

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

## **Goal Setting Principles**

**Goals should be:**

**S: specific**

**M: measurable**

**A: adaptable & attainable**

**R: realistic but challenging**

**T: time based – short and long-term goals**

Setting goals is important for many things we do in life. Think of a few times you have set goals for yourself. Maybe it was to save up for something, improve a grade, read for 30 minutes a day, etc. Goal setting helps improve athletes' motivation and commitment, helps them to stay focused on what to accomplish, helps them to assess strengths and weaknesses, as well as track their performance and improvement during the season.

Both swimmers and the coach(es), should be involved in the goal setting process. It is also good to have your parents involved so they also know the goals you have set. *Parents – please keep in mind that these are your swimmer's goals. Sit down with your swimmer and listen to what they want to achieve but avoid interjecting goals that you want for them.*

When setting goals, swimmers need to establish: 1. Long-term or “dream goals”, 2. Intermediate, 3. Short-term and 4. Immediate, or what is called “process goals”. Process Goals help swimmers to stay grounded in the moment, which is crucial to building confidence.

Swimmers should take a multi-disciplinary approach to improving. They can set many different goals beyond just improving their performance or cutting time. Swimmers can set practice goals, mental swim meet goals, fitness and conditioning goals, as well as nutrition goals. One warning though.....perfectionists will set goals and see them as a task to master, and this could cause burn out. Instead, swimmers need to see goals as general guidelines that can be continually evaluated and adapted.

Goals should be shared with others to make you **accountable**. They should be written down and placed where you will see them as a daily **motivator**. And finally, when you reach a goal, it should be **celebrated**. The coach may not realize that you just met a goal. They have many swimmers. Tell them! They want to celebrate the moment with you!

**Goal Setting Worksheet** Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Fill out the worksheet below, using the **S.M.A.R.T.** acronym as reference.

What is an immediate, (process), goal that you would like to do in the next few weeks?

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Think about something you would like to achieve by the end of December.  
This is a short-term goal that should be reasonable.

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Now think about something you would like to achieve by the end of the season, (intermediate).

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Now write a long-term swimming goal – this could be a future goal of one or several years.

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Now that you have your goals, what can you do, or change to help you achieving them?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Goals can change as you progress through your swimming career. As you set new goals, continue to write them down, post and share them.

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**DREAM**

written down with a date

becomes a

**GOAL**

a goal broken down

becomes a

**PLAN**

a plan backed by

**ACTION**

Makes your dream

**REALITY**