

Losing weight can be much like setting up a business plan for your body. The best results come from setting realistic goals, having a plan to reach those goals, and putting your ideas into action. Take a few minutes to look through the difference steps and determine what you need to do next for success in the gym.

### **Setting Realistic Goals:**

This will be your first step in your fitness plan for your body. Sit down with a pen and a pencil. Think of what you want most from your workouts and just start writing them down. At this point, no goal is a bad goal. Just write down your goals as fast as they pop into your head. Think of it like creative writing for the gym.

The next step is to refine your goals. Apply the "SMART" principle to your goals. Your goals need to meet all of the criteria listed below:

**S**pecific  
**M**easurable  
**A**ttainable  
**R**ealistic  
**T**ime specific

### **Good examples:**

"I want to lose 10 pounds in 6 weeks."  
"I want to run a marathon in 6 months."  
"I want to get to the gym 3 times per week."

These are all "SMART" goals. Remember, it has to be attainable and realistic. These are the two components that people usually leave out in their goal setting. If you want to lose 30 pounds in 30 days, this is not attainable in most cases. If you want to lose 10 pounds in 6 weeks, but you are not willing to change your diet or workout 3-5 days per week because you are too busy, this is not realistic for your lifestyle right now. People need goals that they can achieve, otherwise you will feel like you are continuously failing in the gym. This will quickly lead

to a gym membership that you pay monthly fees towards, but never use.

So if you have not set goals in the gym, I would recommend taking a few minutes to scratch a few ideas down that fit the SMART principle.

### **The Plan:**

Now you have to determine a plan. Sit down with your daily planner, iphone, Outlook calendar or however you keep track of your schedule. Decide how many days per week and how long you can commit to working out. Most people should see results when working out three days per week combined with a healthy diet. These workouts should be entered into your planner just as any other appointment in your week. In fact, these might be the most important appointments for you during the week because you are taking time to better your health. If you are working out three days per week, it should include cardiovascular exercise and strength training on the same day. If your goal is to lose weight at a more rapid rate, you should consider exercising 4-5 days per week.

You should revisit your plan monthly or weekly to determine if you are making improvements towards your SMART goals. If your plan is to workout five days per week and you are highly motivated, but you are really only getting to the gym three times per week then you have created an environment where you are failing your expectations week after week. In this case, I would recommend changing your goal and plan so that it would more accurately reflect working out three times weekly. Once you have mastered this for 1 month and have been successful, then up your progress to four times per week the next month.

### **Taking Action:**

The best plan in the world doesn't mean a thing unless you follow through with it. Get to the gym, jump on your bike, throw on your walking shoes, or whatever your plan may be to reach your goals. Take action now to better your health for tomorrow.

Bridgetown Physical Therapy & Training Studio is committed to helping our patients and

personal training clients to reaching their goals. Whether you need help setting goals, developing a plan or taking action, we are always happy to help. Take care everyone!

Sincerely,

Josh Kernen, PT, DPT, CSCS