

SMART Goals SHARP Goals



...a better way to manage

the
happy
manager

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HOW TO BE A BETTER MANAGER

SMART Goals SHARP Goals

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How to be a Better Manager...

SMART Goals SHARP Goals is one of a series of practical, thought-provoking guides, designed to help you deal with a wide range of management ideas, activities and situations. Whether you are a new manager, or one who wants to hone or develop existing skills, we're sure you'll find something valuable in any of these guides.

This series of e-guides is published by Apex Leadership Ltd. The guides have been developed by a team of professional managers, consultants and educators. The full range of titles is available from [Apex Leadership Ltd](#), or from [the Happy Manager.com](#). Use these guides to benefit from our wealth of management expertise. Let us help you find: **a better way to manage...**"

Phil Higson & Anthony Sturgess
Directors, Apex Leadership Ltd

Using the guides

Each guide contains information, insight and inspiration on essential management topics. The best way to use the guides is to read through each section in turn, ensuring you pause for reflection wherever you see the "Consider..." points. Be sure to answer any questions posed, wherever they appear - they are there for a reason!

Consider ...

Tools ...

After you've worked through the guide, work through the tools. These have been designed to help you use and develop the advice given in the guide:

- Click on the tool buttons where they appear for an in-text hyperlink to the actual tool.
- At the end of each tool you can simply click on the "return" link to get back to your place in the guide.

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SMART and SHARP goals

SMART goals have become a common feature in most organisations. In this guide we will explain the conventional and well-known version of SMART, but take it further to address some of the limitations of the acronym. In doing so we'll introduce ideas about how to develop goals that are more likely to motivate you to succeed. You'll find out how to develop effective goals and combine SMART goal setting with SHARP action. That's because goals are only wish lists unless we convert them to action.

One classic quote, from John Ruskin illustrates the importance of purposeful action:

"What we think, or what we know, or what we believe is, in the end, of little consequence. The only consequence is what we do."

Roman philosopher Seneca's words bring planning and goals together:

"Our plans miscarry because they have no aim. When a man does not know what harbour he is making for, no wind is the right wind."

In this guide we will explore answers to the following questions:

- How do you define goal setting?
- What features of goal setting are important, if we want to ensure they are more likely to be successfully achieved?
- What kinds of goals are more likely to make us motivated to achieve them?
- How do you set SMART goals?
- Why do goals matter?
- What kind of goals should you pursue to be happier in what you do?
- How do you set team goals?
- What strategies can you apply to overcome barriers to setting goals?
- How do you develop SHARP plans of action that help you to achieve your goals?
- What techniques can you use to get things done?
- How do you set personal goals?

The final topic of the guide is possibly the most important; setting goals for your personal development and growth.

This e-guide contains explanation and insights into the often used SMART approach to goal setting. However being a SMART goal setter alone is not enough. Use the guide to discover the importance of SHARP goals too.

SMART clarifies you goals. SHARP focuses your actions to achieve them.

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However, it's also useful to balance this advice with a caution...

Don't have too many goals!

Goals that are purposeful can help shape both our careers and our wider life, but it's worth adding one more useful thought. You're more likely to succeed in attaining your goals if you don't have too many of them. A few goals allow you to focus on what is important. Too many goals mean you run the risk of never achieving any, and perhaps just as bad, not really knowing which are the important ones.

Later in the guide we explore how to set and implement goals. We will also introduce some different perspectives about achieving goals them. First though, we'll begin with the familiar; the more conventional understanding of SMART goals.

Conventional SMART

SMART goals are those which use a well-known acronym to help us succeed in achieving those goals. There's quite a wide range of variation in the way SMART is defined, and here we outline one of the most popular.

However, it's not to be confused with our own take on SMART goals. We will discuss this later arguing the importance of emphasising action in any goal setting activity.

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SHARP and fast

One potential problem with goal setting is that you can spend too much time planning, and not enough time making things happen. Conversely, it may be that you spend too little time in preparation and pay the penalty for hasty decisions. Whether your issue is acting too soon, or too late, or too rarely, think about the importance of timing in your planning activities.

Fast - Why Not Just Do It?

Think about some of the goals you have set. If you were to start implementing them immediately what would be the risk of something going wrong, and what would be the likely impact?

Many of our goals actually don't have significant down-sides. They are probably worth putting into action straight away. If there isn't much of a down-side, but there is lots of potential benefit, then you should think about acting faster.

It's also worth considering ways to achieve goals faster than you might initially have thought was possible. Sometimes it is more valuable to start even when a plan isn't perfectly formed and adapt and change as things emerge.

Keep it Simple

However, to be genuinely fast, and thus responsive, requires preparation. This means the ability to keep things simple. Complexity generally hinders speed, both in decision making and in taking action. Think about how you can set yourself up to be more responsive. How can you simplify what you do so that putting goals into action quickly becomes easier?

Fast should not mean at all costs. It should be about ensuring that your new ideas, whether services or products, are brought to your customers when the opportunity is at its optimum. If the ideas' time has not yet come, then you need to be patient.

To summarise, ensure you can do things fast by:

- Deciding whether it is worth simply making a start on your goal. How can you jump straight to action?
- Thinking about how you can put goals into action faster. How can you simplify things so that you can move to action quickly?
- Asking yourself if the timing is right. Sometimes opportunities can be missed if you don't move to action immediately. What opportunities can't wait? Conversely, what goals need to be put on hold?

Fast is the mantra of the new business era, everything must be done quickly. How can we achieve our goals fast, without being furious?

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Tool 3: the kind of goals that are more likely to make you happier

Use this tool to help you think about the kind of goals that are likely to make you happier.

If you set the right kind of goals it is likely you will be more successful and happier. Provided that is, you pay attention to:

<p>The kind of goals you set</p>	<p>Set goals that are intrinsic and more geared towards personal growth, connection and contribution.</p>
<p>Making the goals demanding</p>	<p>They should stretch you, but not “break you”!</p>
<p>Ensuring the goals are specific</p>	<p>You are clear what you want to achieve.</p>
<p>Thinking about the journey</p>	<p>Enjoy progressing towards the goal, not just the end.</p>
<p>Writing your goals down</p>	<p>And how you hope to achieve them, to make them concrete.</p>
<p>Commit to your goals</p>	<p>Making a commitment, often to and with others means we are far more likely to achieve the goal.</p>

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Join the conversation: bookmark the Happy Manager blog.

(www.the-happy-manager/blog) And leave any comments, suggestions or examples of your own experiences for the benefit of other readers.

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SMART Goals, SHARP Goals
Making Better Decisions
What's the Problem?

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