

Not every goal needs to follow the **SMART** method, but there are essential steps you should employ to ensure your goals are met. Successful goals often result from careful planning and preparation. Follow the suggestions below to enhance your chances of success.

1. Commitment.

The more invested we are in achieving a goal, the more committed we become to ensuring its success. Conversely, if a goal lacks importance to us, it's easy to abandon.

2. Clarity

Specific goals are achievable goals. Being vague can lead you to lose motivation, making achieving your goal more difficult. ***"If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time."*** – Zig Ziglar

3. Visualize it.

"To accomplish great things we must first dream, then visualize, then plan... believe... act!" – Alfred A. Montapert
Visualizing allows you to set the stage for you to plan your goal and the steps you need to take. Practice visualization by creating a vision board, meditating or creating a picture in your mind of your completed goal. Add to your vision by imagining next steps, adding as you work toward your goal.

4. Write it down.

Writing something down creates a physical reminder and improves our encoding process. Simply, we're more likely to remember it and then act on it when we write it down. Combining visualization and writing your goal down, improves your odds of being successful.

5. Have a plan.

"A goal without a plan is only a dream,"
– Brian Tracy

When you want to achieve a goal, you need to have a plan of action. Knowing what you need to do next, taking the steps, and completing them, provides you momentum to continue to achieve your goal.

6. Set a timeline.

In other words, set a deadline. There are many reasons to set a deadline; to motivate you, help you avoid procrastination, help to prioritize what's important, and boost your confidence. Not to mention, keep you on track.

7. Identify obstacles.

Knowing what may get in the way of your success allows you to develop a strategy to deal with or eliminate obstacles. Your strategy should include seeking and accepting advice and support, breaking goals into smaller chunks, updating your plan, and keeping a positive mindset.

8. Reflect and adjust.

"It's not what you look at that matters; it's what you see." – Henry David Thoreau

Looking back and taking stock is the only effective way of learning from mistakes or recognizing gaps and adjusting. Doing this often will also increase the likelihood of your success.