

Writing S.M.A.R.T. Recommendations

Krystine McCants
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What is the S.M.A.R.T framework and how can it help us write better recommendations?



S.M.A.R.T.



Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Timely



Specific



Specific: What is to be done?

The language of the recommendation should leave everyone with the same understanding of what is expected.



Specific: What is to be done?

“Identify and expand communication efforts that have been successful.”



Specific: What is to be done?

“...develop a grant process, which includes clarifications for how the grants will be awarded and managed, what outcomes will be achieved, and how outcomes will be reported to City Council.”

Office of the City of Portland Auditor



Measurable



Measurable: Can you know if it is done?

It should be clear whether the agency has implemented the recommendation.



Measurable: Can you know if it is done?

“Verify the quality and suitability of online credit recovery options used by Oregon schools.”



Measurable: Can you know if it is done?

“Include requirements to share criminal history information with subsequent schools in the model policy and procedure for student records.”



Achievable



Achievable: Can the agency do it?

The recommendation should focus on activities within the agency's control.



Achievable: Can the agency do it?

“Work with the Legislature to strengthen and clarify state laws related to internal auditing and DAS’s role as a centralized coordinating body.”



Achievable: Can the agency do it?

“...document in the agency's tribal consultation policy how agency officials are to communicate with tribes about how tribal input from consultation was considered in agency decisions on proposed infrastructure projects.”

U.S. Government Accountability Office



Relevant



Relevant: Does it address a problem?

The recommendation should address a cause you have identified.



Relevant: Does it address a problem?

“Examine available options for tracking SAFE kits, including efforts in other states, such as Washington and Idaho.”



Relevant: Does it address a problem?

“Update test result tracking requirements for subcontracted tests to ensure that results can be directly traced in Metrc to the lab that performed a specific test.”



Timely



Timely: When will it be done?

The recommendation should be achievable before you are scheduled to follow-up on the audit, or you should identify some portion of the work that can be achieved by that time.



Timely: When will it be done?

“Automate some aspects of the application to reduce human error, such as calculation of local match percentage.”



Timely: When will it be done?

“Central Human Resources should track and monitor the use of administrative leave.”

Krystine McCants, Senior Auditor

(Pronouns: she/her/hers)

Oregon Secretary of State, Audits Division

255 Capitol St. NE, Suite 500

Salem, Oregon 97310

503-986-2283

krystine.mccants@oregon.gov

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Thank you!