

BRIEF

Making Rocks SMART

By [Tommy Mains](#)

Introduction

Setting 90-Day Goals, or Rocks, helps teams and companies march steadily toward their long-term goals. Creating strong Rocks is an art in and of itself. By using the SMART framework (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound), we ensure that our Rocks are up to the challenge.

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Time-bound

Achieving goals keeps teams focused and aligned. When we take the time to make our Rocks SMART, we increase our chance of completing those goals. Placing these parameters on our Rocks ensures everyone in the room knows what Rock completion looks like.



Context

Ambitious goal-setting can be the deciding factor in whether an organization sinks or swims. We align all goals with our most ambitious long-term objectives — our [Compelling and Audacious Goals](#) (CAGs). Cascading down from our CAGs, we set 3-Year Goals, 1-Year Goals, and [90-Day Rocks](#).

Millions of people use the SMART methodology to create their goals. By making Rocks SMART, we can easily tell when we've accomplished or fallen short of our goals.

THE SMART ROCK FORMULA

The formula for crafting a SMART Rock is simple:

Specific — A one-sentence description of what success looks like.

- What precisely do we want to achieve?
- Who owns this Rock?

Example: In the next 90 days, we will increase our monthly recurring revenue (MRR) by 10%. Our CRO owns this goal and is responsible for delegating necessary Milestones to meet our target.

Measurable — The metrics used to determine success or failure.

- How and when will we monitor progress?
- Can the data retrieval be automated?

Example: Department heads will monitor our number of new clients, churn percentage, and MRR weekly.

Achievable — An accounting of existing Competency, Commitment, and Capacity (CCC).

- What resources do we need to acquire?
- Given our current CCC, do we have at least an 80% chance to complete this Rock?

Example: Historically, we've increased MRR by 5-12% every quarter, but we want 10% to become the norm after a new marketing campaign, consistent product improvements, and expanded customer success practices.

Relevant – The connection between this Rock and a longer-term goal.

- How will this Rock keep us on track for our 1-Year and 3-Year Goals?
- What is the connection between this Rock and our Purpose/Passion/Just Cause?

Example: Increasing our MRR by 10% this quarter immediately fits into our 1-Year and 3-Year goals.

Time-bound – A detailed description of the Rock's deadline.

- When will we stop collecting new data to determine success or failure?
- How can we divide this goal into Milestone checkpoints to complete along the way?

Example: Every 4 weeks, we should see a 3% or higher increase in MRR, and we should grow 10% for the quarter.

Core Disciplines of SMART Rocks

1. Specificity minimizes miscommunication. Providing clear and precise instructions for accomplishing a goal makes a SMART goal into an [agreement](#). Reducing the avenues of confusion increases the chances of completing our goals. Reducing the avenues of confusion increases the chances of completing our goals.

2. Automate as much of the data retrieval as possible. When goals are measurable, teams can allocate resources appropriately through data-informed decisions. We use our [Scorecard tool](#) to organize and manage data in a readily accessible, centralized hub.

3. Completing SMART goals boosts morale. We aim to complete 80% or more of our goals. To meet this challenge, we need our goals to be attainable. Balancing a goal's target above a cheap win and below an impossible ask is vital for making Rocks a meaningful experience.

4. SMART Rocks keep an organization's goals cohesive. When our Rocks are relevant to our team, department, or company's greater goals, the entire organization benefits.

5. Milestones ensure timeliness and build trust. While one person owns a Rock, several team members can work toward its completion. [Assign Milestones](#) to break the Rock into more manageable fragments (aka pebbles) and keep the Rock time-bound by watching the Milestones turn into weekly [To-Dos](#).

Hopefully Helpful Hints

Less is more. Taking on too many Rocks can spread teams too thin. We recommend that teams and individuals have no more than three to five Rocks.

Share Company Rocks publicly. Sharing the company's Rocks during quarterly [State of the Company](#) meetings helps align individual teams with the organization's greater goals.


Perform weekly check-ins on the progress of everyone's Rocks. A team's [Weekly Team Meeting](#) is a perfect opportunity to observe the status of everyone's Rocks. When a Rock is not on track, make it an Issue to [Raise, Discuss, and Resolve](#).

Takeaway

When Rocks and other long-term goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound, we leverage the power of having a growth-oriented and discipline-based [culture](#). SMART goals are clearly attained or missed — allowing for accurate departmental review, planning, and alignment.

Ninety's platform splits Rocks into Milestones that can be delegated to individuals, leveraging everyone's strengths toward the common cause of growing your organization.

What's next? Visit the [90u Library](#) or [try Ninety today](#).

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