SMART

Goal Setting

Last Updated
March 4, 2025

Setting clear and effective goals is essential for success in any profession, and travel advising is no exception. As a new travel advisor, you may have big dreams of building a successful business, attracting loyal clients, and creating memorable vacations. However, without a structured approach, those ambitions can feel overwhelming. By utilizing the SMART goal framework, you can create clear, actionable objectives that will guide you toward achieving your professional milestones. SMART goals are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. This approach will not only help you set your goals effectively but will also increase your chances of reaching them.

S – Specific
A specific goal has a much better chance of being accomplished than a general goal. Instead of setting a vague goal like "I want to be a successful travel advisor," you should define what success looks like for you. A specific goal answers the questions: What do I want to accomplish? Why is this important? Who is involved? Where will this take place? Which resources or limitations are involved?

For example, instead of saying, "I want more clients," a specific goal would be: "I will acquire five new clients each month by networking at local events, increasing my social media presence, and offering referral incentives." This goal outlines exactly what needs to be done and eliminates any ambiguity.

M – Measurable
Establishing concrete criteria for measuring progress is crucial. Measurable goals help you stay on track and motivated. If you cannot measure your goal, it becomes difficult to determine whether you are making progress or need to adjust your approach.

A measurable goal answers the question: How will I track my progress? For example, if your goal is to increase your revenue, you could set a measurable objective such as: "I will increase my monthly sales by 20% over the next six months by offering exclusive vacation packages and promoting limited-time discounts." By tracking your sales figures, you can evaluate your progress and make necessary adjustments along the way.

A – Attainable
Your goals should be challenging yet achievable. Setting unrealistic goals can lead to frustration and burnout. On the other hand, goals that are too easy will not push you to grow in your career. Attainable goals require you to consider what steps you need to take and whether you have the resources and skills to accomplish them.

For instance, if you are a new travel advisor, setting a goal to become the top seller in the industry within one year may not be attainable. However, a more realistic goal might be: "I will complete three industry certifications in the next six months to build my expertise and credibility." This goal challenges you but remains within reach with effort and dedication.

R – Realistic
A goal must be realistic and relevant to your career aspirations. Being realistic does not mean setting easy goals but rather setting goals that align with your abilities, resources, and industry standards. Ask yourself: Is this goal practical? Does it align with my long-term vision?

For example, a new travel advisor may set a goal to "sell 50 luxury vacations in the next month." However, if you are just starting and still building your client base, this may not be realistic. Instead, a more realistic goal could be: "I will book at least five luxury vacations in the next three months by targeting high-net-worth clients and collaborating with luxury travel suppliers."

T – Timely (Time-Bound)
Every goal should have a deadline to create a sense of urgency and accountability. Without a time frame, your goal remains just a wish. A time-bound goal answers the question: By when will I achieve this?
For instance, saying, "I want to grow my email list" is not time-bound. However, stating, "I will grow my email list by 500 subscribers in the next six months by offering a free travel planning guide as an incentive" gives you a clear deadline and actionable steps.

Bringing It All Together
Now that you understand each component of SMART goals, let's put it all together. Instead of setting a vague goal like, "I want to be a successful travel advisor," a SMART goal would be:

"I will gain 10 new clients in the next three months by attending two networking events per month, optimizing my website for SEO, and offering referral incentives to existing clients."

This goal is:

- Specific – Clearly defines the objective (gaining 10 new clients) and the methods (networking, SEO, referral incentives).
- Measurable – Progress can be tracked by counting new clients.
- Attainable – Requires effort but is possible within the timeframe.
- Realistic – Aligns with industry best practices and available resources.
- Time-Bound – Has a clear deadline (three months).

Applying SMART Goals to Your Travel Business

As a new travel advisor, setting SMART goals will help you establish a strong foundation for your business. Here are a few examples of SMART goals tailored for travel advisors:

1. Client Acquisition: "I will acquire 20 new clients in the next six months by leveraging social media marketing and partnering with local businesses for referrals."

2. Sales Growth: "I will increase my monthly revenue by 15% over the next four months by promoting high-end travel packages and offering personalized itinerary planning."
3. Professional Development: "I will complete three industry certifications within the next year to improve my expertise and credibility."
4. Marketing Strategy: "I will publish two blog posts per month for the next six months to increase website traffic and establish myself as a travel expert."
5. Networking: "I will attend at least one industry event per quarter to build relationships with suppliers and potential clients."

Tracking and Adjusting Your Goals

Setting SMART goals is just the beginning. You should regularly evaluate your progress and make adjustments as needed. Consider setting weekly or monthly check-ins to review your achievements and identify areas for improvement. If a goal is not being met, analyze the reasons and modify your strategy accordingly. Flexibility is key to long-term success.

Final Thoughts

Creating SMART goals as a new travel advisor is an essential step in building a successful business. By making your goals Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely, you create a roadmap that keeps you focused and motivated. Whether you aim to increase your client base, boost your sales, or expand your expertise, SMART goals will help turn your aspirations into tangible achievements. Stay committed, track your progress, and adjust when necessary to ensure continuous growth and success in the travel industry.