

Principles of Business Management

Week 2a Lecture

S.M.A.R.T. Goals

During this lecture, we will discuss the development of SMART goals.

Goal setting is a phrase that is thrown around often. I am sure that if you've ever spent any time in the corporate world, gone to school, or just wanted to change something about your life, you probably have heard this phrase.

S.M.A.R.T. goals have been around a long time but have just recently come into the spotlight. S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym which stands for Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. We will discuss these in more detail in a moment. First it's essential that you understand that a goal that is very specific has a greater chance of being achieved than a goal that is vague. The bottom line is that you should understand how to set S.M.A.R.T. goals if you are planning on making good decisions during your career.

It's important to mention at this time that organization's also use the S.M.A.R.T. goal format to assist in reaching its strategic plans and objectives.

Let's discuss each word to have a better understand of what this all means:

Specific – Your goal should be clear and specific, and answer the questions:

What are you going to do?

Why is it important to you?

How are you going to achieve it?

Measurable – Your goals should be able to be measured so you can actually see the changes that have happened. If you goal cannot be measured, how are you going to know if you've reached it?

Attainable – Your goal should slightly stretch you out of your comfort zone but close enough that you believe you can reach the goal. If you believe you can reach the goal, chances are you will commit to attaining the goal. If you set a goal that you know in your heart you won't be able to attain, you probably will end up quitting and not reaching the goal.

Realistic – Your goal should be realistic for you to achieve with some effort. If you make your goals too challenging, you may just be setting yourself up to fail before you even begin. It should push you out of your comfort zone, but it should not break you.

Timely – You need to set a clear timeframe for you to achieve your goal to give you something to work towards. Without a definite beginning or end date, it will become easy for you to think you can start next week, and then the next week, and so on. Without a timeframe, there is no sense of urgency to begin.

Example of a General Goal Transferred to the S.M.A.R.T. goal format:

General Goal: I want to lose weight

Transfer to S.M.A.R.T. Goal Format:

Smart = I want to lose 10 pounds by increasing my exercise program

Measurable = to fit into my favorite jeans

Attainable = I will walk on my treadmill for 30 minutes each day

Realistic = I will spend less time watching T.V.

Timely = I will begin tomorrow

Completed S.M.A.R.T. Goal using example above:

I want to lose 10 pounds by increasing my exercise so I can fit into my favorite jeans. Beginning tomorrow, I will reduce my time watching T.V. to work on my treadmill for 30 minutes each day. I will be able to fit into my jeans in 30 days.

References

SMART Goal Setting. (n.d.). Goal Setting: Proven Step-By-Step Goal Setting Guide. Retrieved May 8, 2012, from <http://www.goal-setting-guide.com/goal-setting-tutorials/smart-goal-setting>