Setting SMART goals in Performance Appraisal

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It is important during the planning stage of performance appraisals that both the employee and the employer establish SMART goals. SMART goals is a term coined by Blanchard in 1985 in "Leadership and the One Minute Leader". The SMART acronym refers to - Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely.

Specific goals need to answer the "who, what, where, when, which and why" of the objectives being set. Essentially, it needs to address the subjects involved, the tasks that need to be completed, the location where the tasks are carried out, the time-frame needed, the requirements and barriers as well as reasons for the objective. Goals are more easily accomplished when they are specific.

The goals also need to be **measurable,** by establishing timelines and criteria with which to assess your progress. With such measures in place, the progress of the goal can be measured and tracked, ensuring that the goal is achieved. The satisfaction from monitoring the progress made and reaching certain milestones can be very motivating.

Attainable goals act as motivators to obtaining the necessary skills and information needed to complete the objectives. When an individual perceives a goal to be attainable, they will strive to take the necessary steps to achieve it.

Goals need to be **realistic** in that they must be objectives that the employee must be willing and able to achieve. These are goals that the individual would perceive themselves as having the capability to complete as well as having the motivation to work towards to.

Finally, **timely** refers to establishing timelines by which the individual is aiming to complete the goal. Having such time anchors, the individual has established the boundaries of achieving their goals and will strive to achieve it within the agreed time-frame.