



**work. life. creativity**  
it's about being done.

## November/December 2011 Newsletter

It finally is Fall! Most of the leaves are gone, there is a crispness in the air and the days seem to go straight from “dawn” to “late afternoon”.

This is the time of year that we start to reminisce about the year that is fading and begin to (dare is say it?) dream about the new year.

Did you get everything done that you had planned for 2011? If not you still have some time. If you did, well that is fantastic! Now you can relax and enjoy the holidays (*that means Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year's, I'm not going PC on you*) and start thinking about the goals and plans for 2012.

If you need a little help with getting your projects and plans completed, why not try the following exercise? I do this every week on Saturday morning (*I'm an early riser*) and I find that it is a really big help in staying on track and moving forward.

If you have rocked out all of your 2011 plans and goals, then you can skip to page three!

### The Weekly Review

Take a few minutes and jot down the answers to the following questions:  
(*Seriously, do it. Get a pen and some paper and do it. You will be surprised at what happens, at what you learn about yourself. Because I will bet that you never ask yourself these kinds of questions, do you? You don't have to show the answers to anybody, this is a safe place.*)

1. What did I do well this week?
2. What can I improve on next week?
3. What was my biggest accomplishment?
4. Am I closer to my Life Goals?
5. What was hard for me this week, *and Why?*
6. What was the biggest waste of time?
7. What gave the best Return on Time Invested?

Do you see a pattern? Does anything jump out at you? Did you find yourself making excuses about things or were you honest with yourself (*and it felt a little scary too, huh?*) about the things that you can improve on? Were you able to identify an obstacle that is holding you back? How do you think you can overcome that obstacle? (*Hint: Write that down too!*)

How are you feeling right now? Better? Like you made a little progress and have a much better idea of where you are and where you need to go next? Good. *(If not, well, send me an email or give me call, I can help you with identifying and overcoming these obstacles)*

Okay, step two. Knowing what you now know about the past week, how do you think that these patterns may have affected the whole year? Think about the goals you had for 2011 and why they were not achieved. Can you apply what you just learned to *those* obstacles? Sure you can.

I'll wait.

Oh, good, you're back. Were you able to write down a few notes that will help you polish off those last few tasks and accomplish those goals? Yes? Good.

If not, well here are some more tips that may help you with them, followed by an amazing bonus:

*(scroll down to the next page)*

# Setting SMART Goals so you can really do them

## The SMART model for goal setting

SMART is an acronym for **Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, & Timely**. These five words describe the different facets of your goal and teach you how to break it into smaller parts that you can actually do, gauge your progress, and keep yourself on track to the finish line.

**Specific** - Your definition of your goal must be as specific as you can make it.

- What: What do I want to accomplish?
- Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.
- Who: Who is involved?
- Where: Identify a location.
- How: what steps can I take to do this

Here is an example of a goal that is commonly set on New Year's Eve:

*“I am going to lose weight”*

No. No, most likely you're not. Because that is not a specific goal. Get specific:

*“I am going to lose 20 pounds so that I can get rid of this belly and look good for the class reunion this summer. I will do it by eating less overall, eating more salads and exercising 20 minutes a day - three times a week.  
I will track my progress in my calendar”*

Now **this** is a specific goal. Note also that it addresses the remaining four facets of the goal.

**Measurable** - How will I know when it is accomplished? For this example you will need to get on a scale and weigh yourself and write it down. Using a dry-erase marker on the bathroom mirror is a good spot for that. Maybe on the refrigerator door, too. Subtract 20 from this number. That is your goal. You can track it every day, week, whatever.

**Attainable** - Setting a goal that you can actually accomplish is pretty important. You will be setting yourself up for disappointment if you try for something that you just can't do. Ask yourself:

- Is it realistic?
- Do you have the skills and knowledge?
- If not can you get them?

**Relevant** - Is this worth doing? How is that as a question for the ages. *Is this worth doing?* Do you actually **want** to do it? Does it have any value, *real or perceived*, or is it just posturing?

Because a goal that you really don't care about, that doesn't mean something to you is just a waste of our time together. Because if you don't **feel**, *deep down inside*, that this is worth doing **it just isn't going to get done**.

Going back to our example for a moment, part of our specific statement was that we want to lose the weight in time for the Class Reunion. Because we want to *look good* for the class reunion. We want to *feel good about ourselves* at the class reunion. That is what makes it **relevant** - because the accomplishment has **value**.

**Timely** - Simply put, do you have enough time in your day and in the coming days to actually get this done? The goal in our example can't be accomplished by tomorrow, but it can certainly be completed by June. Use questions like the following to create a roadmap to success:

- When is this due?
- How can I break it up into smaller steps?
- What are my milestones?
- What can I do to get closer today?

In order to lose 20 pounds by June you need to lose about three pounds per month. By modifying your diet and exercise routine you can certainly do that.

**In conclusion...(here is your bonus!)**

Now you have **two new tools** for Goal Setting and ***Goal Accomplishing!***

Now all you have to do is write down your general goal ideas and apply the SMART model to create a well-defined, specifically described goal. You can identify the individual steps and milestones that you will need to measure your progress. Finally, you have a set of tools for evaluating your performance and identifying obstacles.

***Nothing can stop you now!***

Join us in the forums for sharing, feedback and encouragement. Let's make 2012 the year that it finally happens!

Best regards and Happy Thanksgiving, we'll have another newsletter in January.

Stephen P Smith and the work.life.creativity Team.

