

2012
Writing Effective SMART Performance Goals



INTRODUCTION

Writing precise and meaningful performance goals is an important part of your role in the Performance Evaluation Process at BCCC. This self-study book will provide you with a concise overview of that process, explain some differences in today's system, and, finally, guide you step-by-step through writing your performance goals. **When you complete the activities in this course, you will have the first draft of your performance goals to share with your manager.**

Using a Goal Setting Worksheet

An goal setting worksheet can help you clarify your important performance areas before you start writing. A copy of a worksheet for you to use as well as an example of a completed worksheet appears on the following pages.

Review: Goal Setting Questions and Answers

Question	Answer
How many performance goals do I write each year?	4-6
What percentage must my goals weight total?	100%
Who writes the goals?	You write them with the input and approval of your manager.
When are these goals evaluated?	At mid-year and at your final assessment with feedback from your manager throughout the year.
If something changes, can I revise my goals?	Yes. External conditions beyond your control, shifting priorities, or changing your job will necessitate that you modify your goals with the approval of your manager.

Learning Activity 1**Getting Started**

What information or resources do you need to get started writing your yearly performance goals? Review the checklist below and identify which items would be most helpful to you (or write in others specific to your role).

- Department goals
- Department budgets
- Project schedules or plans
- Your last year's goals

Now assemble any of these documents or access the information you need so you can be ready for the next step, completing the objective planning worksheet on the next page. This worksheet will help you identify important performance areas, measures for success, and factors that will affect your goal attainment. Before proceeding to the next section, complete the Goal Planning Worksheet on the next page. If you need help, review the sample Completed Goal Planning Worksheet.

Worksheet 1 Goal Planning Worksheet

Directions. This worksheet is designed to help you arrive at effective goals. Answer the following five questions and use your responses to draft a goal. You should have a total of 4-6 goals. (Copy this form for each goal.)

1. What is to be done?

2. What college/department goal does this support?

3. For whom is this to be done? Who else does this affect?

4. What is expected?

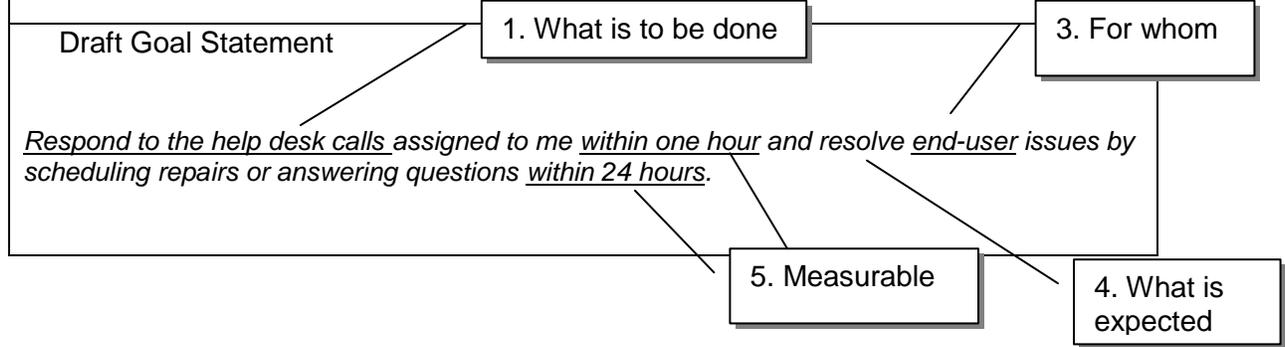
5. Is this measurable, achievable, and realistic?

Draft Goal Statement

Sample Completed Goal Planning Worksheet

Directions. This worksheet is designed to help you arrive at effective goals. Answer the following five questions and use your responses to draft an goal. You should have a total of 4-6 goals.

<p>1. What is to be done?</p> <p><i>Improve customer response time in my department for help desk requests.</i></p>
<p>2. What business/department issue or goal does this support?</p> <p><i>Customer service, achieving service level standards, and productivity.</i></p>
<p>3. For whom is this to be done? Who else does this affect?</p> <p><i>Internal staff. Customers—when employees can't do their work because of computer or phone problems.</i></p>
<p>4. What is expected?</p> <p><i>Respond to all calls within one hour. Schedule repairs and/or resolve issues within 24 hours.</i></p>
<p>5. Is this measurable, achievable, and realistic?</p> <p><i>Yes, especially if we get the new staff person that is budgeted for this year. And we document the time we receive calls, call people back, and the employee signs a form when we complete the job.</i></p>



WRITING EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE GOALS

Well-written goals help to ensure that you and your manager have a similar understanding of **your** expectations for the coming year, what will be expected of you, and how your performance will be measured. By completing Learning Activity 1, you have made an excellent start in defining your performance goals for the coming year. In this section, you will refine your draft goal statements and make sure that they include the necessary characteristics.

Writing Smart Goals

The characteristics of a good performance goal are described as SMART.

S M A R T	Specific: Goals should describe a single outcome, not a collection of unrelated issues.
	Measurable: Goals should have measures and standards that allow success to be assessed objectively.
	Attainable: Goals should be realistic, yet challenging.
	Results oriented: Goals, when accomplished, should produce a meaningful business result.
	Time based: Goals should include a specific time frame for completion.

How to Measure Your Goals

As much as possible, goals should be expressed in measurable and tangible terms, which are as specific and quantifiable as possible. This is the only way you receive a fact-based evaluation of your success. Here are some typical ways of measuring goals:

Time	The appropriate time measure will be determined by the task's time cycle, such as "within 24 hours," or "by the end of the fiscal year."
Quantity	This is a physical unit measurement; usually the number of units of output or input, such as "process 350 tickets per month" or "sell 3,000 new units per week."
Conformance	This refers to measures of deviation from a standard or goal, such as "meet system downtime standard by +/- 2%."
Cost	Typical cost measures include staff hours and dollars. For some measures, it is useful to combine several measures (staff time, equipment, etc.) into a dollar value for convenience, such as "adhere to project expense budget of \$60,000."
Reaction	When other measures are not feasible, it may be necessary to collect data based on the quantification of perceptions. Survey or focus group interviews of customers or employees are sources of reaction measures. A measurement statement might be: "achieve an overall 'very good' rating on the customer response card feedback."

Learning Activity 2: How will each of your goals be measured? Take a minute and identify the measurement for each objective on your worksheets.

Focusing on Key Business Issues

Your performance goals should focus on key college business issues. Do not concentrate on everyday duties that are required of all BCCC employees, such as answering phone calls promptly or making efficient use of computer skills. Examples of business issues your goals may address are listed below.

A. Financial results	B. Management and development of talent
C. Student Enrollment	D. Reengineering processes
E. Completion of key projects	F. Quality
G. Customer service	H. Systems enhancement
I. Applications development	J. Attraction and retention of talent
K. Achieving service level standards	L. Productivity (i.e., achieving targeted savings)

Let's look at our sample goal to determine which business issue it addresses.

Respond to the help desk calls assigned to me within one hour and resolve end-user issues by scheduling repairs or answering questions within 24 hours.

It meets at least three: **Customer service**, **Systems enhancement**, and **Achieving service level standards**.

Learning Activity 3

Make sure that each of your goals addresses areas important to your job and your department. For each of your goals, identify the key issue it addresses.

Goal	Related Issue(s)
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

Goal Examples

Writing goals that meet the SMART criteria requires thought. Using your worksheet and the Learning Activities, you have already answered some of the necessary questions. Now, you just need to craft your goal statement to include these important components. Before you get started, review these sample performance goals, written with and without SMART criteria.

Without (Soft Goal Statement)	With (SMART Goal)
<i>Improve customer service in my department.</i>	<i>Respond to the help desk calls assigned to me within one hour and resolve end-user issues by scheduling repairs or answering questions within 24 hours.</i>
<i>Increase revenues for my division</i>	<i>Achieve an annual revenue goal of \$1,000,000 +/- 2% by year-end.</i>
<i>Increase my knowledge of computer applications.</i>	<i>Learn Excel by June of this year, so that our weekly report is distributed to the department in an Excel spreadsheet for easier reference.</i>
<i>Improve the efficiency of the college's computer network.</i>	<i>Transition to new network without interruption by May and maintain company downtime standard.</i>

Learning Exercise 4

You've now completed your goal planning worksheet, selected measurement criteria for your goals, and made sure that each relates to a critical business issue. Using copies of the forms, write your final draft of your goals and assign a rating to each. As a final review, ask the following questions for each objective.

- Is this goal critical to achieving the BCCC business plan or implementing key strategies?
- Does it address the chosen business issue?
- Is it **S**pecific?
- Is it **M**easurable?
- Is it **A**ttainable, yet challenging?
- Is it **R**esults oriented?
- Is it **T**ime based?

I PERFORMANCE GOALS

A goal is a defined commitment the employee will achieve to contribute to college growth/profitability for the year and is linked to the overall results of the division.

Annual Performance Goals (Write 4-6)

GOAL #1

GOAL #2

GOAL #3

GOAL #4**USING YOUR GOALS
TO MANAGE YOUR
PERFORMANCE**

The reason for spending the time and effort to craft precise and relevant goals is to provide you with a tool to track and monitor your own progress. When you and your manager are on the same page as to what your performance goals should be, you have the means to be responsible and accountable for your own career success.

Now that you have completed the first draft of your goals, you are ready for the next step: reviewing your goals with your manager at a one-on-one meeting and discussing possible changes.

Meeting with your Manager

During the first quarter, your manager will share the division's goals with you and the rest of the group. After you have completed your draft goals, you should initiate a meeting with your manager as directed by your manager. As well as discussing performance goals, you and your manager will discuss your Professional Development Plan for the year.

The purpose of this meeting is for you and your manager to discuss and agree on your annual goals. If your manager asks you to make changes, make sure you understand why. The goal of this meeting is for you and your manager to have an equal understanding of your performance goals. (Review the sample Performance Planning Meeting Agenda below.) At the conclusion of this meeting, you will have your finalized goals for the year.

Sample Performance Planning Meeting Agenda

Key Goals	To agree on priorities, performance goals, and competency development plan for the year ahead.
Desired Outcomes	Shared understanding of expectations, measures, and review dates.
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manager and individual think through expectations of individual, his/her role and required contribution, and his/her career goals and development needs.
Participants	Manager and individual
Duration	1-1.5 hours

Reviewing and Revising Your Goals

Under certain circumstances, you may have to modify your goals during the year. Discuss any changes with your manager and get permission to modify your Goals Form. Some of the circumstances that necessitate changes may be:

- External conditions beyond your control which make the goal inappropriate/obsolete.
- Priorities which have been shifted.
- A project which has been dropped.
- Changing jobs. (In this case, talk with your new manager to set new goals for performance.)

Using Your Goals

Keep a copy of your goals handy. You can support your achievement by starting each day by looking at them and listing what you can do that day to move you one step closer to accomplishing any one of them.

Managing Your Performance by Using Your Goals

- Keep your goals accessible and visible.
 - Foster good communication with your manager, peers, and customers by listening and by asking good questions.
 - Be aware of your impact on other people's goals.
 - Develop an image as an important team player by contributing ideas to your manager or team.
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Self-Assessment

Conducting an assessment of how well you thought you achieved your performance goals is an important part of the review process. Using your Goals Form from the Performance Evaluation Form, describe your achievements for each goal in the space for Self-Assessment. Provide a copy of your completed self-assessment to your manager one week before your scheduled Annual Performance Review.

Learning Activity 5: Creating Your Action Plan

Congratulations! By completing the activities in this self-study course, you have completed the first draft of your annual performance goals. Now it's up to you to meet with your manager to discuss these goals, make any revisions, and then use them throughout the year to manage your own performance. Use the plan on the next page to set important dates so that you can make the most of your performance evaluation process.

Performance Goals Action Plan

Date(s)	Activity
	Meet with manager to discuss my performance evaluation.
	Review my goals on my own to make sure I am on track or to determine changes. (Quarterly or more often)
	Solicit feedback from my manager, team members, or customers, if necessary.
	Conduct my self-assessment in preparation for my annual review.
	Begin drafting my performance goals for next year.
	Other activities:

Post Assessment: How well do I set performance goals?

Rate how well you prepare for goal setting, write your goals, and participate in the Performance Evaluation Process. **Forward a copy of this post assessment upon completion to pdregister@bcc.edu to receive 1 hour of professional development credit.**

1 Disagree Strongly	2 Disagree Somewhat	3 Agree Somewhat	4 Agree Strongly	5 Agree Completely
1 2 3 4 5	1. I know when the performance evaluation planning process begins			
1 2 3 4 5	2. I participated in setting my performance goals for this year with my manager.			
1 2 3 4 5	3. I have a copy of my performance goals and refer to them regularly.			
1 2 3 4 5	4. I referred to my division's or BCCC goals before I wrote my goals.			
1 2 3 4 5	5. I can explain how achieving my performance goals supports my division's goals and BCCC's goals.			
1 2 3 4 5	6. Each one of my performance goals relates to a specific, single outcome.			
1 2 3 4 5	7. Each one of my performance goals can be measured in terms of one of the following: time, quantity, conformance, cost, or reaction.			
1 2 3 4 5	8. Each one of my performance goals is realistic—attainable but challenging.			
1 2 3 4 5	9. Each one of my performance goals is results-oriented, describing the specific result that will be achieved.			
1 2 3 4 5	10. Each one of my performance goals is time-based—it has a specific time frame for completion.			
1 2 3 4 5	11. I assisted in weighting my performance goals.			
1 2 3 4 5	12. I conducted a self-assessment of how well I achieved my goals prior to my annual review last year.			
1 2 3 4 5	13. I understand what part the achievement of my goals plays in my overall performance assessment.			
1 2 3 4 5	14. I reviewed my goals this year to determine whether or not they needed revision.			
1 2 3 4 5	15. I discussed my progress in achieving my goals with my manager at the mid-year review.			

_____ Total score

61-75 Excellent. You regularly use effective goal writing techniques and participate in the goal setting process with management.

46-60 Commendable. You are following some good goal setting practices; however, some improvement is needed.

45 and lower Marginal. You have implemented some standard goal setting techniques, but improvement is still needed in several key areas.

Review this self-analysis, especially those areas in which you rated your efforts with a 3 or lower, so that you can pay special attention to the corresponding sections in this booklet.