# Introduction

Through CAP, all candidates will set a **professional practice goal** that will guide their growth throughout the practicum. Candidates may use the CAP Candidate Preliminary Goal-Setting Form to document their goal, which uses the **S.M.A.R.T.I.E.** framework to ensure the goal is clear, actionable, and equity-centered.

## Tips for Setting a Professional Practice Goal

**1. Identifying an Area for Growth**

* Review your **Self-Assessment Form**.
* Choose a focus area that connects to a CAP element or elements and reflects meaningful growth for your practice and your students.

**2. Explaining Why It Matters**

* Go beyond compliance—write about **why this goal is personally and professionally important**.
* Connect it to your values, your students’ needs, or a classroom challenge.

**3. Drafting the Goal**

* Use strong **action verbs** (e.g., implement, design, facilitate).
* Be sure it’s **student-centered** and not just task-oriented.
* Make sure it’s a **S.M.A.R.T.I.E. goal** from the start—don’t wait until you are looking back to decide how you will measure and monitor the goal.

## Using the S.M.A.R.T.I.E. Table Effectively

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Component** | **Quick Tips** |
| **S** | Name specific strategies or practices you aim to improve. |
| **M** | Describe how you’ll know if you're progressing—quantify if possible. |
| **A** | Think about evidence: lesson plans, video clips, student work, reflections. |
| **R** | Ask: Is this a stretch *and* doable in the practicum timeframe? |
| **T** | Add clear deadlines and checkpoints. |
| **I** | Consider how others—especially marginalized students—are involved. |
| **E** | Think about how your goal promotes fairness, access, or voice. |

## Ask for Support Early

* Be clear about what you’ll need from your **supervising practitioner or program supervisor**.
* Collaboration strengthens your action plan and keeps your goal grounded in real support.

## Final Reminders

* Keep a copy handy to track your benchmarks.
* Use this form as a **living document**—it should grow with you.