

# RICK'S TIPS

***Rick's Tips* explores the competencies necessary for successful leadership and provides activities to assist with the development and mastery of these skills.**

## THE EXECUTIVE GROUP

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# GOAL SETTING

## S.M.A.R.T. MOVE!

“Arriving at one goal is the starting point to another.”  
– John Dewey

We all know that setting goals is an important part of success. A goal is defined as something you strive to reach, the purpose toward which an endeavor is directed, a “dream with a deadline”.

A goal is an “observable and measurable end result having one or more objectives to be achieved within a more or less fixed timeframe.

- Goals express expectations.
- Goals provide an outline for evaluation and reward.
- Goals provide order and structure.
- Goals allow for measurement of progress.

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### WHY MANY FAIL TO REACH THEIR GOALS

There are many reasons why individuals and organizations fail to meet their goals:

- Often, there are too many goals established simultaneously and they are given no priority.
- There is little value to setting goals if there is no follow up or accountability. The impression is that the goal wasn't that important.
- Explanations are given for goals not met rather than an examination of “why” and what adjustments must be made to the goal. For example, should larger goals be divided into smaller goals.
- A discussion of how the goal contributes to the overall success of the organization is not offered. There is no reward for reaching the goal. Rewards come in many different forms and sizes and are important to keeping motivation high.
- Too often, the goal is important to only one individual and there is no “buy-in” from those having to help reach the goal.

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## S.M.A.R.T.

There are many approaches for setting goals and they all have commonalities. One of the most popular methods of goal setting is the **S.M.A.R.T.** method:

### **S = Specific**

Make sure the goal answers who, what, where, when, which, and why questions.

### **M = Measurable**

Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress. This helps to maintain focus, reach target dates which are really just mini-goals, and provides for feelings of achievement along with way. Determine measurability by asking the "how" questions.

### **A = Attainable**

With effort and commitment, the goal can be reached. Goals can push a person to master new skills and develop new abilities in order to reach the goal.

### **R = Realistic**

A goal must represent an objective toward which a person is both willing and able to work. A realistic goal is one that a person truly believes they can accomplish.

### **T = Timely**

Create a sense of urgency by grounding the goal in a time frame.

### **Step 1**      **Decide what you want, what you really want to achieve**

It is at this first step when it is most important to follow the **SMART** system. After you have established that your goal follows the **SMART** guidelines, you can feel positive about successfully reaching the goal.

### **Step 2**      **Write it down**

Committing the goal to paper makes it concrete. Post the written goal where you can see it on a daily basis. This helps you stay focused and direct your actions.

### **Step 3**      **Develop a plan**

While your goal is specific, there are tasks and actions that need to be taken along the way and each of these should have a deadline.

### **Step 4**      **Review frequently**

Remember to review the goal and the plan regularly; asking yourself if the goal remains **SMART**. If not, make adjustments.

### **Step 5**      **Set a new goal**

"Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishment."

– Jim Rohn