

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 917 S.M.A.R.T. Goals – Be Smart When You Use Them

Is the S.M.A.R.T. goal system really all that smart, or is it how we use it? I'm Jerry Roberts, and we'll talk about being smart when it comes to goals, next, on The Extra Point.

You've probably heard or read about the S.M.A.R.T. goals system. It's been around for a long time. S.M.A.R.T. If you're familiar with this, we'll give you a refresher today. Let's spell it out.

S is for Specific. If a goal isn't specific, how do you know when you've reached it? I may say, "I want to lose weight." That's non-specific. Your response to that could be, "Great, how much do you want to lose?" I answer, "10 pounds." We'll chat in a moment how that could be more specific, but it's a start.

M is for Measurable. Is the weight loss goal measurable? Yes, I put a number on it. I also have a scale at home. So far, so good.

A is for Attainable. Can it be done? Sure, a 10-lb. weight loss is possible.

A might also stand for Alignable. This means does this person's goal align with the organizational goals of his or her employer?

R is for Realistic. Is it realistic that I try to lose the weight? This isn't *can it be done*, this is *should it be done*? No problem, someone of my size can handle a 10-lb. loss. What if I announced I was planning to lose 100 lbs. over the next 12 months. While I might be able to do it, I don't think any health professional would advise it. Goals that are overly ambitious and don't lead to a desirable outcome, likely fail the "realistic" test.

T is for TIME BOUND. What's my time limit for losing the weight? A year? That's less than a pound per month. That's too much time. How about a month? I probably could, but that's

very restrictive. Two months? That would be about nine weeks, and I'd have to lose a little over a pound per week. That's doable, without a massive strain to get there. You must set a completion date or you eliminate time pressure, which is a critical component.

Okay, let's get under the hood on this.

1. Most people fail to be as specific as needed. I said I wanted to lose 10 lbs. What if I added to the goal that I want to get to a certain pants size, and achieve a certain body mass index number"? That's much more specific.

We already know it's measurable, attainable, and realistic. Where else do we need to add focus?

2. The provision for how long it will take to achieve the goal, the time involved. Just as we're not as precise as we can be with the specifics, we also often fall short when it comes to setting a deadline. We either are far too aggressive in our assumptions, or we allow too much time.

Don't agonize over this. Figure the timing you can realistically commit to, and go with that.

3. As simple as this S.M.A.R.T. goal system is, it lacks one important thing. The "GO" button. I've seen people use any number of goal-planning methods, and fail with them — because they never got off square one. So, don't just set a date for the goal to be achieved. Set a date for it to launch, get everything in order — and launch it!

4. Chunk your goals into smaller pieces. Big goals are sometimes scary. Small steps aren't.

5. Write out your first steps. Football coaches will often design a game plan with the first 15 or so plays set in stone.

(Con't.)

They run those plays. After that, they adjust their plan to the circumstances of the game. If you have the initial steps laid out, it's easier to get going.

S.M.A.R.T. goals can work for you. Just be smart in how you handle things.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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