

# IMPACTFUL OUTREACH: METHODS FOR CREATING AND ASSESSING OUTREACH INITIATIVES

Goal setting is an essential component of assessing outreach – without knowing what you are trying to achieve it will be impossible to measure success. Using the SMART framework you can set easily measurable goals and establish a meaningful evaluation framework tied to institutional priorities.

## Draft Goal: Increase student use of the library

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Good goals are **Specific** – vague goals do not set a strategic direction. Tying your goal to an offering at your library can help you measure your success in the long-run.

Offerings might include:

- Programming
- Promotions
- Advertisements
- Services
- Products
- Public Relations
- Development

Goals should also be **Measurable**. We need data to tell us where we've started and how we'll know we're successful. Libraries collect a lot of operational data (circulation stats, gate count, etc.) automatically – but a lot of usable data comes from qualitative or quantitative investigations, market research initiatives or ratio calculations.

Methods of data collection might include:

-  Focus Groups
-  Surveys
-  Counts & Metrics
-  Benchmark Data & CAGR
-  Mixed Methods
-  Content Analysis
-  Space Use & Behavioral Data
-  Evaluation Frameworks

Goals should be **Achievable**. We need to look at what our average performance looks like – and then decide what an achievable standard of growth would be for a single evaluation cycle.

**Transform your standard data collection from an inventory of data – to a benchmark of performance and insight for growth strategy.**

**What did we do?** Did we do it better than last time?

**How much of it did we do?** Did we do more of it than last time?

**Where did we do it?** Is there a better/more strategic choice?

**How many people came?** Did more people come than last time?

**Which people came?** What percentage of our audience did we capture?

**How much did we spend?** Did we spend less than last time? What is the ROI?

**How long did it take us to do it?** Are we getting more efficient?

Your goals should be **Relevant** to both your organization and audience. Think about the behaviors you are trying to drive. Are students supposed to follow you on Instagram, show up for an event, or use an E-Resource? Using the AIDA model you can create a taxonomy of behavioral responses to your messaging or marketing initiatives.



Goals should be **Timebound** and relevant to institutional priorities. This will give you both an end date to report your success and a deadline that will be useful to the stakeholder to whom you are reporting.

### Example Timelines:

- By the end of the semester...
- In the next academic year...
- During the calendar year 2021....
- During FY22
- During Welcome Week on campus...
- By the end of Freshman writing....
- At the time of graduation....

Goal Transformation: By the end of FY21, the library will increase our citation workshops by 50%, increasing capacity for attendance from 200 students to 300.

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