

SMART objectives worksheet

Effective goal setting can help you as a swimmer to:

- Focus on the right things at the right time
- Become more confident
- Identify the steps that you need to take to improve your performance
- Be more focussed on the journey, rather than a specific gala, race or point in time

“Outcome” goals are related to winning a race, or other specific measurable data such as achieving a certain time, or personal best. Outcome goals can be useful, but over-use of outcome goals (or achievements) can affect your confidence if things don’t go well.

“Process” goals are what skills / techniques you should focus on and how they prepare you for competition. These goals tend to be more useful and help you to maintain focus on the “now”. Examples include:

- tonight I am going to do 5 fly kicks off every tumble turn I do at the shallow end
- at this session I am not going to breathe on the first fly stroke after transition
- I am going to work on my underwaters for freestyle and reach at least 6 meters underwater from every tumble turn

Goal setting can also follow the SMART approach outlined below:

Specific – For example, rather than “improve turns”, what is exactly is required to improve them (such as tighten my streamline off the wall; accelerate into the turn; no breathing in the 5m into/out of the turn, etc.)

Measurable - Simple for “outcome goals”, such as number of strokes per length, stroke rate, T20, etc., but is more challenging for process goals. If the goal cannot be objectively measured, then subjective scoring could be applied, e.g. “how tired did I feel on a score of 1 – 10”

Achievable - Goals should be challenging in order to maintain motivation and improvement, but not so unrealistic that they adversely affect your motivation and improvement.

Relevant - Focusing on the top 5 things that are going to make the biggest difference will achieve a better outcome than having a long, long list of small goals

Time-bound – a timeline should be drafted so that you have a target event, or stage in the training season to achieve an agreed goal, e.g. “by the time of the COSACSS spring meet, I will have swam sub-34 seconds for my 50 FC”.

Goals should be drafted by yourself so that you feel in control of your swimming. Once you have some goals, your coach would check through them and help you to finalise your goals and agree a plan to help you achieve them. If goals are too large or too unrealistic, for example, your coach can help you to break it down into the most important steps and help you work towards them.

The next page is a template that you can use, if you wish, to note some ideas down and bring them to your coach when we return to poolside. Or you can ask a parent to email it to your coach, who can look at it with you whilst we are not in the pool.

Name:			
Age:			
What things do you like most about competitive swimming?	1) 2) 3) 4)		
What is your lifetime swimming goal or dream? (e.g. winning a medal at the Olympics; to still be competing when I'm an old person; to go sub-25 secs for 50 Free)			
What do you want to improve on in the next 3 months? Examples: Core strength, flexibility, strength			
End of season Goals (times)		Current Time (LC or SC)	Goal Time (LC or SC)
	1500 Fr		
	800 Fr		
	400 Fr		
	400 IM		
	200 IM		
	200 Fr		
	200 Bk		
	200 BR		
	200 FLY		
	100 Fr		
	100 BK		
	100 BR		
	100 FLY		
	50 Fr		
	50 BK		
	50 BR		
	50 FLY		
What are the top 5 things I need to work on to achieve my goals?	1) 2) 3) 4) 5)		

Goal Commitment

Athlete:

I _____ hereby am committed to work toward the goals I have established

Athlete Signature _____

Date _____

Coach:

I _____ hereby am committed to helping _____ achieve his/her goals.

Coach Signature _____ **Date** _____