A great way to begin the annual goals / review and development cycle is to set-the—stage with a conversation about the process. You can either do this in individual meetings or team meetings. The outcome is to share why this is beneficial to everyone’s success and to make sure everyone understands the roles and accountabilities. It also provides you with an opportunity to inform employees of your philosophy and management style. This puts everyone at ease and gives them advance notice to start preparing.

The GROW Model guides your conversation so it is purposeful and two-way. The use of open-ended questions helps conversation flow. Employees feel heard and valued because they share their thoughts, insights and are receptive to feedback. The GROW model helps to build trust, is supportive and empowering of others. It’s all about the conversation.

**Sample Conversation Starters**

I’m glad we have an opportunity to meet today. I would like to discuss our new annual goals and development planning process with you.

- What would you like to get from today’s meeting?
- Is there anything specific you would like to know?

My goal is to ensure you fully understand the process, timelines and what each of us is expected to do. What else would you like to take away from today? So we agree on......

- Let’s get started

**Sample Conversation Starters**

Manager provides information package and begins to review...

At the end of the info sharing you might ask staff:

- Have you had any previous experiences with annual processes?
- What made it successful? What didn’t?
- What did you like? What didn’t you like about the process?

Would you like to hear about my experience with annual processes?

**Sample Conversation Starters**

Lots of brainstorming to determine how manager and employee(s) will work through this process.

- What can we do to ensure we don’t miss any significant dates?
- What might be ways you can track your progress with respect to identified goals?
- What are ways to store notes or records of progress?

**Sample Conversation Starters**

- How will we hold ourselves accountable to the suggested timeframe? How will you hold yourself accountable?