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Supervisors and their direct reports need to collaborate in setting meaningful goals, tracking progress against those goals over time, and evaluating performance. Use the *tips for preparing for end-of-year performance conversations* and the *S.M.A.R.T method* to ensure successful performance appraisals.

### Tips for Preparing for End-of-Year Performance Conversations

- **Plan ahead** by scheduling the conversation at least one week in advance, cushioning time in between appraisal deliveries, and anticipating the recipient's reaction and your strategy to address their concerns.
- Kickoff the meeting with a **positive note** that sets the tone for a two-way conversation, highlight the **unique individual strengths**, and **express gratitude** for their contribution to the role, the team, and the organization despite changes.
- **Weave in themes** from previous conversations and allow for reflection on accomplishments and development opportunities from **throughout the year**, not just in recent weeks and months.
- Share information in a manner that is **insightful** and centered on **support, service, and commitment** to the individual, including a copy of the End-of-Year summary for them to take home.
- Deliver performance evaluation based on the **S.M.A.R.T Method**.
- Draw on input from stakeholders where possible – **multiple perspectives** can demonstrate increased objectivity.
- Refrain from statements that **disproportionately favor** those you most closely “identify with.”
- **Actively listen** to the reaction of the recipient by restating, reframing, clarifying, and realigning.
- Put **equal effort** into evaluating performance of **all team members** regardless of length in time in their position.
- End on a **positive**, forward-looking note, discussing plans for **future growth**.

## **S.M.A.R.T Goal Method**

### **SMART Goals**

To make sure your goals are clear and reachable, each one should be:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).

#### **1. Specific**

Your goal should be clear and specific, otherwise you won't be able to focus your efforts or feel truly motivated to achieve it. When drafting your goal, try to answer the five "W" questions:

- What do I want to accomplish?
- Why is this goal important?
- Who is involved?
- Where is it located?
- Which resources or limits are involved?

#### **2. Measurable**

It's important to have measurable goals, so that you can track your progress and stay motivated. Assessing progress helps you to stay focused, meet your deadlines, and feel the excitement of getting closer to achieving your goal.

A measurable goal should address questions such as:

- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

#### **3. Achievable**

Your goal also needs to be realistic and attainable to be successful. In other words, it should stretch your abilities but still remain possible. When you set an achievable goal, you may be able to identify previously overlooked opportunities or resources that can bring you closer to it.

An achievable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- How can I accomplish this goal?
- How realistic is the goal, based on other constraints, such as financial factors?

#### **4. Relevant**

This step is about ensuring that your goal matters to you, and that it also aligns with other relevant goals. We all need support and assistance in achieving our goals, but it's important to retain control over them. So, make sure that your plans drive everyone forward, but that you're still responsible for achieving your own goal.

A relevant goal can answer "yes" to these questions:

- Does this seem worthwhile?
- Is this the right time?
- Does this match our other efforts/needs?
- Am I the right person to reach this goal?

**5. Time-bound**

Every goal needs a target date, so that you have a deadline to focus on and something to work toward. This part of the SMART goal criteria helps to prevent everyday tasks from taking priority over your longer-term goals.

A time-bound goal will usually answer these questions:

- When?
- What can I do six months from now?
- What can I do six weeks from now?
- What can I do today?

## PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL DO'S AND DON'TS

### Provide Feedback on

- (1) Goals:**
  - Achieved
  - Active
  - Not met
- (2) Behavior:**
  - Consistent
  - Inconsistent
- (3) Communication:**
  - Internal /External
  - Verbal
  - Non-verbal
  - Electronic
  - Proactive
  - Reactive
- (4) Quality/Competency:**
  - Accomplishment: What, How?
  - Subject Matter Expertise
  - Contribution (Period & Recent)
  - Professional Development
  - Qualitative & Quantitative Results
- (5) Dependability:**
  - Attendance
  - Engagement
  - Trust and Support
- (6) Teamwork:**
  - Collaboration
  - Interpersonal Skills
  - Emotional Intelligence
  - Accountability
- (7) Results (If Applicable):**
  - Counseling
  - Performance Improvement Plan
  - Disciplinary Action
  - Final Warning
  - Plan of Action
  - Check-in Commitment
  - Rehabilitation Period

### Refrain from

- (1) Unprofessional Language:**
  - Slang
  - Jargon
  - Idiom
  - Proverb
  - Loaded Language
  - Metaphors
  - Passive Aggressive Statements
  - Rhetorical Questions
  - Absolutes
  - Dehumanizing language
- (2) Retaliation:**
  - Medical Leave
  - Personal Leave
  - Parental Leave
  - Protected Class (Disability, Age)
  - Civil Duty Leave (Jury, Military)
  - Reasonable Accommodation
  - Worker's Compensation
- (3) Inconsistencies:**
  - Ratings vs. Appraisal Summary
  - Ratings vs. Merit Increases
  - Ratings vs. Documentation
- (4) Confusion:**
  - Person vs. Performance
  - Isolated incident vs. Pattern
  - Bias vs. Objectivity
  - Opportunities vs. Challenges
- (5) Surprises:**
  - Unestablished Goals
  - New Information
  - Unclear Expectations
  - Irrelevant Duties
- (6) Unconscious Bias:**
  - Missing Direct report lens
  - Missing Key Stakeholder lens
  - Missing Former Leader lens