



Getting Started

To develop SMART objectives, use the template below and fill in the blanks:

By _____ (When – time bound), _____ (Who/What – **Specific**)

From _____ to _____ MEASURE (number, rate, percentage of change and baseline – **Measurable**)

Next, review the objective to assure that it is achievable and relevant to overall program goals.

Here are some examples of SMART objectives:

- By June 29, 2019 (time bound), increase the number of training sessions given for program partners on “Implementing and Evaluating System Change” (specific & relevant) from 10 to 14 (measurable & achievable).
- By December 31, 2019 (time bound), increase awareness of the signs and symptoms of postpartum depression and the importance of seeking help among first time mothers attending the program (specific & relevant) from 11% to 15% (measurable & achievable).
- By February 15, 2019 (time bound), increase by four (measurable & achievable) the number of non-profit organizations in Brampton that have been trained in the development of evaluation plans (specific & relevant).

Exercise

Take the following objectives and “make them SMART.”

1. Increase the number of partners in our food program.

2. Train staff on new guidelines.

3. Enhance EMS policy to decrease stroke deaths in 2002.

4. By June 2019, increase by 10% the percentage of neighbourhood residents who are aware of the programs at their nearest community centre.

5. Increase the number of nonprofits that adopt an employee benefits plan.

Making them SMART:

There are many ways that these objectives could be made SMARTer. For each example, think about the following:

1. *Increase the number of partners in our food program.*
The objective needs to specify how many and by when. Do you have a baseline? Is the proposed increase reasonable given the context and available resources? Does the program seek a specific kind of partner or partners from a specific setting? What action must be taken for someone to be considered a partner (e.g., a written agreement)?

One SMART example might read: By June 29, 2019, increase from 12 to 14 the number of program partners that represent health prevention initiatives and have signed our “Program Letter of Partner Commitment.”

2. *Train staff on new guidelines.*
How many staff? By when? Which guidelines? Do you expect them to increase their knowledge? How will you measure that? Do you expect them to increase guideline use in their work with clients? Are you training specific staff roles within a certain geographic region?
3. *Enhance EMS policy to decrease stroke deaths in 2019.*
What does “enhance” mean? How will you measure “enhance”? By when? Is this realistic? Will you measure policy adoption or decreased stroke deaths?

One SMART example might read: By December 31, 2019, (Region name) Emergency Medical Services will adopt a regional policy to transport stroke patients to the nearest certified hospital.

4. *By June 2020, increase by 10% the percentage of [neighbourhood] residents who are aware of the programs at their nearest community centre.*

Is this 10% of a number or 10 percentage points? Is this a meaningful increase? Do you have a baseline? What is the data source? What level of awareness? Of specific programs or services? Does this apply to all residents or a specific group or region? Adults only or are teens included? Is it reasonable, given the level of activities, to see this amount of increase population wide? Is it achievable in the time frame stated? Is a data source available to measure change at the appropriate time, at the level we have targeted the intervention?

One SMART example might read: By December 30, 2019, increase by 10 percentage points from baseline, the percentage of households in Peel Region who know the location of their community centre and who can also provide three activities or services offered there.

5. *Increase the number of nonprofits that adopt an employee benefits plan.*

Increase by how much? By when? All nonprofits or a subset? What does “adopt” mean (how will you know when it’s adopted)? What data source(s) are you using or how will you document an increase?

One SMART example might read: By December 31, 2020, 50 small to medium nonprofits in Ontario will offer employee benefit packages that include comprehensive health benefits.

Source: CDC Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention
https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/docs/smart_objectives.pdf