Setting Goals in the Workplace

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In each and every organisation, it is vital to set goals. Goals provide a guideline as to how employees should conduct themselves in achieving the organisation's strategic goals. They also ensure that individuals are not only working towards personal success but also towards the success of the organisation. Research indicates that goals serve four basic functions: providing guidance and direction, facilitating planning, motivating and inspiring employees, and helping evaluate and control performance.

In the quest of setting goals, it is important to ensure they are clearly defined, so as to ensure their attainability. Goals that are ambiguous and unclear make it difficult for an individual to set a strategic path in attaining them. They make it difficult for one to map out a clear roadmap in achieving them. Setting clear goals in the organisation makes one able to clearly plan the activities they will undertake in achieving them and set targets. The success of an organisation is based on clear, understandable and attainable goals.

In this regard, it is useful to set Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely (SMART) Goals. With SMART goals, there can be a certainty that any task undertaken within the organisation is for the success of the organisation, and individuals have clear objectives laid out for them. SMART goals also provide an individual with a platform to set realistic targets for themselves, based on their own abilities. With this in mind, one can be assured that when setting goals within the organisation, the SMART approach is a clear measure of success.

Setting SMART goals

Specific

In setting goals, one should avoid vague and ambiguous goals that leave the employee uncertain as to what they should do. Goals should be specific, and point to the object of success. They should have clear objectives that make it easy for one to lay down their strategy to achieve them.

Measurable

Set goals should be measurable. This means that the specified goal should be set in such a way that there is a degree of measuring the progress of the goal. It, therefore, makes it clear when one has attained the goal based on the clearly set target.

Attainable

In every step of the goal-setting process, one should make sure the goals they are setting are realistic and achievable. This helps in assessing the success of an organisation based on goals that are implementable with regards to the prevailing environment. Setting unattainable goals may give the impression that employees are underperforming, whereas there is a need to revise the targets.

Relevant

Every organisation has a clearly defined vision, which they aim to attain. Organizational goals have to be relevant to attaining this vision. It is pointless to set goals that do not have anything to do with the organisation's vision as they simply waste time and resources.

Timely

Goals need to be time-bound. In order to increase productivity, individuals should be guided by clearly set timelines for doing tasks. Timelines should also be realistic, in line with the magnitude of the tasks.

By Implementing SMART goals in the organisation, success can be attained in a clear and defined way.

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