S.M.A.R.T. Goals

S – Specific

Make goals based on specific facts, asking yourself *"who?" "what?" "when?" and "how?"* questions. Perhaps writing down "I want to achieve better grades" is not specific enough. Writing down "I will earn at least a C+ on the midterm exam in my TLIT 200 course" is a more specific goal.

M – Measurable

Make sure that you have numbers or specific benchmarks in your goal, something that you can point to and say, "Look, I achieved that!" In the example above, by using the "C+" as a measure, you can determine whether or not you met, or even exceeded, that goal.

A – Achievable

Make sure that your goal is something that you can actually do. For example, making a goal that you will become the instructor for TLIT 200 by end of the class would not be achievable!

R – Realistic

You'll want to make your goals match who you really are and what you are capable of achieving. Although you don't want to set your sights too low, you also don't want to set them too high. If you set a bar that is too low, you won't be challenging yourself. If you set it too high, you'll become discouraged. In our example, if you say you want a "D" on your midterm exam, this may be a goal that is too easy to accomplish; if you say you will earn an "A+" on the midterm, you may be setting yourself up for feelings of failure if you know that an "A+" is not possible for you.

T- Timely (Time-sensitive)

Give yourself a deadline! If you don't determine a timeframe for your goals to be accomplished, it is too easy to forget about them. In the example we have been using, the midterm exam becomes our deadline. If the midterm takes place on November 4, for example, then we can say "I will earn at least a C+ on the midterm exam, which takes place on November 4, in my T LIT 200 course."

an **idea** is just a DREAM until you write it down.. THEN it's a **goal**.