

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

AFFINITY RESEARCH GROUPS

<Name of presenters>
 <Affiliation of presenters>
 NSF DUE-0920300; CNS 0837556

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INTRODUCTIONS-1



Birthplace Favorite movie

Name

Research interest Place I would like to visit

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INTRODUCTIONS-2

- Meet as many people as you can in the next 5 minutes.
- Find out <add something here>.

TIME LIMIT: 5 minutes

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GOALS

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GOALS

Broad purposes around which project activities and resources can be organized.

- State what you hope to accomplish, but usually are not measurable.
- Create the setting for what you are proposing.
- Identify a gap in knowledge.
- Describe what you want to achieve and the outcome.
- Should be important, and the outcome should impact your long-range research plan.

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GOAL EXAMPLES: THINK

- Review the goals in the handout.
- What are your observations?
- Time limit: 15 minutes

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GOAL EXAMPLES: SHARE

- **TIME:** 15 minutes

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SETTING GOALS: THINK

- **Team Leader:** Share your project's research goals with your team.
- **Students:** (Individually or with your team leader)
- What is your **long-term** research/ personal/ career goal?
- What are your project/personal/career goals?
- **Time:** 30 minutes

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QUESTIONS: SHARE

- Share your goals with the group.
- **Discussion:**
- (If appropriate): What gap in knowledge does the goal address?
- How does the goal relate to achieving the long-term goal?
- **Time:** 15 minutes (5 minutes each)

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QUESTIONS: REPORT OUT

- **Discussion:**
What gap in knowledge does the goal address?
How does the goal relate to achieving the long-range goal?
- **Time:** 15 minutes

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OBJECTIVES

OBJECTIVES

Specific things that will be accomplished in the project

- Operational
- Measurable
- Basis for the activities and evaluation of your project

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Specific things that will be accomplished in the project

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Example: Goal is to reach the top of the mountain. One objective is to have everyone at base camp by 6 pm on June 16th.

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SMART OBJECTIVES

- **Specific:** concrete and well defined
- **Measurable:** criteria for measuring success; ability to define when objective is achieved
- **Achievable:** ability to attain with effort and commitment; feasible and actionable
- **Realistic:** attainable with available resources, e.g., equipment, time, and people
- **Time-bound:** achievable in defined time period

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GUIDELINES

- Check that all objectives relate to and support the overall project goal.
- Ensure that each objective correlates with a specific goal.
- Delineate a reasonable number of objectives and present in a logical order.
- Consider “why” objectives over “what” objectives.
- Make sure no objective is dependent on the successful outcome of another.

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STRONG & WEAK VERBS FOR OBJECTIVES

Strong:

- to increase
- to determine
- to create/design
- to evaluate/analyze
- to describe
- to calculate
- to contrast
- to classify

Weak

- to promote
- to encourage
- to understand
- to become aware
- to work with
- to support
- to grasp
- to study

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COMMON ERRORS

- Too specific; too broad
 - Make meaningful and measurable
- Too many; too few
 - Balance achievable and comprehensive
- Too arbitrary; too boilerplate
 - Make relevant and significant

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EXERCISE: THINK

- Review the objectives in the handout.
- What are your observations?
- Time limit: 15 minutes

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SHARE

- **TIME: 15 minutes**

REPORT OUT

- **TIME: 15 minutes**

SETTING OBJECTIVES: THINK

SHARE

- Each member shares one objective with the group.
- Discussion: Is it SMART?
- **TIME: 15 minutes**

REPORT OUT

- **TIME: 15 minutes**

SUMMARY

- What benefits do you gain as a researcher?
- What value do you bring to your research project?
- What are the differences between goals and objectives?
- Why is it important to articulate goals and objectives?
- Why is it important to have others review your goals and objectives?