

# **Establishing Employee Objectives**

Staff Training  
The Office of Human Resources

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# Introduction

- Setting goals and objectives is the first and most critical step in the planning process.
- It is important to the College that all employees are well trained in how to set these meaningful performance measurements so that objectives align with the needs of the College and individual employee professional needs .

# Today's Objectives

- Recognize the difference between goals and objectives.
- Understand the importance of setting objectives to support the St. Mary's College of Maryland Strategic Plan specifically as they relate to the department.
- Understand what SMART objectives are.
- Describe how SMART objectives are set.

# Goals vs. Objectives

Although the terms “goals” and “objectives” are often used interchangeably, there is a difference between them:

## Goals

- General
- Less tangible
- Broad
- Abstract
- Strategic—long-range direction, set by senior administration

## Objectives

- Specific
- Measurable
- Narrow
- Concrete
- Tactical—short-range, set with supervisors to support the accomplishment of goals

# Importance of Setting Objectives to Meet Goals

- Planning is the most important management function.
  - *“Failing to plan is planning to fail.”*
- Setting goals and objectives is important because it is the first and most critical step in the planning process.
- St. Mary’s goals are set by the College’s Strategic Plan. They are forward-facing and provide the College with the direction in which it will move.
- Objectives can be mile markers along the road indicating progress and maintaining motivation.

# How We Set Objectives

- St. Mary's College of Maryland established goals as part of the Strategic Plan. Tactics to achieve and implement the goals have been developed.



- Supervisors use the College's goals to set their departmental objectives.



- Supervisors collaborate with employees to help develop individual employee objectives that support the objectives of the department. Supervisors also help employees develop their individual professional objectives.
- The performance of supervisors and employees is evaluated in part on their accomplishment of these objectives.

# SMART Objectives

We strive to set SMART Objectives:

***S*** Specific

***M*** Measurable

***A*** Achievable

***R*** Realistic

***T*** Time-oriented

# Specific Objectives

## **Specific objectives are:**

- Concrete
- Detailed
- Focused
- Well-defined
- Straightforward
- Action-oriented



# Specific Objectives (cont'd.)

**When setting objectives that are specific, ask the following questions:**

- What am I going to do? Use action verbs such as *develop, execute, conduct, build*.
- Why is it important to do this task?
- Who is going to be involved?
- When do I want this task to be completed?
- How am I going to do this task?

# Measurable Objectives

- Measurements for objectives help you know you are making progress toward completing the objectives.
- Progress measurements also allow for course corrections along the way for both direction and pace.
- If you set an objective that is measurable, you will have tangible evidence of completion of the objective.

# Measurable Objectives (cont'd.)

**When setting objectives that are measurable ask the following:**

- How will I know when this objective has been achieved?
- What measurements can I use?
- What milestones can I use to track progress toward completion?

# Achievable Objectives

- Achievable objectives are those that you can actually accomplish (something you can realistically do within the time frame set)—not an aspiration or vision.
- Achievable objectives need to challenge you but not so much that they are unattainable or to cause frustration in being unable to complete them.
- You need to fully commit to achieving the objectives.

# Realistic Objectives

**Realistic objectives are those that you have the resources to accomplish, including:**

- *Skills*
- *Funding*
- *Equipment*
- *Time*
- *Staff*

# Realistic Objectives (cont'd.)

**When setting objectives that are realistic, ask the following :**

- Do I have the resources to accomplish this objective?
- Do I need to rearrange my priorities to accomplish this objective?
- Is it possible to complete this objective?
- How will pursuing this objective affect other performance objectives?
- Will this objective help meet/support department and goals of the College?

# Time-Oriented Objectives

- Time-oriented objectives are those that have deadlines for completion. The time frames create a sense of urgency and lead to action.
- The deadlines, just as with overall objectives, must be achievable and realistic.
- For a complex objective, break it into small parts and set a deadline for completion of each phase.

# Time-Oriented Objectives (cont'd.)

**When setting objectives that are time-oriented ask the following:**

- What is the earliest—yet achievable and realistic—date for this objective to be started and to be completed?
- Have I included these dates in the statement of the objective?
- Are there other projects/objectives that must be completed first, or are there others that are reliant upon the completion of this objective?



# Professional Objectives

**When setting professional objectives some or all of the following questions may be applicable:**

- Is the objective directly related to my position?
- Does it allow me to maintain or progress in my position?
- Does it build on the my professional knowledge, skill and effective work practices?
- Is it a requirement to continued employment in the position?

# Summary

Although the terms “goals” and “objectives” are often used interchangeably, there are significant differences:

- Goals are general, intangible, broad, abstract and long-range directions generally set by senior leaders.
- Objectives are specific, measurable, narrow and concrete. They are short-range plans generally set by supervisors to accomplish goals.

# Summary (cont'd.)

- Setting goals and objectives is important because it is the first and most critical step in the planning process.
- Executive Council, along with the College's Board of Trustees, lead the establishment of the College's goals. Individual supervisors then use these goals to set their departmental objectives and their individual professional objectives, and to collaborate with employees as they develop individual objectives.

# Summary (cont'd.)

## SMART Objectives

**S** Specific

**M** Measurable

**A** Achievable

**R** Realistic

**T** Time-oriented

# Questions?

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