

**Purpose:** Goal setting for personal, professional, and organizational growth is a proven tactic to help individuals and teams achieve higher performance. Directors of nursing services (DNSs) can use this worksheet to help their team or themselves develop a stretch goal combined with a SMART goal.

**Directions:** After reading the introduction and the example, answer the questions in the blank template to develop goals for either personal, professional, or organizational growth.

## Introduction

Stretch goals and SMART goals complement each other. A stretch goal is ambitious and urges the individual or team to “stretch” beyond what they think they can achieve. A stretch goal inspires big dreams and motivates people to undertake significant challenges. In contrast, a SMART goal is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound. When a stretch goal is paired with a SMART goal, the individual or team has a roadmap to follow and is inspired to make progress toward the bigger vision.

## Example

### Stretch Goal

Be inspired to think big!

#### What is my/our big dream or ambitious challenge I/we want to achieve?

*I want to be recognized as a top expert nurse leader for post-acute care.*

### SMART Goal

Be strategic and think about the actions that will help make progress.

S	M	A	R	T
Be specific about what is to be accomplished.	Have a clear definition of success.	Ensure that the goal is realistic.	Confirm that the goal is worth pursuing.	Select a motivating but doable completion date.

#### Specific — What goal is narrower but represents a concrete step that helps achieve the stretch goal?

*I will become an AAPACN-certified director of nursing services (DNS-CT).*

#### Measurable — How will progress be measured?

*I will complete two courses of the AAPACN DNS-CT program a month until all 10 courses are complete, so I can become a DNS-CT.*

#### Attainable — What barriers must be overcome, and what resources, including people, are necessary to make progress?

*I will need the support of the nursing home administrator and the assistant director of nursing to cover my responsibilities for two hours per week while I focus on completing the DNS-CT program.*

#### Relevant — Why is this a priority, and what value does it add?

*To be recognized as a top expert nursing leader for post-acute care, achieving the SMART goal of becoming a DNS-CT is relevant and realistic. It's also something I can be proud of, it will help me feel more confident in my decisions, and it will help me better support my team during challenges—all outcomes that contribute to the stretch goal.*

#### Time-Bound — By what date will the achievement be accomplished?

*I will start January 1 and finish May 31.*

Name:

Date:

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Be inspired to think big!

What is my/our big dream or ambitious challenge I/we want to achieve?

**SMART Goal**  
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