

Write SMART: How to Create Terrific Writing Goals--And Achieve Them!

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By Katey Coffing, Ph.D.

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Open up your favorite calendar and circle today's date.

Why? Because no matter what day it is, you've been given a wonderful gift: a bright and shiny year ahead to make your writing dreams come true.

What are your writing goals for the coming year? If you don't have any, this is the perfect time to create them. Clear goals help you stay focused as a writer. If you choose what you want to accomplish, you can arrange your time and priorities to get them done.

Take five minutes right now to decide what big things you'd like to achieve this year. (I'll focus on your writing, but this technique can work for any area of your life.)

A long-established acronym, SMART, can help you create great goals. SMART stands for

Specific
Measurable
Action-Oriented
Risk/Realistic
Timed

Here's how each of these words can help you succeed.

Specific:

When determining your goals, be precise. Instead of "I'll write more this year," consider "I'll complete a new chapter every two weeks."

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Measurable:

For each goal you choose, make sure you can measure progress. For example, how will you know you've completed it?

Action-oriented:

Choose goals you control so they're not at anyone else's mercy. Rather than "This year I'll get a book contract," set goals to complete and polish two novels or mail 30 queries to agents.

Risk/Realistic:

It's always good to stretch yourself. However, if writing ten pages usually takes you several weeks, don't count on writing six novels this year. Unrealistic expectations can get you so frustrated you'll lose momentum. Instead, create goals that motivate you without being burdens.

Timed:

Setting a particular deadline will help you pace yourself to get things done. For each of your goals, establish a completion date.

Next, take these big SMART goals and figure out what smaller steps you'll need to achieve each of them. Design these subgoals to be SMART too!

Once you have a list of goals for the year, put them where you'll see them every day. Print them out and tape them to your computer, your office wall, even your bathroom mirror.

See them, know them...do them.

Writers, I hope this coming year brings everything you wish for. More importantly, I want you to *make your dreams come true*!

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Katey Coffing, Ph.D. is a novelist and book coach who helps women delight in writing (and finishing!) their books. Visit her at

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To receive additional articles and tips for women writers, subscribe to Katey's ezine, The Write Calling, at

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Goal Setting for your Home Business.

By Ian Hugh Canaway

The ability to set goals and effectively motivate yourself to achieve them in home business are two essential skills that you cannot afford to overlook.

To try and start a business without goals could be compared to throwing a baseball pitch, blindfolded in the dark. What would be your chance of getting your pitch on target? Never mind getting a strike-out. Unless you are very lucky it is unlikely that you will have any success without properly setting out goals.

If when you start your home business, in what ever field it maybe, if you have no goals and aim at nothing, is it not unlikely that you will hit nothing and achieve nothing?

To set effective goals there are a few things you need to know about yourself which will affect how you set your goals. You are affected by, the environment in which you live, your experience and knowledge, your attitude and dreams and visions for the future.

When you set your goals you need to decide what you want and when you want to achieve each goal. You should spend time writing down your goals and display them in a prominent position where you will see them daily to remind yourself to stay motivated and focused. Cross off your goals once they've been achieved, adding new ones to ensure your business keeps growing.

"Don't set your Goals to low. If you don't need much, you won't become much". -- Jim Rohn --

I'm sure you will have come across the SMART analogy, with regards to goal setting. It contains the most important concepts to consider and adhere to when setting your goals.

Goals should be; Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time related.

For example it would be unwise to set a goal of making \$10,000 in a week, it's just not a realistic goal for the average person, unless you have a lot of experience and knowledge in your field or receive help from someone who has these attributes. When you failed to reach this goal your motivation would suffer and you might start doubting your decision to start your home business.

Ok let's set some goals, firstly, though I want you to write a list of all the things you want; whether it is a new car, watch, house, sofa, to send your kids through college or a successful home business, write them all down and say why you want it. When I did this I had a list the length of my arm and I'm still

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working through it 3 years on. By doing this it will help focus your mind and motivate yourself to succeed.

Now set your goals, they need to be SMART and you need to set both short term and long term goals. One of the best techniques I use is to set 6 goals before I go to bed for the next day and prioritise them. All successful people set goals and prioritise them in order of importance. Remember your time

is your most important asset; you simply cannot afford to waste it.

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. — Aristotle -

By making goal setting a habit there is no reason why you cannot achieve excellence.

Ian Canaway is the owner of

and is dedicated to helping

you save time and money by providing the highest quality proven tools & opportunities and information for growing a successful home-based online business.

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