

Quick Guide

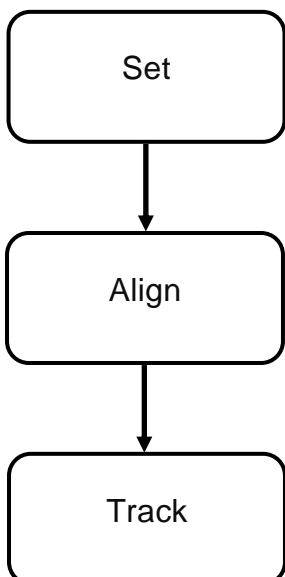
To Objective Setting

Why it matters...

Establishing broad aims will provide you with a destination and a direction of travel. In order to ensure that you reach your destination, you will need to set more specific requirements in the form of objectives. Objective setting helps you to:

- Be clear about what is required (outcomes, results or changes)
- Prioritise activities and workloads by focussing on the most important or significant goals before others
- Determine the resources required to complete a task
- Assess options and choices that arise as a task/ projects gets underway
- Measure success. Achieving objectives helps quantify the value added by you, your team or department.

How it works



Goals or objectives are often qualified in that they state their purpose. This is necessary to help you understand why certain things need to be done. Qualified goals help us understand the bigger picture.

SMART Objectives

Specific: Well-defined so that those who need to know do know exactly what is expected, when, and how much. With specific goals, managers can easily measure progress toward goal completion.

Measurable: Provide milestones to track progress and motivate employees toward achievement.

Attainable: Success needs to be achievable with effort by those involved. The bar should not be set too high or too low- both are demotivating.

Relevant: The objective should be within the scope of those involved- it should be something they themselves can influence.

Time-bound: Establish enough time to achieve the goal, but not too much time to undermine performance. Goals without deadlines tend to be overtaken by day-to-day events.

What do I need to do?

- The process of setting goals should be a collaborative process between an employee and their manager. Whether writing long- or short-term goals, the most widely-used framework is S-M-A-R-T.
- Goal Alignment is critical to ensuring that each person within your team can see the direction of objectives and know how their job/tasks fit the bigger picture .
- After you have set your objectives, it is important to track the progress on them. So that the necessary information is available during the all-important review process. Additionally, managers need to be aware of progress on goals to step in with assistance or resources when it appears that goal targets will possibly be missed.

What are the benefits of setting goals?

High achievers feel motivated by the challenges goals represent. They use them to demonstrate their abilities and achievements which results in them being perceived as successful and effective.

Goal setting can be used to great effect at any level and for any purpose, both in your work and personal life. They can be self-generated or determined by others to help give direction, encouragement and, of course, praise (when they are achieved).

Hints and Tips for setting objectives

- Avoid writing objectives which describe what someone is going to do. Focus on what you need the individual to achieve .
- Track and review objectives throughout the year/time period.
- Objectives should reflect the level and range of responsibilities that an individual has.
- Objectives should be challenging and aim to achieve positive outcomes – avoid setting objectives that are too difficult or too easy, both can be demotivating.
- An objective should clarify to everyone that reads it what is expected

Turn objective-setting into a team activity

To avoid a team member creating objectives on their own that don't coincide with the teams you can:

- Ensure the objectives are physically available to everyone: online, meetings , notice board etc.
- Reflect on team members' objectives in a team meeting. The team can help review its effectiveness.
- Encourage your team to finalise their objectives in pairs or trios.
- Share your ideas with other colleagues and invite them to come to a team meeting to present an overview of their objectives and how they relate to and impact on those in your department. This will help to ensure that objectives complement each other between departments and individual efforts are well invested.

Contact Organisational Development for support at Develop@essex.ac.uk. For more Quick Guides go to the [webpage](#).