

Appendix B: From Dreams to SMART Goals

What is God calling the congregation to do in the next season of the church's life? What God-sized dreams has the Crossroads Team discerned out of their process of prayer and discovery? To make dreams a vital reality in your congregation, goals are needed. The process of goal writing that we advocate is much more than a "to do" list or a checklist of things to accomplish. Rather, it is a process designed to provide clarity of calling and focus for ministry. SMART goals are the structure that undergirds a congregation's God-sized dreams.

Goals provide: Purpose → Direction → Alignment

SMART goals are outcome statements. To be effective, goals must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. Two to three goals are plenty. Remember that the performance goals help to sharpen focus and energy, and align with the contextual mission of the congregation and the trajectory of the Arkansas Conference. Finally, make certain that your goal passes the "so what" test. A reasonable person reading the goal should understand why the goal has inherent worth and how it will advance the mission of the congregation.

Specific

Goals must be easily understood. They must tell precisely what the congregation will accomplish

Measurable

Goals must be measurable or observable (on some level) so that there is clarity about whether the congregation has been successful or not in reaching the goals. Measurable and observable isn't necessarily the same thing as quantifiable (counting); be creative in the measures that you define.

Attainable

Goals must not be too difficult or too easy. If the goal is too challenging, the congregation may become frustrated. A goal that is too easy won't prompt any changes in behavior.

Relevant

Your goals as a congregation must be congruent with the overall mission and vision of the congregation and the trajectory of the Arkansas Conference. How are your goals attached to God's dreams for the church in this season of the congregation's life?

Time bound

Goals must be bound by specific time parameters and deadlines for completion. Some goals need to have triggers that signal a next step, or perhaps an automatic lifespan.