

The SMARTT Focus Tool

What is focus and why is it important?

Focus is defined as 'A specific area and target outcomes on which to concentrate attention, thinking and action to achieve results'. In a beef business it is easy to be overwhelmed with the pace of business, and the range of things that could be done to impact on profit. Having a specific focus can help to:

- Set boundaries
- Concentrate thinking and action to make a real difference on improving profit
- Stop wasting time and resources doing things that don't make enough of an impact on profit
- Get more effect for effort.

The value of focus is that it provides greater effectiveness and efficiency of both thinking and action. Developing a clear focus can be done simply using the SMARTT Focus Tool.

SMARTT Focus

The acronym SMART has been used in planning and goal setting for many years. In the SMARTT Focus Tool an additional T (Targeted) has been introduced to make it SMARTT which stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Targeted, Timelined. Below is an example of an un-SMARTT Focus and the same Focus made SMARTT.

Un-SMARTT Focus:

To enhance the wellbeing of rural families by increasing the capacity of beef producers to continuously improve production systems.

SMARTTer Focus:

To enhance the wellbeing of rural families in north Queensland by increasing the capacity of beef producers to continuously improve their production systems to achieve an average of 5% improvements in

- Profit (gross margin)
- Environment (specific KPIs)
- Energy efficiency (specific KPIs)

per year every year.

The steps to follow when using the SMARTT Focus tool

1. Define the area of attention, the need or opportunity, and decide what will fulfil the need.
2. Write a Focus statement. This is a statement that says what the boundaries of the focus are and what will be achieved. It is often useful to start a focus statement with the words 'To achieve'.
3. Make the Focus statement SMARTT (Specific, Measurable, Achievable Relevant, Targeted, Timelined).
4. Develop a list of key principles and assumptions that underpin the Focus.
5. Check that the described SMARTT Focus meets the need adequately i.e. well enough without spending too much time on detail.
6. Negotiate shared understanding and a shared mental model of the Focus by clarifying important concepts, logic and key terms. Use conceptual frameworks like focusing frameworks where useful.

A worksheet for the SMARTT Focus Tool is on the next page.

SMARTT Focus Tool

Name:

Date:

Specific Need/Opportunity

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Draft Focus

(A Focus should clearly state what you want to achieve; indicate the boundaries and scale of focus.)

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Could the Focus be made SMARTTer?

Specific?

Measurable?

Achievable?

Relevant?

Targeted?

Timelined?

SMARTTer Focus:

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Key Values, Principles and Assumptions Underpinning the Focus:

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Check the logical connections between the Need/Opportunity, SMARTT Focus and Principles. Improve and simplify if necessary.