

Goal-setting

In formulating an action plan, the church will have to set goals and priorities. When setting goals many find the **SMART** acronym useful. There are several different versions of this, but in one commonly used version **SMART** refers to goals that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, **A**chievable, **R**elevant and **T**ime-framed.

Specific - means that your goal is right to the point

Measurable - means that you will know when you have reached your goal

Achievable - means that your goal is realistic, something you have every expectation of achieving, and will therefore not become discouraged. This doesn't mean that you can't make big, ambitious plans, but it helps to break it down into smaller, achievable steps.

Relevant – means that your goal is right for you at this time, and achieving it will benefit you

Time-framed means that you set yourself a time limit in which to achieve it, a time-frame that it is realistic (not too short and not too long).

Another important criterion is that goals are SHARED. The whole consultancy process is designed to ensure that the goals are not the private dream of the minister or any other leader but are shared and owned by the congregation.

Priorities

Having a stack of goals is not the same as having an action plan. Goals need to be prioritised, with due regard to the manageability of what is proposed as well as the urgency. The church's resources are unlikely to be such that it can tackle everything at once!

The following questions might be helpful to the group who are tasked with setting the goals and priorities. It can help to establish precisely what actions need to be taken to achieve the objectives. Use this

- When a situation has been thoroughly diagnosed, priorities established and a clear understanding of what needs to happen is required. If there is no detailed plan, quite frequently the action just will not happen.

Strengths

- Simplicity
- The questions provide a clear structure for plan
- It can be used in a multitude of situations - at any level (individual, team, etc)
- Language is simple

Limitations

Can take more time to complete than you think!
It has limited use in complex projects

How to use

- Use in one group or break people up into smaller to tackle different issues.
- Hand out the list of questions and get people to write their answers on a flipchart (or use post-it notes then stick on a flip chart).
- If done in small groups, ask the group to present back.
- Take each of the findings outlined in the Consultants report one at a time and use the questions below to come to a list of actions that will become your action plan.

Action Planning Questions:

- What do you want to achieve?
- How will you move forward?
- What help do you need, and from whom?
- What are the obstacles you may encounter?
- How will you overcome each one?
- What timescale will you work to?
- Who will be responsible for what?