

Goal-Writing Instructions

Goal Examples

Goals might be specific or broad.

- Specific goals focus on the acquisition of one skill, e.g., *“Improve negotiation skills.”*
- Broad goals such as, *“Be regarded as a thought leader”* generally require a comprehensive, multi-part, phased-in plan.

Consider the following when developing goals:

1. Focus the goal on the end result.
2. Describe the future state once you’ve reached the goal.
3. What is the current state relative to the goal.
4. Actions that will close the gap.
5. Potential obstacles to closing the gap.
6. Support from others required to effect and sustain the change.

Goal-Writing Instructions

Goal: Be more influential in meetings with executive management.
Future state
My recommendations/suggestions are listened to with interest and they are acted on. People regard me as influential. They see that I have influence with executive management. I confidently handle debate when my ideas are questioned. My presentations are clear and compelling.
Current state
I have excellent recommendations, but I don't always get them on the table before someone else does. Many of my best ideas come after the meeting, not during. And when that happens, I often do not make sure I get a second audience for them. Some of my recommendations are listened to and acted on. I'd like to increase that number. When under pressure and questioning from others, I often get defensive, and generally argue my way out of it.
Actions to close the gap
Get my recommendation on the table during a meeting, not after. And if an idea comes later, make sure I get it heard by the right people. Plan in advance when I have something of importance I want to influence others on. This will probably help me when there's debate – I'll be ready for it. Get feedback from others on how I could improve.
Potential obstacles to closing the gap
Time. I don't like to ask people for feedback about me. They might tell me things I don't want to hear; they might think I'm unable to figure it out for myself and this might cause them to not be influenced by me in the future.
Support from others
Talk things through with a trusted colleague or a business-savvy friend before I act.

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Goal: Be advanced to the next level of leadership within a year.
Future state
<p>I have a role that largely uses my strategic thinking ability.</p> <p>The director role positions me for my long-term goals.</p> <p>My job includes working across the organization with people at various levels.</p> <p>I have exposure to executive management; they see what I'm capable of doing.</p> <p>I am influential; people listen to and act on my ideas.</p> <p>When people think of me, what comes to mind is "exceptional leader."</p>
Current state
<p>I use my tactical skills, but in my current role there is little need for my strategic abilities.</p> <p>My current role is a stepping stone to my long-term goals – that's good.</p> <p>Although I have some cross-organizational interactions, they are not at the level they should be.</p> <p>I have limited exposure to executive management. But when I have had it, I have made a positive impact.</p> <p>I have good influence skills and need to use them more.</p> <p>People think of me as technically good in my role, can manage others, and know that I have sound business skills, but they are not yet thinking of me as an "exceptional leader."</p>
Actions to close the gap
<p>Design a career plan that my management will sign off on.</p> <p>Talk with my manager about more challenging roles within the next three months.</p> <p>Put myself in situations where my strategic and business skills will be noticed more often by those who can influence the promotion decision.</p>
Potential obstacles to closing the gap
<p>My peer group may see me as too competitive.</p> <p>Depending on the possible jobs for the near future, I may need more skills than I have the time or energy to fit (the learning of) into my schedule. But I don't know that for sure.</p>
Support from others
Sounding board.

Goal-Writing Instructions

Team Goal: Lead a high performing team that works well together on projects.
Future state
<p>We hold regular team meetings to talk about projects and quickly find where the problem areas are or might be.</p> <p>Our team meetings have agendas and we're able to stick to them. When we go off track, we can quickly get back on track.</p> <p>I give good quality feedback regularly to my direct reports. We talk about what's going well and what could be improved. It's an easy-going, informal conversation.</p> <p>We use the "accountabilities grid" in both individual conversations and team meetings. It's working well and we can easily see what's working and what needs attention.</p> <p>Each of my direct reports has an individual development plan that links to our team's goals and their own career plans.</p> <p>When I see that a direct report isn't doing well, we sit down right away to see what can be improved and how it can be improved.</p>
Current state
<p>I don't have time for 1:1s with my direct reports other than to talk quickly about how their projects are going.</p> <p>Our team meetings are brief, but we do talk about challenges. We don't always have action plans at the end of each team meeting.</p> <p>We sometimes waste a lot of time in team meetings getting off track.</p> <p>I give feedback to direct reports only when I have to and that's usually when something is going wrong.</p>
Actions to close the gap
<p>Set up 1:1s for every two weeks. Let people know that I'm going to start giving feedback more often and that the discussion can be two-way – I get feedback from them, too.</p> <p>Show my team the accountabilities grid and how to use it at our next team meeting.</p> <p>Within three months, get development plans going with my direct reports.</p>
Potential obstacles to closing the gap
<p>My team might not want to do things any differently than they're doing them now.</p>
Support from others
<p>Use my internal mentor to bounce things off of.</p>