Why do I need goals?

Achievements start with setting a clear goal. An achievable goal organizes and guides your work-related decisions and activities.

Here are a few other reasons to set goals:

- Your goals provide opportunities for change, challenge, and growth.
- Your goals allow you to monitor your own progress.
- Your goals give you a basis for communicating with others about how you perform your job.
- Your goals can help achieve the vision and purpose of UTHealth: Excellence above all in the quest to be an acknowledged leader in the collaboration to treat, cure and prevent the most common diseases through education, research and clinical practice.

An achievable goal is more than a destination. It's also a tool that helps you take the shortest path to your destination.

Performance Goals

Performance goals set standards for results you want to achieve in your regular activities. These goals usually set targets that challenge your existing abilities and require you to stretch them to new levels of achievement.

Performance goals describe a change from your current level of performance to the targeted level and the time period in which the change will happen.

Examples of performance goals:
- I will update all faculty members' CV's by February 26, 2020.
- I will develop, gain approval of and implement the gated XXX protocol by April 29, 2020.
- I will attend the monthly Residency Coordinator meetings and summarize the results for the Program Director within three working days of each meeting.

Performance goals raise your aim and take full advantage of your current abilities.

How to Write Goals

Use the SMART goal template to write your goals. A SMART goal meets the criteria of the terms of the acronym SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, and Relevant.

Acronym	Description	Developing SMART Goals
S	**Specific**	Goals are clear, detailed and unambiguous. To make goals specific, they must express exactly what is expected, why is it important, who's involved, where is it going to happen and which attributes are important. A specific goal will usually answer the five "W" questions: • What: What do I want to accomplish? • Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal. • Who: Who is involved? • Where: Identify a location. • Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
M	**Measureable**	This term stresses the need for concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of the goal. If a goal is not measurable, it is not possible to know whether progress toward successful completion is being made. Measuring progress helps with focus, the ability to reach target dates, and experience the achievement to reach the ultimate goal. A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as: • How much? • How many? • How will I know when it is accomplished?
A	**Attainable**	This term stresses the importance of goals that are realistic and attainable. While an attainable goal may stretch the goal-setter in order to achieve it, the goal is not extreme. That is, the goals are neither out of reach nor below standard performance. When goals are important to the goal-setter, one begins to discover ways to make them come true, and develop the abilities and skills to reach them. An attainable goal may cause goal-setters to identify previously overlooked opportunities to bring themselves closer to the achievement of their goals. An attainable goal will usually answer the question: • How: How can the goal be accomplished?
R	**Relevant**	A relevant goal must represent an objective that the goal-setter is willing and able to work towards. This does not mean the goal cannot be high. A goal is probably relevant if the goal-setter believes that it can be accomplished. If the goal-setter has accomplished anything similar in the past they may have identified a relevant goal. A relevant goal will usually answer the question: • Does this seem worthwhile?
T	**Timely**	The fifth term stresses the importance of grounding goals within a time frame; giving them a target date. A commitment to a deadline helps a team focus their efforts on completion of the goal on or before the due date. Timeliness is intended to prevent goals from being overtaken by the day-to-day crises that invariably arise in an organization. A timely goal is intended to establish a sense of urgency. A timely goal will usually answer the question: • When? • What can I do 6 months from now? • What can I do 6 weeks from now? • What can I do today?
R	**Reevaluate** **Reward**	As goals are being developed and phases of different goals are being accomplished, reevaluate each goal to make sure they are still relevant and attainable. Once goals have been accomplished, celebrate in their accomplishment and start developing new SMART goals.

Writing SMART Goals—Template

The following template will help in the writing of a SMART Goal:

(<u>I or accountable party</u>) will (<u>action word/s</u>) (<u>object of the goal</u>) by (<u>time</u>) for the purpose of (<u>relevance/results</u>)

Examples of a SMART Goal Using the Template Format

➢ I will complete two eLearning courses on communication by August 1, 2019, in order to develop my communication skills for my conference presentation in November 2019.

➢ I will submit a FY2020 projected budget outlining the needs of the department by April 31, 2019, in order to have it ready for review by senior leadership.

➢ I will develop a new process to increase customer satisfaction by January 29, 2020 in order to support the department's mission of great customer service.

➢ I will return all patient calls within a 24-hour time-frame.