Setting Fitness Goals

Once you have a goal in mind, apply the **SMART** Goal setting formula:

**S**pecific - The goal must be clear and precise.
Many people decide they want to “get fit”. This statement is too general. Does it mean getting up a flight of stairs, or does it mean being able to climb the Empire State Building? Does it mean losing 5 pounds or 25? A specific goal is clear and easy to understand. State your goal. Put it on the fridge, tell your friends, family and co workers. It will help you stick to it.

**M**easurable - There must be a way to determine your success.
You will never be able to achieve a goal if you don’t know what the measurement of success is. Without an endpoint, you will not be able to chart your progress and see the improvements along the way. If your goal is to increase your strength, how will you know when you have reached it? A measurable goal would be to be able to do 3 sets of 12 repetitions with a ten pound weight.

**A**ction Orientated - Determine how you are going to reach your goal.
Great achievements require plans. By mapping out the actions that need to be taken, you will greatly improve your likelihood of reaching your goal. For example, if you wanted to run a marathon you might chart the steps as follows:

a) Find a marathon you would like to enter.
b) Call facilities to find a marathon-training course that works with your schedule.
c) Save $50.00 per month for the training course.
d) Attend 3 training sessions per week.
e) When you are ready, enter the marathon.
f) Complete the marathon. Be happy just to finish it.

This breaks a large, formidable goal (running a marathon) down into smaller, attainable goals. In addition, set weekly mini goals to increase your training time/distance. Some of your early short term goals could be to walk for an hour; then advance to run for 5 minutes without stopping, walk for a while, then run again, etc. Being able to successfully attain small progressive steps set you up for success and for completion of your long-term goal.

**R**ealistic - Take a reality check - is this goal attainable?
Ask yourself the question: “Can I do this?” If the answer is “no” adjust the goal. For example, most of us will never look like Raquel Welch in a bikini. This is NOT a realistic goal to set. This may involve slight changes to the action plan, the time involved for the goal, or a complete change in the original goal.

**T**ime - Set a deadline for the goal.
Break down the steps outlined in your action plan and determine how long each will take. Add up the time. If the time does not fit into your goal, either adjust the goal or the time frames. Set a definite end date: e.g. you want to lose 5 pounds in the next month. Start your goal on January 1, and aim for January 31 as your deadline.

*Adapted from Idea*