

SMART Goals

The following method is an effective goal setting model available to assist you in the process.

- **Specific** – *What should be achieved?*
When employees are given specific goals, they tend to perform higher than when they are told to do their best or when they receive no guidance at all. Increasing goal specificity reduces ambiguity about what is expected and focuses the search for appropriate behaviors. Specificity helps employees focus on important tasks.
- **Measurable** – *How will you know if the goal has been reached?*
What criteria will be used to ascertain whether the goal has been reached? Having measurable goals means that the employee will be able to evaluate his/her own progress.
- **Action Plan** – *Which actions will you take to achieve the goals?*
How will the goal be accomplished? Will the manager list the steps of the action plan, or will the employee do that? How might the employee's developmental level affect this step?
- **Realistic** – *Are they achievable?*
If goals are set too high, employees may lose their motivation, and will give up when they fail to achieve these unrealistic goals.

Are the expected results within the employee's control?

Although goals should be attainable, they should also be challenging. Increasing the difficulty of employees' goals can increase their perceived challenge and enhance the amount of effort expended to achieve them. Thus, more difficult goals tend to lead to increased effort and performance, as long as they are seen as feasible.

- **Time Frames** – *By when?*
When will the actions be completed/the goal achieved? Will there be intermittent progress reviews?

SMART Goals Template

When setting goals for yourself or with an employee it is always best to create SMART goals. These are goals that are:

Specific – *What should be achieved?*

Measurable - *How will you know if the goal has been reached?*

Action Plan- *Which actions will you take to achieve the goals*

Realistic - *Are they achievable?*

Time Frame - *By when?*