accurately address the scope of the problem and programmatic steps that can be implemented within a specific time frame. Objectives that do not directly relate to the program goal will not help achieve the goal.

5. Time-based

Objectives should provide a time frame indicating when the objective will be measured, or a time by which the objective will be met. Including a time frame in the objectives helps in planning and evaluating the program.

Examples of SMART Objectives

Non-SMART objective 1: Schools will be trained on the selected scientifically based sun safety health education curriculum.

1. This objective is not SMART because it is not specific, measurable, or time-phased.
2. It can be made SMART by specifically indicating who is responsible for training the schools, how many people will be trained, who they are, and by when the training will be conducted.

SMART objective 1: By year two of the project, the Division of Cancer will have trained 75% of elementary schools in districts 1, 3, and 6 on the selected scientifically based sun safety health education curriculum.

Non-SMART objective 2: 90% of cancer survivors will participate in our self-management course.

1. This objective is not SMART because it is not specific or time-phased.
2. It can be made SMART by specifically indicating who will do the activity, by when, and who will participate in the self-management course.

SMART objective 2: By the end of the calendar year, district health staff will have enrolled 90% of newly diagnosed cancer survivors from the Elms Cancer Community Center in the Chronic Disease Self-Management course