

# OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

## Initiation



### Objectives and benefits

A project goal is a broad statement about the problem you're trying to solve. An objective provides measurable criteria, or set targets, of what your project will achieve. You may have a number of objectives for your project. Each objective will help you stay on track and work towards your goal.

### Initiation

The purpose of this phase is to develop a clear understanding of what your project is, what you want to achieve and how you plan to get there.

## Key points

### 1. Consider your goal

An objective is a measure of how you will achieve your goal. When developing an objective, it's often tempting to draft a wish list of items that will make a difference in your organisation. It is important that each objective is focused, so keep referring back to the goal and choose the criteria you will measure success by. Usually 2-3 specific measurable objectives are enough. The benefits will be set separately.

### 2 Create SMARTA objectives

Keeping your objectives focused and clear can often be tricky. One way to develop well-written objectives is to use the SMARTA approach. This ensures your objectives are: Specific; Measurable; Attainable; Relevant; Timely and Agreed (see guide below). Use this as a guide when writing your objectives and ensure you can support each criterion, as this will help develop realistic objectives with validity and focus.

### 3. Understand the benefits

Apart from the objectives, your project will likely achieve a number of benefits for your organisation and consumers. Benefits are additional 'wins' that the project will achieve alongside the objectives. Benefits can be both expected (planned) or unexpected (discovered). This list will likely be more extensive than objectives. While it's important to capture all of the benefits, don't get too carried away and over promise.

### 4. Quantitative and qualitative benefits

The benefits may be quantitative (such as increased revenue or reduced cost) or qualitative (such as improved morale or capability). It's important to keep track of these and include them in your project reports. Consider how they will be measured, as benefits will need evidence to support their achievement. It may be 'hard data' like percentage increase or KPI improvement, or survey responses to capture consumer benefits.

## Considerations and tips

It's easy to get confused about the difference between objectives and benefits. For example, increasing the number of patients who leave the ED within four hours is an objective; increasing the morale of ED staff may be a benefit. Consider these points when developing your objectives and benefits.

### Know the difference

Be aware of clearly defining your goal, objectives and benefits as separate items. Consider how each will be achieved and be clear on the difference. You may also need to help others understand the difference.

### Evolving

It is difficult to set quantitative objectives at the beginning of the project unless you have baseline data. Ensure you have access to the data measures and consider how to track the improvement along the way and the final outcomes.

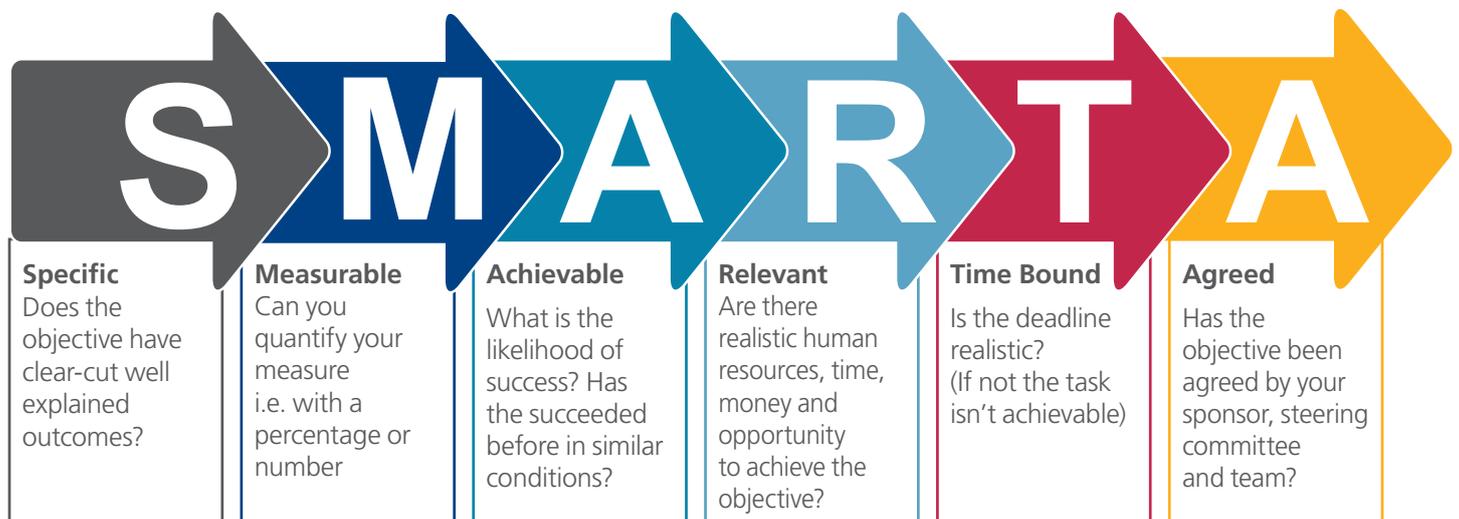
### Action related

Think of an objective as an action statement. It will need to 'do' something, like 'reduce' or 'increase'. Support the action with specific measures and timelines. For example: Increase X from 50% to 85% by (date). This will help identify it as an objective.

### Accountability

Ensure that the objectives are agreed. Once they fit the SMARTA criteria, your sponsor and steering committee need to be in agreement of accountability to the objectives before you move forward in the project.

## SMARTA framework



## Further information

[My Health Learning Log in Form](#) – Redesign Initiation (202464923): Goals and Objectives

10 steps to setting smart objectives – [www.projectsmaart.co.uk/10-steps-to-setting-smart-objectives.php](http://www.projectsmaart.co.uk/10-steps-to-setting-smart-objectives.php)

## Next steps

Once you have established the project objectives and benefits, you can start thinking about the people who will help you achieve them. Involving people and engaging stakeholders is essential to achieving the objectives and overall goal.