

Guidance on Setting SIMple Performance Goals

SIMple goals are (specific, important, and measurable). They describe the desired results (the “what”) and the behaviors (the “how”) while aligning with and advancing team/work unit goals and strategies.



Have an Initial Conversation to Explore Goal Areas

An exploratory conversation between a supervisor and employee is an important first step in setting performance goals. Knowledge areas and skills that an employee wants to develop, important projects that are continuing, and new or expanded directions for the work team are all great areas to inform goal setting. Other team members or leaders may have ideas to help shape individual goals so pull those ideas into this initial conversation.

Questions to Identify Interest Areas for Goals

- What are some skills or knowledge areas that you would like to build?
- What is a challenging part of your job? What ideas do you have for developing stronger skills in this area?
- What are some challenges the team will need to tackle in the next year?
- What is a good next step to build on a current project?
- What motivates you in your job?
- What skills or knowledge do you have that others could benefit from?
- Are there opportunities around diversity, equity, and inclusion that others in SPH could benefit from?

Set 2-3 SIMple Goals

To help identify how those interest areas can become meaningful goals, keep these four questions in mind:

- What** is the goal?
- How** will you achieve it?
- How** does the goal link up to broader priorities?
- How** do you define success?

Examples of Well-Designed Goals

Example 1

- Complete the [Equity and Diversity Certificate](#) through the Office of Equity and Diversity.
- I will achieve this goal by:
 - Attending 10 workshops (30 hours total)
 - Getting approval from my supervisor
 - Working with my team to ensure responsibilities are covered while at the workshops
- This goal links up to the SPH core value tha Different Perspectives Make Us Stronger.
- I will be successful when I've attended all 10 workshops and earn the certificate.
 - NOTE: You can go one step further by committing to giving a presentation to your work team about what you learned and how you plan to apply the information you gained in your work.*

Example 2

- Share my knowledge and help with succession planning efforts by documenting the processes I use to complete my work.
- I will achieve this goal by:
 - Identifying which processes have little to no documentation
 - Scheduling a couple hours each week to make process documents
 - Save those process documents in a shared team folder on Google Drive
- This links to the broader organizational goal of retaining process knowledge for cross-training and succession planning
- I will be successful when I've documented four processes and had them reviewed for clarity by someone who is not familiar with the processes.

Revisit Goals at Regular Check-Ins

- Check-ins are regular supervisor/employee discussions throughout the year to:
 - Check in on progress toward goals
 - Stay aligned on current projects
 - Discuss what is going well and what could be better
 - Agree on next steps
- The frequency of check in meetings are up to the supervisor and employee and depend on the nature of the work. It's common to have these meetings on a monthly basis. Check in conversations provide opportunities for ongoing feedback and differ from other supervisor/employee meetings that mainly focus on the day-to-day work.
- Check-ins provide an opportunity to adjust priorities or change direction as needed.
- When the initial performance goals are achieved, identify new goals. Goal setting is an ongoing process and doesn't have to wait for the new performance year.
- Supervisors and employees should keep good notes from check in meetings to use to draft the next annual performance appraisal.