



ORTHO2

SMART Goals

As the year 2018 begins we all start to look at goals for the New Year.

Regardless of how long you've been in practice, whether 5, 10, 15, or 20+ years, if you are getting the same lackluster results year after year, ask yourself what needs to change to make this your best year ever.

Moving your office and team to the next level of success is a goal for most offices. Do you get overwhelmed at the beginning of a project? Do you struggle to boost team productivity? Do you have a difficult time getting team members involved with practice goals? The steps to make this happen are sometimes the missing piece between setting goals and achieving them.

Setting individual or team goals for your practice can be a challenge for many offices. Often the goals are too broad or without a way to measure success. Using SMART goals can help you and your team set and achieve goals.

The secret to alleviating common project challenges is to set specific goals. SMART goals are designed to provide structure and guidance throughout a project, and better identify what you want to accomplish. This method is especially effective in helping your team set goals that align with practice goals.

S – Specific

When setting a goal, be specific about what you want to accomplish. Think about this as the mission statement for your goal. Goals of simply raising production or reducing clinical expenses are too broad. Giving specifics along with the tools and expectations of each team member will increase involvement from your team.

M – Measurable

What metrics are you going to use to determine if you meet the goal? This makes a goal more tangible because it provides a way to measure progress. If it's a project that's going to take a few months to complete, then set some milestones by considering specific tasks or time frames to accomplish.

A – Achievable

This focuses on how important a goal is to you and what you can do to make it achievable. It may require developing new skills and changing attitudes. The goal is meant to inspire motivation, not discouragement. Think about how to accomplish the goal and if you have the tools/skills needed. If you don't currently possess those tools/skills, consider what it would take to attain them.

R - Realistic

Set a realistic goal. Setting an unrealistic goal will make a team member give up before they even try. If team members can't reach the bar it is easier to give up before they start rather than try and disappoint you.

T – Time-Bound

Anyone can set goals, but if it lacks realistic expectations and timing, chances are you're not going to succeed. Providing a target date is imperative. Ask specific questions about the goal deadline and what can be accomplished within that time frame. If the goal will take three months to complete, it's useful to define what should be achieved half-way through the process. Providing time constraints also creates a sense of urgency. Celebrating their success when goals are met is a huge motivator to continue or attempt other goals.

Something that's very important when setting SMART goals, is formulating it in a POSITIVE manner. Remember that what you focus on, gets improved. ◊

About the Author



Andrea Cook is a clinical consultant and trainer for premier orthodontic offices across the country with more than 20 years experience chairside. She is presenting at the 2018 Users Group Meeting in Savannah, Georgia.

Reprinted from

The Newsletter for Members and Friends of Ortho2
January 2018 - Volume 36 Issue 1