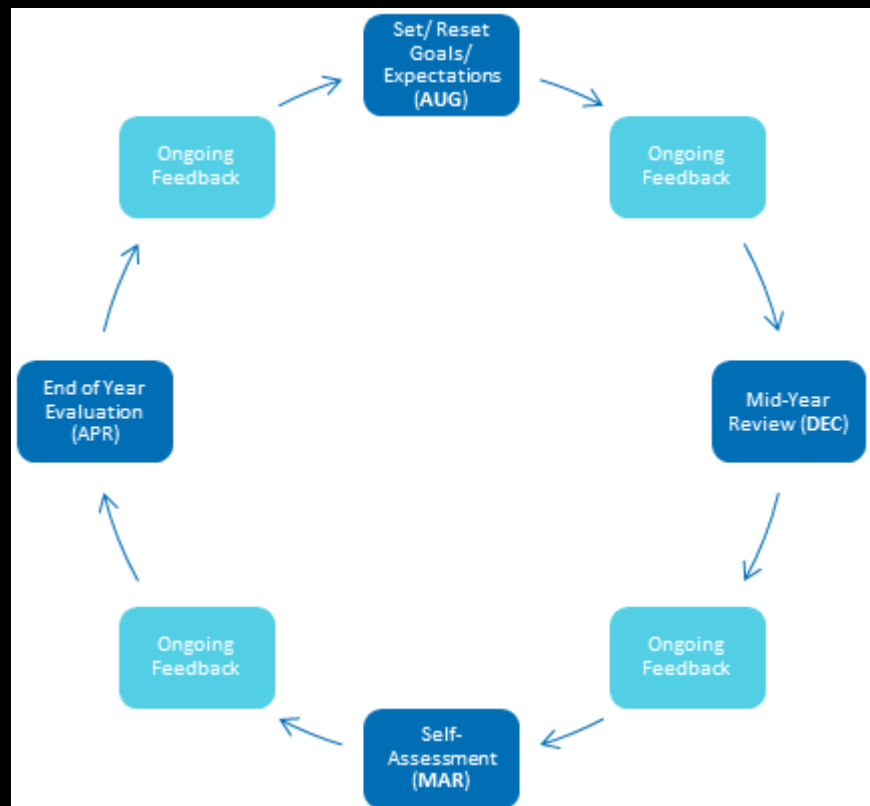


Goal Setting

Goal setting is the first step in the performance management cycle. The goals set at the beginning of the fiscal year are foundational to all of the other activities in the cycle.

Working with their manager, most Northeastern staff members establish 3-5 performance goals that align with their department's goals and at least one professional development goal that aligns with their career aspirations.

Depending on the scope, goals sometimes flow from year to year.



PERFORMANCE GOALS:

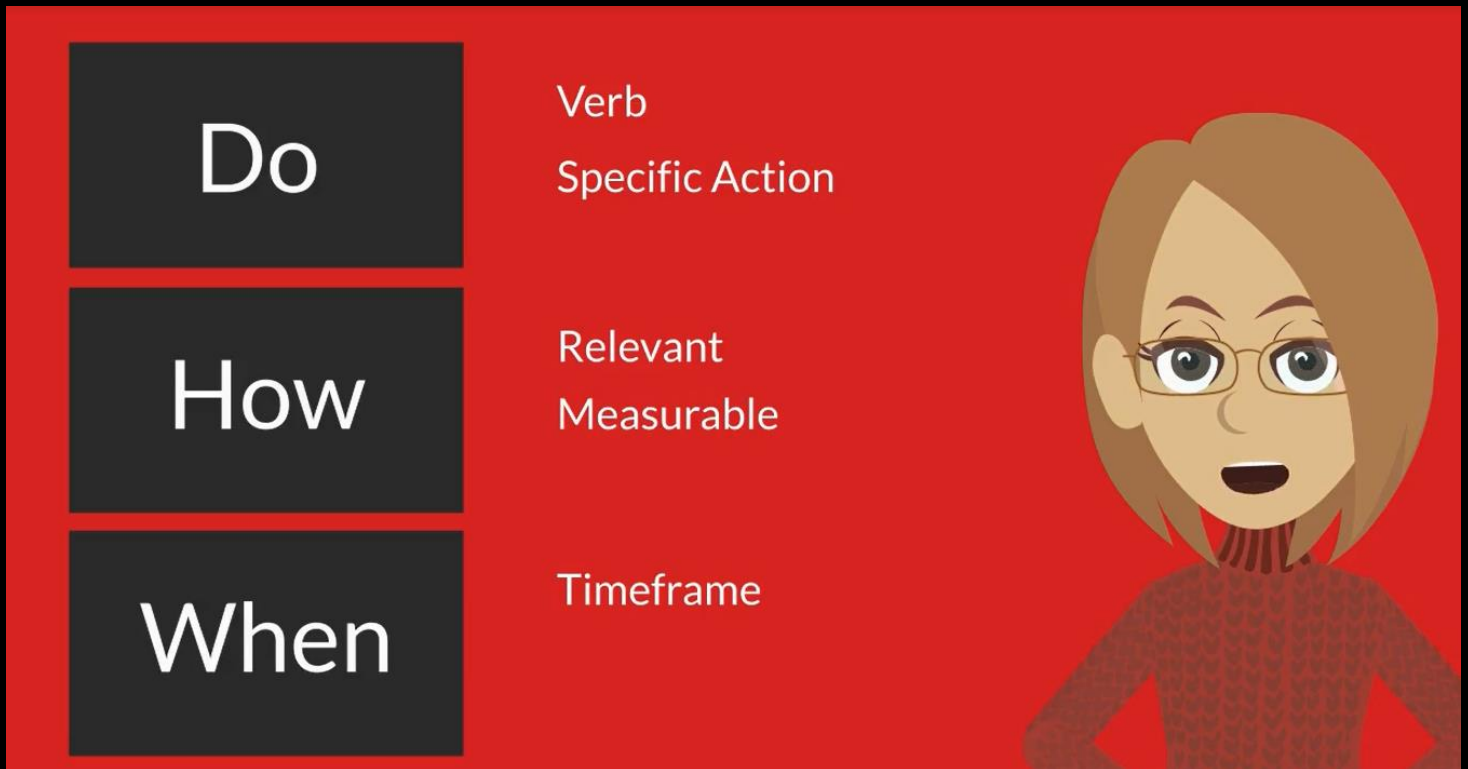
Performance goals are related to the person's job responsibilities and deliverables. Performance goals are not a list of day-to-day tasks, but rather what the person will accomplish during the fiscal year, which runs from June 30th to July 1st. Performance goals should tie back to Northeastern University's Mission, the College or Division goals and the Department goals. Once established, goals may be revised or changed as the needs of the organization change.

DEVELOPMENT GOALS:

Development goals are learning-oriented with a focus on growing skills and competencies in the current role or providing opportunities for career advancement.

Writing Goals

Writing goals can be broken down into three parts.



SMART Goals

Goals should also be SMART.



SPECIFIC

A goal should be specific in that it must state clearly what will be accomplished. Use action verbs such as develop, execute, conduct, and build when writing a specific goal.

A goal that is specific can answer the following questions:

- What am I going to do?
- Why is it important to do this task?
- Who is going to be involved?

MEASURABLE

A goal should be measurable in that you can quantify success and be able to track the progress of the goal from start to finish. Common measures include quantity, quality, timeliness, accuracy, etc. A goal that is measurable can answer the following questions:

- How will I know when this objective has been achieved?
- What measurements can I use?
- What milestones can I use to track progress toward completion?

ACHIEVABLE

An achievable goal is something you can realistically complete within the stated timeframe. Otherwise, the goal will have a demoralizing effect rather than a motivating one. A goal that is achievable can answer the following questions:

- Can you influence the outcome?
- Are there contingencies outside your control that need to be considered? If yes, what is the strategy to deal with those?
- Do you have the resources and the time to complete this goal in the context of the other goals and work priorities?

RESULTS-ORIENTED

A goal is results-oriented and relevant if it is consistent with the mission and priorities of the university. Goals should be linked to higher-level University, Division/School, Department goals. This provides context and ensures that goals and actions contribute to the bigger picture. A goal that is relevant can answer the following questions:

- Will this objective help meet/support the university mission and department goals?
- Is the goal relevant to performance expectations for the individual?
- How will pursuing this objective affect other performance objectives?

TIME-BOUND

A goal is time-bound when it has deadlines, milestones, or timelines. Each goal needs to have due dates. For more complex goals, set up smaller milestones to track progress more closely. Milestones in and of themselves must be measurable as well. Remember not every goal is an annual goal – some may be 6 months in length or end at different times throughout the year. Be careful to set deadlines that are achievable. A goal that is time-bound can answer the following questions:

- What is the earliest—yet achievable—date for this goal to be started and to be completed?
- Have I included these dates in the goal description?
- Are there other projects/goals that must be completed first, or are there others that are reliant upon the completion of this goal?

Using Metrics

Metrics will help you track the success of the goal. Metrics can include customer satisfaction, cost savings/revenue generation, automation/process improvement, or on-time completion of a deliverable.

Typical measurements may include:

- **Completion:** Examples of completion metrics include on time and on budget delivery.
- **Customer:** Examples of customer metrics include who was reached and their satisfaction level.
- **Financial:** Examples of financial metrics include costs, savings, revenue, etc.
- **Quality:** Examples of quality metrics include accuracy, error rate, and satisfaction scores.
- **Process:** Examples of process metrics include increased efficiency, decreased time, more automation, fewer steps, etc.

Manager Tips

- Plan time for the process.
- Start the process by meeting with your whole team to:
 - Review the process and form
 - Outline the timeline for each step of the process
 - Reiterate the University's mission, the college's goals and department's goals
- Invite team members to draft their goals first and then meet to collaborate and finalize the goals.
- Once established, regularly have check-in meetings to review progress all year long on both performance and professional development goals.

