



ESTABLISHING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A Framework for Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Planning

Goals and objectives are directly derived from the unit’s mission. The process of establishing goals and objectives helps us deconstruct the mission into achievable, concrete, time-bound actions that we can measure in order to track progress. Clear goals and objectives are, therefore, critical to the IE process.

What Is a Goal?

Goals are general statements of what it is we want to achieve. Goals derive directly from the mission (the overall purpose and core values) of your unit. Goals must be relevant, realistic, and achievable. You should **develop 3-5 goals** from your mission statement. For each goal, you will need to develop a series of objectives.

What Are Objectives?

Objectives state the specific actions you will take to achieve your goals. Objectives must be specific, measurable, and time-bound. For each goal, you should **develop 3-5 objectives**.

Common ways of describing goals versus objectives:

Goals are broad

Objectives are narrow

Goals are more long-term

Objectives are more short-term

Goals are general intentions

Objectives are precise actions

Goals are often intangible

Objectives are often tangible

Goals are abstract

Objectives are concrete

Goals are difficult to measure

Objectives are measurable

- **Goals** are desired results that provide direction and guide decision-making. **Objectives** are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to achieve goals.
- We use **goals** to turn our mission into achievable end-results. We use **objectives** to operationalize and measure achievement towards goals.
- Measurable **objectives** are essential for evaluating progress.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES
Something you try to achieve	Actions you need to take to achieve a goal
Define direction and destination	Steps that get us there
Where we want to go	How we will get there
Big picture	Specific tactics



EXAMPLES

Goal:

The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness (OIRE) will develop and implement a campus-wide process for Institutional Effectiveness.

Objective 1:

OIRE will work with TTUHSC EP leadership to determine TTUHSC EP organizational structure, divisions, and define units.

Objective 2:

OIRE will establish an IE Task Force with representation from all divisions, and organize regular, monthly task-force meetings starting in August 2015.

Objective 3:

OIRE will develop and present a series of workshops and materials to teach IE principles to task force members.

CHECKLIST (for both Goals and Objectives)

Do/Are your **goals** and **objectives**:

- Use the **SMART** criteria
 - S** Specific
 - M** Measurable
 - A** Achievable (attainable, action-oriented)
 - R** Relevant (realistic, reasonable)
 - T** Time-bound
- Use action verbs (e.g., define, explain, identify, illustrate, apply, organize); refer to “Useful Action Verbs” attachment
- In complete sentences
 - At least 3 in total (e.g., minimum of 3 goals per mission statement and minimum of 3 objectives per goal)
- Aligned with your program’s/office’s/department’s mission statement



CHECKLIST (for goals)

Do/Are your goals:

- General statements
- Broad
- Define direction/destination
- Long-term

CHECKLIST (for objectives)

Do/Are your objectives:

- answer the five ‘W’ questions (usually, but not always all are answered):
 - What: What do I want to accomplish?
 - Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits or accomplishing goal.
 - Who: Who is involved?
 - Where: Identify a location.
 - Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
- Distinctive from one another
- Not “bundled”
 - *Example: The Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment will facilitate the preparation for reaffirmation of accreditation by SACSCOC **AND** work cooperatively to monitor progress of the TTUHSC strategic plan.*
- Avoid directionality (e.g., use of the words “increase” or “decrease”)
- Not specify a quantifiable target
- Simply stated
- Measurable – Is it possible to collect accurate and reliable data for each?
- Accurately reflect the key results of the operations or service offered by your program/office/department