



Management Assistance Program

SETTING TEAM MISSIONS, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

Providing the Clarity and Vision of Purpose that Each Team Member in the Organization Can Follow

GOALS:

The goals of this module are to understand Team Missions, Goals and Objectives, why we need them, how we can develop them, how they can be used to build effective teams, and how this effective teamwork can have a positive impact on business (or the company or the bottom line).

To help organizations, managers, and employees:

- Understand (define) missions, goals and objectives.
- Develop a team mission and mission statement.
- Form team goals.
- Set team objectives.
- Use missions, goals and objectives to build effective teams.
- Understand how effective teams work together to attain objectives, meet goals and build businesses.

OVERVIEW:

Most companies and large organizations have mission statements to define their purpose. Mission statements can be equally useful for small teams. Developing a mission statement can seem deceptively simple but, in actuality, it is a challenge to communicate the ideals, goals and objectives of a team in just a few sentences.

The mission statement should distill the core attributes, values and goals of the team into a clear and concise statement. The team mission statement then becomes a tool for developing and defining the team's goals and objectives. It also serves as an internal team-building tool and an external message about what the team believes in and wants to accomplish.

Brainstorming sessions with the team members is a good way to develop a mission statement. To accomplish this, the effective manager should obtain input and ideas from team members. Team members should also participate

in this process to assure their ideas and perceptions about their work are considered. The manager and team can work together to identify key points, develop tangible goals, set objectives, and determine a strategy or action plan to accomplish these goals.

Team Mission – Developing a team mission should begin with a plan that includes:

- WHO WE ARE
 - Identify the individual members of the team
 - Learn about the background and talents of each team member
 - Use this information to decide how each individual fits in and determine their roles on the team accordingly
- WHAT WE DO
 - Identify what each person has been responsible for in the past, how the individual's talents and accomplishments will fit in with the team, and how this information can be used to contribute to building a successful team
- WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING
 - Think about the big picture and capture a sense of purpose
 - Develop a long-term vision for setting team goals and objectives
 - Clearly identify the role of the team, including what the team will do and what the team will not do
- WHAT WE STAND FOR
 - Outline team values
- WHY WE DO IT
 - Define the team's goals and objectives

Team Goal-Setting

- WHAT IS A GOAL?
 - A goal can be defined as something you want to achieve.
 - A goal can also be defined as the aim or object of something you are trying to obtain.
 - Goal-setting can be defined as a cognitive theory of motivation which effectively energizes an individual to become more productive.

- WHAT ARE TEAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?
 - Team goals can be defined as shared perceptions that refer to a desirable state for the team as a unit rather than simply the sum of the personal goals of individual members.
 - Goals serve as long-term steps you would like to achieve. Goals are typically set for 1 – 5 years.
 - Objectives are measurable short-term points of achievement and are usually set for 6 months to 1 year.
 - There are four kinds of team goals:
 - Team members' goals for themselves
 - Team members' goals for the group
 - The team's goals for the team
 - The team's goals for its members

- TYPES OF GOALS
 - Outcome goals – these involve a comparison with others or against a benchmark. Achieving outcome goals depends on time, effort, coordination and ability of the team vs. time, effort, coordination and ability of the opposition or the achievement reflected in benchmark measurements.
 - Performance goals – these involve a comparison with self or a fixed standard. Achieving performance goals depends on the time, effort, coordination and ability of the team.
 - Process goals – these relate to a means of achieving performance goals. Achieving process goals depends on the time, effort and coordination of the team.

- IMPORTANCE OF GROUP GOALS
 - Prevalence – every team or group regardless of size has goals for their collectivity.
 - Consequences – team goals have been shown to have an impact on both the cohesion and performance of the group. As a result, we hear about “Management by Objectives” and “Mission Statements”.

- HOW DOES GOAL SETTING WORK?
 - Directs the attention of team members to focus on the task or goal.
 - Mobilizes effort of team members to work toward the goal.
 - Increases long-term persistence of the team.
 - Promotes the development of new strategies by the team.

- PRINCIPLES OF GOAL SETTING
 - **S**pecific – it is important to remember that a goal or an objective cannot be too general in nature. A goal must be to the point and the team has to have a specific outcome that that they want to achieve.

 - **M**easurable – generally speaking, goals and objectives should be measurable. If the team can experience success, they will be motivated and determined to do more and/or to do better.

 - **A**ction Plan – it is important for the team to develop an action plan to achieve the set goals or objectives. Make sure the actions planned will contribute to achieving the objective.

 - **R**ealistic – the measurable parts of a goal must not be too easy or too difficult. The team goal or objective should be broken down into attainable objectives.

 - **T**imely – every goal or objective should be linked to time. If there are no time limits or deadlines, the team may lose motivation.

- DO GROUP GOALS ENHANCE GROUP PERFORMANCE?
 - There is strong evidence showing that individual goals improve individual performance. Similarly, studies show that group goals had a positive effect on group performance.

- WHY DO GROUP GOALS ENHANCE GROUP PERFORMANCE?
 - Focuses the group members' attention on the goal.
 - Leads to team planning.
 - Leads to monitoring of team performance which, in turn, leads to motivation.
 - Encourages team effort and persistence.
 - Leads to coordination of efforts.
 - Leads to morale-building and communication.

- APPLICATIONS OF GOAL SETTING
 - Goal setting will be most effective when there is feedback showing progress/measures in relation to the goal.
 - The higher the degree of commitment and the more meaningful the goal, the better the performance.
 - Goal achievement will be facilitated by having a realistic action plan or strategy.
 - Specific goals will regulate action more precisely than general goals.
 - The more advanced the goal, the better the performance.
 - Specific goals will lead to better performance than “do your best” or no goals.
 - Using short-term goals plus long-term goals will lead to better performance than using long-term goals alone.

- THE GOAL-SETTING PROCESS
 - Assess your current goal-setting process.
 - Create a vision for your future.
 - Prepare your team mission statement
 - Work to achieve group buy-in and establish common goals.
 - Develop long-term goals.
 - Write specific measurable objectives.
 - Prepare an action plan to implement the objectives.

- TEAM INVOLVEMENT IN GOAL-SETTING
 - The task of bringing together different people to participate on a team can be challenging.

 - Often teams become stronger and more independent as they learn to work together as a unit.

 - Characteristics of successful team members include a positive outlook, reliability, and honesty. In addition, team members should be encouraging and inclusive.

 - Teams also need a solid support system in order to build the strong relationships needed to be effective. Senior leadership, managers, and team members should be involved in team goal-setting wherever possible. If goals must be set without the involvement of team members, leaders and managers should make every effort to obtain team buy-in before assigning goals and objectives.

- TIME FRAME
 - Once you have established your mission statement (to become grounded in your common values), it is important to establish goals and objectives for the time your group has together.
 - Goals should have a target date for achievement. Interim dates for meeting various objectives are also helpful.
 - Long-term goals, although important, don't always enable teams to judge their performance toward intended outcomes and can actually have a negative impact as the team loses sight of goals.

- NEXT STEPS – SETTING THE ACTUAL GOALS
 - Brainstorm Goals - choose a team facilitator who is willing to lead your brainstorming discussion, choose a process that is comfortable for the group.
 - Consider posting missions, goals and objectives where everyone can see them during team meetings – This will help the group stay focused.
 - A mix of goals works best – Short-term goals give the team a set of easily recognizable benchmarks that provide feedback on performance within a set time frame.
 - Set goals with your team – Goals can be set for both individual members and the entire team (or any part of the team). A structure that allows team members to participate in goal-setting has a much greater chance of success than a dictatorial regime. Imposing goals on employees without consultation can easily generate resentment and hostility. If ownership of goals is shared, the chance of achieving them is greatly increased.
 - Be specific and consistent – To be effective, remember that each goal must be attainable and quantifiable. A vague statement, like increase performance is useless. A statement such as make 10 calls per day or complete 30 analyses each week is much better.
 - Set milestones along the way – This allows the team to assess progress and stay on track. It also provides an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the goals over time to be sure they don't become outdated.

- THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN SETTING GOALS
 - Setting goals based on outcomes can lead to perceptions of failure when the outcomes are not achieved for reasons outside the control of the team or the individual team member(s).
 - Setting goals that are unrealistically high can also lead to perceptions of failure. If a goal is perceived to be unattainable, little effort will be made toward achieving that goal.
 - Conversely, goals that are set too low can also lead to problems. Unless there is a challenge, the goal may be seen as a waste of time.
 - Goals that are too vague can lead to confusion.
 - Too many goals can lead to a feeling of overload. If a team must work on multiple goals, it is helpful to prioritize the goals so the team can function effectively and work toward the most important goals first.

Without a mission statement, an organization will flounder and pull in different directions. Without a team mission statement, the team will follow suit. Setting team missions, goals and objectives is important in keeping the group focused on achievement. Without mission, team members lack a sense of purpose. Without goals, team members may lose sight of what they want to achieve. Without measurable objectives to achieve, team members may lack motivation.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Prepare a mission statement

A mission statement becomes your guide for management, inspiring you to make decisions that will best help you reach your goal. The Team Mission Statement should be in agreement with the principles of the organization's mission statement. It should be narrow enough to give direction and guidance, broad enough to allow for growth; deep enough to allow the realization of the team's potential, realistic, and brief. The team mission should capture the essence of the team without being vague.

- Get input from team members
- Prepare the mission statement
- Publish or share the mission statement as appropriate to the team and organization.

A sample mission statement might be as simple as: "We provide (these services) for (these individuals) in (this way) for (these results)".

2. Set team goals

Using the team mission statement, develop a set of goals that is compatible with the mission statement.

- Get input from team members.
- Gain agreement among team members.
- Prepare a set of team goals for achieving desired results.
- Prioritize goals to avoid feelings of overload or apathy.
- Be clear about business intent in order to remain focused on priorities.
- Review goals regularly to keep team informed and motivated.

3. Set objectives

Objectives are statements of desired outcomes or expectations. It has been said that managing without objectives is like taking a trip without knowing the destination. Objectives are necessary if performance results are to have a positive impact.

- Ensure that objectives are clear, reasonable and attainable.
- Be sure objectives are understood.
- Set objectives that are specific but flexible.
- Be sure objectives outline how goals will be accomplished.
- Include measurable data and targets.
- Concentrate on what is important.
- Ask relevant questions.
- Assign responsibility.
- Set time frames for achievement.
- Measure and monitor results.

SUMMARY: Tips for Setting Team Missions, Goals and Objectives

- Gain a clear understanding of your team and its members.
- Explore reasons why the team exists and what its purpose is for the organization.
- Develop a clear and concise team mission statement.
- Solicit Team input = team buy-in.
- Set Smart Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely).
- Set objectives to achieve goals.
- Develop an action plan to achieve team goals and objectives.
- Encourage each team member to develop their own goals and objectives.
- Review on a regular basis to keep team motivated.
- Be sure objectives and goals are tied to a realistic time frame.