

Writing Your Goals and Objectives

Setting clear goals and objectives is a key for the success of your ministry. Without concrete, practical and well-done goals and objectives, your program will not achieve its purpose. So let's clarify exactly what goals and objectives mean. The purpose in writing them is to make your ministry pro-active, not re-active.

A. Goals.

1. The goals of your program indicate 'what' you want to accomplish in your program. They are the desired outcomes that you have for a specific part of your program.
2. Your goals should also say 'why' you are doing what you are doing, what your definite purpose is for this goal.
3. It must be as definite as possible, including a specific date of completion.
4. Your goal should be one sentence long.

A positive example: In order to evangelize young people for Christ, we will develop a working plan for building solid relationships with youth to be distributed to Core and priests by June 30, 20xx. Notice the following in this goal: It is specific (*a working plan for Core and priests*), has a definite purpose (*for building solid relationships with youth so as to evangelize them to Christ*) and includes a specific date of completion (*June 30, 20xx*)

A poor example would be as follows: To help Core build better relationships with teens. Notice the following in this goal: It is not specific (*'better' relationships, compared to what?*), has no purpose (*why are we building better relationships with teens?: Just to have fun, to create a political movement, because nobody else loves me?*), and has no date of completion. This goal will not be a driving force to the objectives. By assuming the specific and definite aspects of a goal, your ministry will not have direction and growth.

B. Objectives:

1. An objective needs to answer the question 'how' the goal is to be accomplished.
2. There should be no more than three objectives per goal, or otherwise you may burn out.
3. The objective needs to be a specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, observable, time-activated event or material that can be evaluated. The objective needs to state 'when' exactly it will take place or be completed. (This evaluation will become the basis of your synthesis project.)

4. A good objective needs to avoid vague words like 'more', 'increase' – it needs to be specific with numbers, occurrences of events. 'More' cannot be evaluated. An objective must also avoid words that are flaky, like, 'try', 'might', 'possibly': These words do not set concrete standards to which you can hold yourself accountable.

Referring to the above goal ('a'), a positive example of an objective would be: By November 1, we will develop a weekly relationship checklist for Core members and priests that will help them stay accountable and pass this checklist out to them on the May Core Retreat. This objective is measurable (*a checklist*), meaning that it can be observed and evaluated.

Again, referring to the above goal ('a'), a poor example of an objective could be as follows: To try to develop a way to be a better Core Team. This objective is not measurable, nor does it refer to anything specific. It also leaves a lot of questions unanswered, such as: *What* is 'better'? *How* will 'better' be developed (asking 'how' after an objective generally means that the statement was a goal, not an objective.) How will 'try' be measured and evaluated? Is the objective to 'try' or to 'develop'? *By When* will this be developed?

"A goal without a plan is a hallucination."