

# GOAL SETTING TIPS

Effective goals should be participative. Both manager and individual should be involved in the development of goals to ensure understanding and commitment. Goals should be documented, available for review, managed on a continuous basis and acknowledged. Goals should be flexible enough to account for changing conditions.

## What Are S.M.A.R.T. Goals?

The S.M.A.R.T. approach to handling goals came out of the corporate world in the early 1980s. It describes a method for setting and working toward goals, and the acronym stands for the following:

- **Specific:** Clearly define goals as succinctly as possible.
  - Answer the questions Who? What? When? Where? Why? Which?
- **Measurable:** Identify metrics for measuring progress and success.
  - Metrics and milestones. How much? How many? What percentage?
- **Achievable:** Set realistic goals that can be completed within specific parameters.
  - Do you have skills and tools to accomplish this goal?
- **Relevant:** Ensure that goals are worth pursuing.
  - Does it fit with overall organizational objectives?
- **Time-Bound:** Assign deadlines to goals and related action steps.
  - When does it need to be completed? Are there intermediate milestones that would show progress?

Using the S.M.A.R.T. framework for managing goals and objectives can help you examine the motivation behind pursuing a certain goal. It can also help you determine what resources will be required to reach that goal. The S.M.A.R.T. guidelines break down the goal planning process into clear steps so that vital questions can be answered efficiently. What exactly needs to be accomplished? How will you know when your goal has been reached? What is the timeline, and who is responsible for the different actions required to reach the goal?

## Types of Goals:

- **Job description goals.** Goals may be based on the achievement of a pre-established set of job duties from your job description. These goals are expected to be accomplished continuously until the job description changes. Examples might be financial, customer oriented, or process- or system-oriented goals.
- **Project goals.** Goals may be based on achievement of a project objective. These goals may be set for a single year and changed as projects are completed. Job description and project goals are "what" needs to be accomplished.
- **Behavioral goals.** Goals may be based on certain behaviors. These goals are expected to be accomplished continuously. Behavioral goals are "how" things need to be accomplished.
- **Stretch goals.** Goals that are especially challenging to reach are sometimes referred to as stretch goals. Stretch goals are usually used to expand the knowledge, skills and abilities of high-potential employees.

## Examples of Effective Goals:

- Increase revenue by 10 percent during the first quarter.
- Reduce office expenses by 25 percent as compared with the prior year's actual costs.
- Decrease employee absences from three days to one day per quarter.

# GOAL SETTING WORKSHEET

**INITIAL  
GOAL**

Write the goal you have in mind

**S**

**SPECIFIC**

What do you want to accomplish? Who needs to be included? When do you want to do this? Why is this a goal?

**M**

**MEASURABLE**

How can you measure progress and know if you've successfully met your goal?

**A**

**ACHIEVABLE**

Do you have the skills required to achieve the goal? If not, can you obtain them? What is the motivation for this goal? Is the amount of effort required on par with what the goal will achieve?

**R**

**RELEVANT**

Why am I setting this goal now? Is it aligned with overall objectives?

**T**

**TIME-BOUND**

What's the deadline and is it realistic?

**SMART  
GOAL**

Review what you have written, and craft a new goal statement based on what the answers to the questions above have revealed