

## Helping Your Mentee Set & Reach Goals

Help your mentee reach their goals by asking questions to understand their desired outcome. Goals should be SMART:

Specific  
Measurable  
Action-oriented  
Realistic  
Time-bound

The best way to create SMART mentoring goals is through conversation. Make sure you are clear on what success looks like. Be as specific as possible and determine a way to measure success.

### Ask:

Ask “How will we know if/when you have achieved your goal?” “What will success look like?” “What will be different when you achieve this goal?”

### Encourage:

Encourage action rather than contemplation. Action-focused goals encourage actionable steps for accomplishment by doing, not just thinking. Too often we see mentees set goals that start with “I will think about” or “I will explore.” SMART goals have action words and should answer the question, “What will I do?”

### Provide:

Provide a reality check. SMART goals are realistic. Help your mentees set realistic milestones that link to a larger goal to keep them motivated and create enthusiasm for further progress. Discuss possible obstacles and how to overcome those obstacles. If obstacles can be overcome, create learning around that. If they cannot, create a more realistic goal.

### Set:

Set a deadline. Too often, development goals remain unreached because they feel important but not urgent. Having time-bound goals helps measure progress, create a sense of urgency, generate momentum, and provide natural check-in points along the way. Set a date by which the goal should be achieved, and continually track progress towards that date.