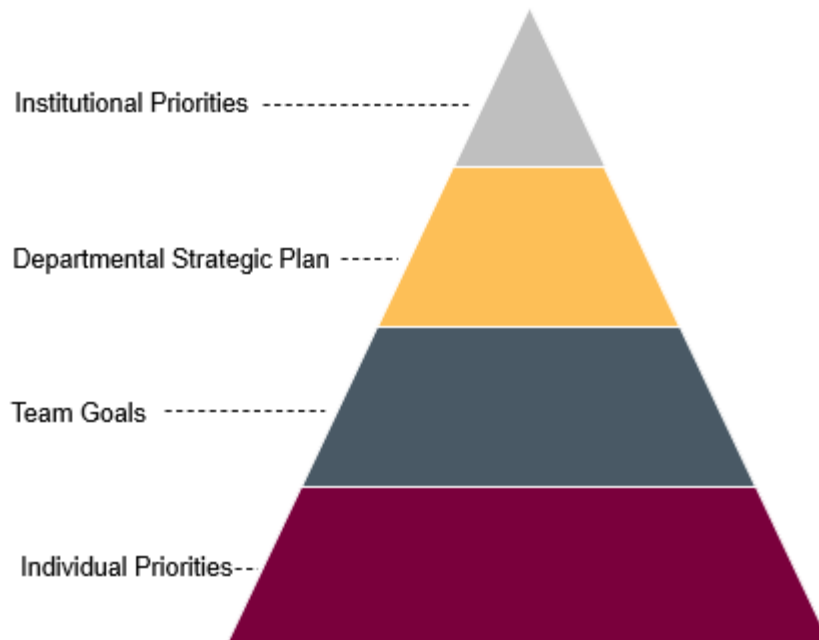


Setting Effective Objectives

Annual objective and development goals setting is the first phase of the TMG Performance Review and Development process. It provides an opportunity for an employee and their manager to collaborate on setting expectations, ensuring alignment to the team, department and University goals, as well as gaining individual commitment and engagement.





Goals conversations and documentation should be completed by the end of September each year to confirm the priority items to be achieved. Each individual is responsible for setting **3 to 4** annual goals and **1 to 2** development goal for the year. At the end of the year, all goals will form the basis of the individual's performance review.

Annual & Development Goals

Annual goals are *role oriented*. It is important to ensure that work objectives are not simply day-to-day activities that are a "given" within your job description. Objectives should be:

- Cascaded from the institution's strategic priorities
- Clearly connected to the department's strategic objectives or key performance indicators
- Incremental projects, responsibilities or actions that support key operational initiatives
- Linked with measurable, high impact outcomes
- Geared towards improving processes, creating efficiencies or improving the student/employee experience

Development goals are *learning oriented*. They capture the skills, knowledge and experiences that support the growth and development of the individual for success in their current role and to prepare them for future positions.

A development goal should not simply be to attend a workshop or take a course. It should be targeted to acquiring a new skill or competency (i.e., project management, HTML programming,

conflict resolution) that is required to develop in an individual’s career. Keep in mind that the most effective development goals are clearly linked to work objectives and provide an opportunity to practically apply the new skills/ knowledge areas.



TOP TIP

Crafting the right goals

- Goals should be connected with larger university and department priorities
- Goals outline the “what” the team member is going to do, but this should be complemented with the Leadership Capabilities, which outline “how” the goal should be approached. Consider both perspectives when writing goals to ensure there is no overlap, but that each complements the other
- Share your goals so that team members understand your priorities

Set SMART Objectives

Objectives should follow the SMART criteria, which is a guideline for writing goals so that they are clear and focused on what is important to achieve desired results. The acronym SMART stands for: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound. Review the table below for a guide on assessing if your goals meet these requirements.

CRITERIA	QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK YOURSELF
S Specific	What are the specific details of what is to be achieved, how it will be achieved, what steps are required and who is responsible? Does the objective include an “object” and an “active verb”?
M Measurable	What are the quantifiable, concrete results that will evaluate whether or not the objective has been met? Have I clearly defined what the overall benefit will be? How will I track progress over time?
A Achievable	Are the necessary tools, information, and other resources available to enable me to meet this objective? Are new skills/knowledge required? Can this realistically be achieved within existing constraints?
R	What is the value-added impact to McMaster, students, department,



Relevant	colleagues, or other key stakeholders in achieving this objective?
T	Are the due dates clear to everyone involved?
Time Bound	Does the time element allow/facilitate measurement of ongoing progress?

After setting your goals, revisit them to make sure that they are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. To set your team up for success, ensure alignment of expectations to simplify performance conversations.

Data for Measurement:

There are different types of data of information or data that can be collected to assess the progress of a goal.

Type of Data	Examples
Quantitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality - i.e., increased customer/student satisfaction, response time decreased by 20% • Quantity - is represented by a number (i.e., process 50 more new hires per pay) • Cost - represented by currency or percentage (i.e., reduces administrative costs by 10%)
Qualitative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness - represented by a number, day, month, time of day (i.e., schedules, deadlines) • Behavior – represented by levels of service provided to staff or students

Regular Goal Review

- It is important to monitor progress throughout the year. Will the objective be completed within allotted timeframe
- Recognize if new/special efforts must be made or additional resources are needed.
- Address unexpected challenges when they occur i.e. resourcing issues, legislative changes, etc.
- Evaluate if it is necessary to adjust measurable targets if additional criteria or action items were added.
- Identify if goals need to be modified in light of changing priorities

SAMPLE:

Explore the two sample goals below. Both have the same intended outcomes, however, one follows the SMART criteria which makes it easier to understand the goal and assess progress and ultimately, achievement.

	Goal Example	Why
Goal	Improve team communication on the project.	This goal could be improved because it does not define why “improved team communication” might mean or how success might be measured.
SMART Goal	By the end of the next fiscal year, I will increase the project team’s meeting attendance by 30% by implementing a flexible scheduling policy and sending reminders 24 hours before each meeting, in order to enhance team collaboration.	<p>Specific: Increase the project team’s meeting attendance by 30%</p> <p>Measurable: 30% increase in attendance</p> <p>Attainable: Clearly outlined, doable strategies within current constraints</p> <p>Relevant: Acts in alignment with a university strategic priority</p> <p>Time-Bound: By the end of the fiscal year</p>