



Fitness Goals: Overrated?

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In many cases, getting to the gym and working out is easy, but making it on a consistent basis is where we get into trouble. We also run into these problems with our eating habits. It would be relatively easy to go to the store, buy the healthy stuff, and eat it for a week. But following the same schedule for a six month period? Not such an easy task.

This seems to be the norm for the majority of people. We have good intentions (getting to the gym and buying the right food), but after a few weeks we seem to run out of steam. This has happened to me (and most people I know), more times than I can count. One reason this occurs, is the lack of proper goal setting. Not having a goal can make it very easy to skip out on workouts or fail to eat proper foods because you really don't have a reason to do so.

Another obstacle that seems to trip people up is not setting a proper goal. A common example of an improper goal is, "I want to look good." This is a good start, but it lacks specificity. By not having a specific end point or numbers to shoot for, it becomes easy to say, "I've worked hard this last week, maybe I'll take this week off". Pretty soon weeks turn into months, months to years, and we've made little progress. Not only that, but we also lose faith in setting goals. We begin to think that setting goals doesn't work for us and we've tried it all before.

At Athletes' Training Center, we have begun using SMART goals to help our clients and patients avoid the previous pitfalls. SMART is an acronym for:

Specific - a definitive way that we can help our clients (Decrease Body Fat, Increase Vertical Jump, or Increase Speed).

Measurable - has a numerical value to it in most cases (24%, 32", 1.88 seconds).

Attainable - the goal must be something that is logical and not unrealistic.

Reason - used to find the true reason for setting a goal (Not be made fun of by friends, make parents proud, or get noticed by the opposite sex). Possibly the most important.

Time - usually a time period that is more than a month, due to the amount of time it typically takes to illicit the changes people are striving for.

If we put all of these steps together, we could come up with a goal that looks like this...

I want to decrease my body fat to 24% by May 28th. This goal means something to me because if I can achieve this, I may get noticed more by the opposite sex.

As long as this goal is **Attainable**, we've got a winner!

Having a measurable and achievable end point takes your time in the gym from simple "work outs" to "training sessions" that are pieces of a much larger puzzle. Once you set a goal, you can make lifestyle choices that are geared towards your goal and each choice you make will affect your end point in a positive or negative way.

Tip: Before you begin exercising, set a SMART goal that will keep you accountable to yourself. As long as you are willing to truly commit to this goal, it will help you make the proper lifestyle changes to see the results you're looking for.