

# Setting Client-Centered Goals

Trainers tend to be highly motivated go-getters, but it's important to let your clients take the wheel when setting their goals. Help them navigate, but let them steer.

## Perform a Health Assessment

It's easier to set goals when both you and your client know where they're starting from.

## Listen to Their Needs and Desires

Why is your client working with you? Common reasons include:

- A recent injury or functional change,
- Body image issues,
- Dissatisfaction with their current fitness level,
- Health-related concerns,
- The desire to support activities of daily living (ADL), and
- Athletic goals.



## Develop "SMARTS" Goals

This method adds an "S" to the end of the well-known "SMART" goals formula. SMARTS goals should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timely and self-determined.

## Address Reasons a Client Might Not Achieve Their Goals

Here are some common reasons:

- Their goals aren't their own. Maybe they chose a goal because it's what a friend or colleague was doing, not necessarily what they themselves wanted to do.
- They lack support. Clients with disabilities might need help getting to the gym, or even getting ready to go to the gym, and such help might not be available.
- Time constraints. Activities of daily living take time, often much more time for those with disabilities.
- Barriers to entry. Sometimes literal barriers – the gym might not be fully accessible.
- Lack of education. Often, we don't know what we don't know. Help your client gain the necessary knowledge to feel confident in their own training decisions.