

# How to Set & Achieve Goals in a Group Setting

*Create a culture of continuous improvement in your organization*

## **Create the Game of Work**

Continuous improvement is constantly moving forward; continuously getting better. Thus, our success is a journey – not a destination. As we move forward on our goals, we realize that the aim is to get to where we wish to go. Sometimes it will be slow and sometimes we'll get there fast but the main goal is: *forward progress*.

Take a machine that we are attempting to make more efficient – get more productivity out of. In some cases, we can get more efficiency by speeding it up – but you can only go so fast safely or per the limitations of the machine. We can improve also by reducing the amount of time the machine is down for repairs or by increasing the set up speed for a new run. Or we can improve the quality the machine is producing and/or reduce the waist that the machine creates. All this increases efficiency and productivity and *many goals can be set to achieve this end. Thus to reach our aim we can focus on multiple goals and action steps.*

Once we achieve our goal, the question is what should we do? Should we quit? No! Let us celebrate our victory and then set a new goal! This is what constant and never ending improvement is all about.

There are two misconceptions about goal setting that we should discuss today.

The first is that when you reach a goal, it's ok to stop – since the goal has been reached. The second is that if you **don't** reach a goal, you should be disappointed and beat yourself and the team up for not reaching it.

First – the Goal is to constantly get better – someone is always reducing the time it take to run 100 yards, increasing the speed of the

computer, increasing their net worth and sales. It's best, in life, to never stop improving.

Second – If one does not reach the goal on the **goal** (of goal setting) is not to be disappointed but to readjust and keep going towards that goal. This is because we are all human and no one can predict the future. A goal is an *aim* – no one can know for sure how realistic the aim is – *it is simply a direction we are pointing*.

Thus we might say that our goal is to obtain this machine speed by this time by this date and in some cases we'll bust the goal - hit it before our deadline. *Our task is to celebrate this, have some pizza, and then set a new goal.*

If we don't reach the machine speed goal, we simply want to look at what happened and readjust it. Maybe the goal is a good one but we just need to adjust the time frame we wish to accomplish the goal. Possibly the goal was unrealistic and we need to break it down to a smaller aim of progress. *No big deal.*

This would be true of a group of salespeople whose goal is to double their sales. At the end of the year, they may look at their sales and it just went up by 13%. After some thought, they might decide that a realistic five-year goal is to double sales. For next year they decide their short term one-year goal is to increase their sales by 20%. This would be more realistic. The group would hopefully not spend too much time beating up on themselves in disappointment. It is a natural human tendency to set goals too large and too soon – the point is to learn – not abuse ourselves about it!

When we first start tracking the progress of our goals, we learn a lot – some good – some bad. I am working for a company that has begun to track many aspects of their company's performance. Some of the things they are learning is very encouraging - a lot is not. There are problems that need to be addressed. When you first start the goal setting process, you are opening up a can of worms or Pandora's box – a lot of stuff comes out that perhaps you were not so conscious of before. **ALL THIS IS GOOD!**

As a leader, what is best to do is to help your people to feel positive about what is being discovered “Without this tracking, we would have never known – now we know – what should we do about it?” Keep your group

focused on action. “Before we started setting goals, the company was ok. Goal setting itself won’t hurt us – it can only improve us. It’s ok for us to know where we stand. **Let’s decide what to do and take action to move forward!**”

The process of goal setting in a group is to create a *mastermind relationship* with all group members. It must be approached with full faith in the beginning that the answers will come and that we will step by step move forward by taking action on our goals.

A *mastermind relationship* is when people’s minds are heated up and ideas for improvements seem to “pop” out of no where. This process happens naturally and all the group leader has to do is to ask the right questions.

Let’s take our machine. Let us say that management, after careful study has said that his machine should be able to do 500 pieces per hour.

The leader says, “OK, here’s the amount we are shooting for. Now we know we are at this level now (250), so what is the goal for this month?”

The group discusses it and decides that they wish to go for 350 this month. The group leader say “Great, what needs to be done to make this happen? Let us each write down three ideas on cards.”

**Now the goal is set and we can let the *mastermind* begin...**