

Community Service Learning

How to Write Measurable Objectives

Goals vs. Objectives

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

Goal Example

To better community health.

Objectives are measurable activities that produce a specific result and guide your project toward impacting your goal. They are written in active tense, using verbs (i.e. plan, write, conduct, etc.). Objectives are brief guiding statements of your activities (*process*) and what you intend to happens as a result (*outcome*)—these components should be measurable, and feed into your overall goal.

objectives → measurable outcomes → goal

SMART Objectives

The **SMART** acronym is a guide in writing effective 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]