Establishing Performance Goals

The first step in the Performance Assessment process is to establish what kind of performance is expected and how it will be measured. Using the S.M.A.R.T. approach when creating goals is an effective way for managers and employees to be clear and understand each other.

| S.M.A.R.T acronym and descriptions | |
| --- | --- |
| Letter | Description |
| S | **Specific:** Be specific when establishing goals. Are expectations met and priorities specific and clear? If applicable, have previous expectations changed since goals were established? How are the expectations consistent with the goals of the department? The work group? |
| M | **Measurable:** How will both parties know when a performance is Successful vs. Outstanding? What types of observations or review would indicate that the employee is performing at a Consistent level? What examples, behaviors, feedback will be considered? |
| A | **Attainable:** Goals should be appropriate to the employee’s responsibilities and level of experience, and reasonably attainable within the individual’s control. If a standard is unrealistic, people feel they’re being set up for failure. |
| R | **Realistic:** Given the employee’s current performance, time in the position, and department priorities, are the goals realistic? |
| T | **Timeframe:** What must the employee do in the next 90 days, six months, one year? Are all employees expected to accomplish the same goals in the same time frame? What type of follow-up schedule will be considered? |

Roles and Responsibilities

Manager’s Role

Work jointly with his/her employee to identify essential job responsibilities and related goals at the beginning of the assessment period.

* Complete a written performance assessment for each employee as notified.
* Discuss openly and honestly the contents of the written review with the employee by addressing employee strengths, areas needing improvement and plans for further development.
* Meet informally, on an ongoing basis, with the employee to compare progress and results with goals, to suggest corrective measures if issues arise, to discuss performance improvement solutions, to modify current goals and to establish new goals when appropriate.
* Maintain records and documentation on the employee's performance throughout the year. Using a performance log or something similar is helpful.
* Encourage employees to provide input on performance issues on an on-going basis.
* Assist employees in understanding the performance review process.
* Encourage employees to complete a self-evaluation using interpreters or other support as needed.
* When employees are transferred or promoted, or when manager turnover occurs, the previous manager will pass on observations and input on employee performance to the new manager whenever possible.

Employee’s Role

* Work jointly with his/her manager to identify essential job responsibilities and related goals at the beginning of the assessment period.
* Complete a self-assessment of performance during the review period. Filling out a performance evaluation form is strongly encouraged.
* Meet with manager to review past performance and plan future performance. This includes goals, determination of how best to achieve them, identification of needed support, time frames, and charting of progress toward meeting goals.
* Sign the performance review document after discussion with the manager. The employee's signature does not necessarily indicate agreement. It shows that you read and understood the evaluation's content.
* Provide input regarding his/her performance throughout the 12-month review period. Using a performance log or something similar is helpful.
* Meet standards and expectations of job performance.