

## 5: SETTING GOALS

### Discussion Questions:

1. What is a goal?
2. What are the three categories of goals?
3. What are the basics of setting goals?
4. How do you set goals?
5. How does an organization obtain goal commitment?

"A GOAL PROPERLY SET IS HALFWAY REACHED."

~ ABRAHAM LINCOLN

#### 1. What is a goal?

- A. A goal is the \_\_\_\_\_. A good analogy is to look at a rudder. A rudder is a broad, flat, movable piece of wood or metal hinged vertically at the stern of a boat that is used for steering. Human beings also have a rudder called a goal. It gives an individual or organization a destination, and if kept on course, allows successful movement to achieve a desirable end.
- B. Goals are \_\_\_\_\_. If challenges or obstacles never emerge, progression and improvement could not be made. Successful organizations and individuals share the common characteristics of becoming goal setters and completers.

#### 2. What are the three categories of goals?

- A. The first category of goals is called short-range goals. \_\_\_\_\_ that can be applied on a daily basis. They are practical plans that enable people to move toward the achievement of long-term goals. Organizational missions and visions cannot amount to very much with the achievement of solid short-term goals that act like a foundation for a building.
- B. The second category of goals is called \_\_\_\_\_, which are built on the foundation of the short-range goals. They deal with \_\_\_\_\_ and have target dates that are written down, and progress is measured periodically. In an organization, intermediate goals are very operative in nature and are redefined on a yearly basis.

- C. The third category of goals is long-range goals which reflect the \_\_\_\_\_ of the organization. In an organization, these goals are usually developed by upper management and are formally stated and published in annual reports.

They are usually the most abstract of all goals and tend to be open-ended as they can take five to ten years to achieve. Long-range goals provide a guide, not a holy writ etched in stone, but can be changed if it becomes necessary.

### 3. What are the basics of setting goals?

- A. For goals to be effective, \_\_\_\_\_ should be found and will serve as a guide in defining and setting goals. The characteristics can be found in the word SMART: Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Realistic, and Timely.
- B. Goals are only meaningful when they are \_\_\_\_\_ enough to be verified and evaluated. This is best when a goal is stated in quantitative terms like "Drill 15 new oil wells" instead of "Drill wells!" A specific goal that is written down increases commitment and understanding.
- C. Goals should be \_\_\_\_\_. When a specific goal can be measured, feedback is provided to give people an understanding of whether their level of effort is sufficient or needs to be increased. When an organization can monitor progress, information becomes helpful in the management control process.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to goals being written and assignments, responsibilities, and tasks being assigned to specific people within the organization. Individuals from top-level management to entry-level employees participate in performing specific tasks and duties that directly influence the accomplishment of a goal.
- E. Goals should be challenging but \_\_\_\_\_. As goals become attainable instead of just a wish list, reasonable expectations of what can be achieved over a given period of time become clear.

- F. \_\_\_\_\_ refers to a specific time period, or deadline, in which the goal must be accomplished. With time limits built into a goal, reviews, corrections, revisions, and adjustments can be made.

**4. How do you set goals?**

- A. Goals are not just a writing exercise to be put aside until the time comes to write goals for another period. They should be used personally and organizationally to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Goals will reflect better ownership and possession if every organizational individual understands the steps that should be used in setting goals.
- B. First, \_\_\_\_\_ or tasks to be done. Goal setting begins by defining what it is that you want your organizational members to accomplish.
- C. Second, specify \_\_\_\_\_. Typically, goal outcomes are measured in physical units, time, or money.
- D. Third, \_\_\_\_\_. This step requires identifying the level of performance expected.
- E. Fourth, \_\_\_\_\_. After the targets are set, deadlines for each goal need to be put into place. A time period reduces ambiguity and increases goal importance.
- F. Fifth, \_\_\_\_\_. When someone is given more than one goal, it is important to rank the goals in order of importance. This step allows organizational members to take action and expend effort on each goal in proportion to its importance.
- G. Sixth, \_\_\_\_\_. Goal setting should not encourage people to choose easy goals in order to ensure success.

- H. Seventh, \_\_\_\_\_ . Failure to coordinate interdependent goals through the organization can lead to territorial fights and overlapping of effort.

**5. How does an organization obtain goal commitment?**

- A. The mere existence of goals is no assurance that employees accept and are committed to them. Certain \_\_\_\_\_ from top to bottom can increase goal acceptance and commitment.
- B. The first place to look in gaining goal commitment is \_\_\_\_\_. Commitment from leaders binds the organization to a certain line of conduct and creates stability when pressures and criticism emerge from within the organization. Management support comes through by providing necessary equipment, supplies, time, and other resources to complete the required tasks. Also, management can reduce barriers that stand between employees and the attainment of their goals.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ in goal setting increases acceptance of goals. Employees must perceive management as truly seeking their input instead of simply "going through the motions" of soliciting employee involvement.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_. Individuals and departments differ in terms of their skills and abilities. These differences should be taken into consideration, and goals must realistically reflect the capabilities of organizational and human resources. Matching goal difficulty with organizational capabilities increases the likelihood that the employees will see the goals as fair, realistic, attainable, and acceptable.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_. Offering money, promotions, recognition, time off, or similar rewards to employees contingent on goal achievement increases goal commitment. Every organization member has the question in the back of his/her mind of "What's in it for me?" Connecting rewards to the accomplishment of goals will answer that question.