

SMART GOALS

By Gary Pennington, CRSP, CHSC

When I am teaching ISO-type courses and I am talking about setting goals and targets, I like to use the acronym of SMART. Some of you have seen this in the past and are probably already using it. Actually, I use SMAAART. For those who have never seen this, here it is:

- Ø **S – Specific:** Goals and targets need to be specific. For example, it is not just good enough to say you want to be rich. Be specific. Define what rich is. For Mr. Gates, another billion dollars would be his goal. For me, I am happy to have another five dollars in my wallet.
- Ø **M – Measureable:** When you set a goal, it needs to be measureable. How are you going to determine the goal has been met if you don't measure the results? For both Mr. Gates and I, we can measure the results.
- Ø **A – Achievable:** This was the original "A" in SMART as I learned it. Can the goal be achieved? Do we have the resources including human resources to be able to achieve this goal in the time frame expected?
- Ø **A – Agreed upon:** I added this "A" in my version as I believe that the person assigning the task or goal needs to agree to provide the resources and leadership needed to assist the individual assigned the responsibility to achieve the goal. The person assigned the goal agrees to accept the responsibility for completing the goal based on receiving the resources needed.

- Ø **A – Accountable:** This "A" was added to show that the person assigning the goal is accountable for providing leadership and the necessary resources and the person required to complete the goal is accountable to do so based on the provision of the resources needed.
- Ø **R – Realistic:** Is this goal realistic? Is it a "pie in the sky" goal that we will never be able to reach or do we have the ability to realistically achieve the goal? I also add "but challenging". We can have a goal and be able to reach it "realistically" without presenting a challenge to the organization. The goal needs to be able to "Raise the bar" for the organization. This is consistent with the goal to "continually improve".
- Ø **T – Time-dated:** Set a date for completion. Human nature is to prioritize based on pressure applied. If there is no date set for completion, then the perception is that the goal is not a priority; hence there is no pressure to complete the goal. In addition, part of the measurement requirement is to measure the completion of the goal within the time-frame expected and within budget.



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