

Have a **SMART** Goal

A student came to me in the year 1996 soon after he was assessed suitable for IIT JEE training at BASE. He came from a place in Hosur in TN close to Bangalore. He sat close to me along with his father, Mr. Sivaraman, and asked me with his childlike innocence but deep passion, "Sir, after my B.Tech. in IIT Chennai, where should I continue my higher studies?" Remember that was the time that the boy had just entered BASE for his preparation to IIT JEE. I was delighted at the boy's passion to achieve something high even as he entered BASE. I asked him what his goal was. He simply said, "Sir, I want to do research." I further clarified whether he was interested in technology or management. He said, "Technology." I told this young boy that there are some great institutions for studying technology - such as MIT, Stanford, Perdue, and Princeton. "However if you wish to pursue technology, then I would like you to go to MIT," I said. The boy immediately replied, "I will go to MIT sir." Precisely, he started working for getting into IIT, which became his short term goal. He travelled from Hosur to BASE in Basavanagudi, for 2 years, never missed a class. He had to travel by 2 buses nearly for 2 hours each way. He got into IIT Chennai with an AIR of 31 and took his B. Tech. in Computer Science. Soon after his B. Tech he joined MIT and finished his Ph.D. in 2008. This young boy is none other than **S. Raghavendran**, who is currently working in a quantitative asset management company in US. If you want to reach your destination, check if Dr. Raghavendran could be a role model for you to set your goal. To know more from him, if you need, you can contact him at rsivaraman@gmail.com



Takeaways:

- Set a goal today. Do a SWOT analysis of yourself.
- Build on your strengths. Look at your own strengths and build on them.
- Eliminate your weaknesses as they are hurdles in your way.
- Never compare with anyone. This may sometimes result in looking at others' strengths and your weaknesses leading to fear of failure and weakening of your goal.
- If you have genuine problems/ obstacles, check if by determination and focus, you can convert the obstacles into stepping stones of success.
- Make your goal SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time bound).