

SETTING EXPECTATIONS & OBJECTIVES

Setting expectations means agreeing on performance objectives by which an individual's contribution to the organization will be measured. They should be driven by:

- the organization's strategy and objectives;
- the individual's role;
- her/his strengths and personal development needs.

Brief and frequent conversations about current projects and upcoming priorities help people to focus on how to do their best work.

Objective Setting Conversations Support High Performance Through:

- **alignment** of personal and organizational goals;
- turning **intent into action** — hope is not a strategy;
- increasing **motivation**;
- **focus** and **priority** on what is considered important;
- helping to **measure progress** — what gets measured gets done.

Setting Challenging (Stretch) Goals

Objectives shouldn't be simple to achieve. Good objectives should be realistic yet challenging. If the goal is too challenging for the person's skill level, she/he tends to become anxious and performance may drop. If the goal mix does not truly utilize existing levels of skill and ability, they may get bored and demotivated. The secret is to strike a balance between skill level and the degree of challenge the assignment presents.

In setting goals, our people should 'stretch' themselves and move beyond their comfort zones. Help inspire them by providing the right level of support so that they become more successful and fulfilled.

When setting objectives, aim to follow this process:

- insure **alignment** with **the organization's plans**;
- **clarify** priority objectives — identify three key objectives;
- **articulate** how the objectives fit into "the Big Picture;"
- stress your **ongoing support** for achieving objectives;
- **agree** on next steps and **action plan** using SMART goals.

Specific - the more specific, the better the chance it will be achieved

Measurable - how you know to what extent it is or isn't achieved

Achievable - can be accomplished within the timeframe

Relevant - aligned with personal and organizational objectives

Time-bound - has a deadline: an objective without a deadline is a wish

Effective Feedback Discussions

1. Prepare for the Feedback Discussion

- Review the expectations and objectives
- Crystalize in your own mind the key messages you want the individual to take away from the discussion

2. Set the Tone for the Discussion

- Set the climate for a positive discussion (insure no distractions, etc.)
- Communicate the objective, i.e., to recognize and enhance performance
- Outline how the meeting will proceed, and that you will need their input and contribution throughout
- Ask the individual if he or she has any specific objectives for the discussion

3. Discuss the Individual's Performance

- Encourage the individual to self-assess his or her strengths and development areas:
 - "What's gone well?" "What hasn't gone as well?"
 - Tailor your approach to the rest of the discussion if his or her perceptions don't match with reality
- Offer your feedback after hearing the individual:
 - Provide balanced constructive feedback: 3 positives to 1 constructive criticism
 - Provide appropriate recognition for their achievements
 - Ask for the individual's reaction to the feedback
 - Actively listen and ask questions to gain better understanding
 - Identify any areas for further development

4. The SBI Feedback Model

- Developed by the Center for Creative Leadership
- **S**ituation: anchor in time and place
"I want to give you some feedback on the research memo you delivered today."
- **B**ehavior: what you observed
"You said that you understood the three research topics I asked you to cover in the memo, but the memo you turned in seems to cover only two of the three topics."
- **I**mpact: your perception of its impact
"Although the research you did on the first two topics is good, without your research on the third, I will not be able to finish my motion today as I had planned."

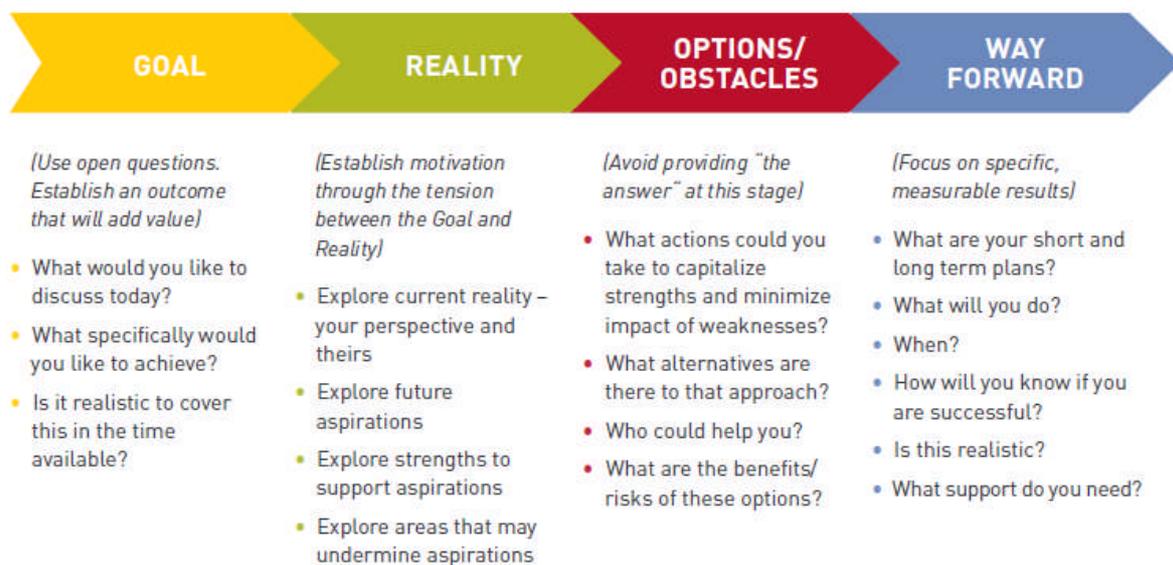
5. Close the Discussion

- Reiterate key messages:
 - How should the individual feel as a result of the discussion? Motivated? Valued? Ready to take ownership of his or her areas for improvement?
- Encourage ongoing discussions:
 - Set follow-up discussion if appropriate
 - Encourage the individual to initiate periodic discussions with you to discuss progress

CAREER & DEVELOPMENT CONVERSATIONS

Career and development conversations are important for the individuals you supervise. While some conversations may arise from a performance discussion or refer to past behavior, most tend to focus on the future. Often we assume that because someone is already performing well, they don't need any conversations about their future career. In fact, the opposite is true.

Getting started: The GROW model, described by Max Landsberg in his book *The Tao of Coaching*, sets out a best practice process for structuring a career and development conversation.



A simple agenda for a conversation on longer term career aspirations and opportunities could look like this:



For some, this may be the first time that they have had a focused conversation about their career and development. It is important to state the purpose of the conversation — which is intended to support and motivate — and set aside any concerns that the conversation is a threat.