

“SMART”en-Up your Goals!

Goal setting is a powerful tool used to help foster productive actions and meaningful behaviours. However, many athletes fail to follow through with their goals. Common issues with goal setting include:

1. The goal is too broad or general.
2. The goal is unrealistic based on current skillsets and resources.
3. The goal is not meaningful or purposeful to the individual.

A popular technique used by Mental Performance Consultants to enhance the goal setting process is introducing the **SMART** principles.

SMART goals have been shown to have positive correlations to commitment, confidence, and productive behavioural change towards desired pursuits (Chen et al., 2017).

Specific

Narrowing the breadth of your goals can help with effective planning.

Examples:

General: “I want to be a better athlete.”

Specific: “I want to improve my endurance, and improve my free throw accuracy.”

Measurable

Comparing your current standings to desired results. Define what evidence will prove you’re making progress toward your goals. Think *“How much?”* or *“How many.”*

Example:

“I will improve my free-throw accuracy by 10% by the end of the season.”

Action-oriented

Applying actionable behaviours to your goal. Think of “actions” as building blocks or puzzle pieces to your main goal. What can you *physically* do to move closer to your goal(s)?

Examples:

“To improve my endurance, I can run 3 times a week.”

“To improve my shot accuracy, I will throw 25 extra free-throws after practice.”

Realistic & Relevant

Your goals should align with your values, and have personal meaning (relevance).

List your current skillsets, resources and support systems that can help you achieve this goal (realistic).

Example:

“I can run with my teammates after school on Thursdays.”

“Coach offered to stay late after practice to help with my technique.”

Time-bound

To enhance task prioritization and motivation, set some deadlines and check-in dates to monitor your goal progress.

Example:

“I will improve my personal best time before the race on October 1st.”

Try applying these steps to your goal(s) today!

Mind Matters

Meagan Ferguson, MHK MPC

Resources:

Sport Psychology Goal Setting (AASP): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HOoRZiiotY&t=488s>

Chen, L. H., Wu, C. H., & Chang, J. H. (2017). Gratitude and athletes' life satisfaction: The moderating role of mindfulness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 18(4), 1147–1159.