

## Community Service Learning How to Write Measurable Objectives

### Goals vs. Objectives

A **goal** is a broad, brief statement of intent that provides focus or vision for planning. They are usually non-specific and non-measurable.

*Goal Example*

***Our goal is to help our participants attain weight loss.***

**Objectives** are meant to be realistic targets for the project and can help you focus your project on what matters. They are written in active tense and use strong verbs (i.e. plan, write, conduct, etc.). Objectives can be thought of as a “short hand” version of your activities (*process*) and what you hope happens as a result (*outcome*)—these being the bridge that takes you to your goal.

**Activities → Results → Achieve Goal**

### SMART Objectives

The **SMART** acronym can be very helpful in writing objectives:

**Specific**—*What exactly are we going to do, with or for whom?*

Be precise about what you are going to achieve.

**Measurable**—*Is it measurable & can WE measure it?*

Quantify your objectives.

**Achievable**—*Can we get it done in the proposed timeframe for this amount of money?*

The objective must be realistic given available resources, time period, etc.

**Results-oriented**—*Will this objective lead to the desired results?*

The outcomes/results of the project directly support the overall goal.

**Time-limited**—*When will we accomplish this objective?*

A clear statement of when the objective will be achieved.

To develop SMART objectives that will help you reach your goal, fill in the blanks:

**[In a certain time frame] [specific clients (or participants)] [under certain conditions] will [achieve a type of change] [as measured by].**

*SMART Objective Example*

By December 31, 2011, 33% of clients who participate in our wellness program for at least 3  
**[in time frame]                      [specific clients]                      [under certain conditions]**  
 months will meet their weight-loss goals as measured by monthly weigh-ins.  
**[achieve a type of change]                      [as measured by]**