



Managers Guide to Setting SMART Objectives

Guidance for Appraisal Performance Reviews

Introduction – why do we need to set SMART objectives?

This guidance is intended to support appraisers and appraisees when setting objectives at the annual performance review and the six month review.

Objective-setting is an integral part of the appraisal process. SMART is an acronym in common use which describes the key characteristics of effective objectives. If your objectives are **Specific**, **Measurable**, **Achievable**, **Relevant** and **Time-bound**, they will enable you to focus on the aims of the team, service and the organisation as a whole and ensure that efforts are directed towards the achievement of these aims in a timely way. All too often, objectives set during the appraisal process are less than SMART, potentially leading to a lack of focus for the appraisee and difficulties when reviewing achievements at the end of the appraisal period.

Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust's (PHT) Strategy has a set of strategic aims which should guide the work of all services – either in directly delivering outcomes (typically 'frontline services') or in supporting other services to deliver (typically 'back office functions') and these are as follows:

- Deliver safe, high quality patient centred care
- Develop a reputation for excellence in innovation, research and development and education in the top 20% of our peers.
- Become the hospital of choice for general, specialist and selected services.
- Be a hospital whose staff recommend the Trust as a place to work and have treatment
- Develop sufficient financial strengths to adapt to change and invest in the future.

PHT's Strategic Aims are supported by the Clinical Service Centre Business Plans and a range of Corporate Strategies and many service objectives will be drawn directly from these plans. In setting appraisal objectives, appraisers and appraisees should consider the '**golden thread**' that should be traceable from these Trust strategies all the way down to individual objectives.

Writing SMART objectives

A common problem when setting appraisal objectives is focussing on activities, rather than on the outcome or impact of these activities.

SMART objectives focus on what it will look like when the objective is achieved. Sometimes the objective has to be achieved in a particular way and therefore should include the actions that will have to be taken in order to achieve it. However, remember that the objective should focus on the outcome.

SMART



SPECIFIC objectives will be clear and unambiguous. They state clearly what the expected behaviour, achievement or outcome will be in precise terms. This enables you to refer back at the end of the review period and make an objective judgement about whether the objective has been achieved.

Consider - What is the goal? What outcome is needed? Think with the end result in mind... Is it clear and well defined? Is it clear to anyone that has a basic knowledge of the work area?



MEASURABLE objectives enable you to see that progress is being achieved. A measurable objective will usually answer questions such as:

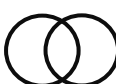
- How much?
- How many?
- How will I know when it is accomplished?

Consider... What is the measurable outcome? Know if the goal is obtainable and how far away completion is. How will you know if you have been successful?



ACHIEVABLE objectives are realistic and attainable. This does not mean that you should not set stretching targets which require a change in behaviour or application of significant effort; easily achievable objectives are not motivating. However, it is equally demotivating to set objectives that are not possible to achieve, so consider the resources and time needed, and the potential limitations outside the control of the individual, team or service.

Consider... How long will it take to achieve this? Is it achievable? Agree with all parties what the goal should be to ensure clarity. Is there availability of resources, knowledge and time? Is the right support in place?



RELEVANT objectives support the team, service, or Clinical Service Centre to deliver on the Trusts priorities and strategic goals. This is where the '**golden thread**' should be visible. Consider how the individual objective supports the achievement of these wider goals. As well as Trust Strategy led aims, teams and services may also have aims and actions in relation to implementing clinical standards and regulations, codes of practice or healthcare policy recommendations in their area of work.

Consider... Does the objective link to the team/department goals? Does the objective support the overall goals of the organisation? Is the objective stretching enough to ensure performance is improved?



TIME-BOUND (Timescale/Timely) objectives have clear dates, with interim milestones if necessary, for achievement. Deadlines are important to focus effort on things that can get lost in day to day activity. Set a date by which the objective should be achieved, and include dates for any interim activities that are important to achieving it.

Consider... What is the date for completing this objective? Is there enough time to achieve the goal or a time limit? How often will it be reviewed? Be aware of allowing too much time which can effect motivation or dilute performance.

Tips on writing objectives

Identify what it is that you want to achieve

- Write down what you want to achieve using a positive statement
- Make it specific
- Identify how you will measure achievement
- Plan the steps you need to achieve it
- Identify a deadline
- Consider how you will measure progress



Consider how you will know when the objective is successfully achieved.

Use action verbs, for example;

- To increase
- To deliver
- To perform
- To identify
- To develop
- To produce
- To implement
- To draft
- To improve
- To ensure
- To complete
- To review
- To analyse
- To present
- To maintain

Avoid woolly phrases and jargon, for example;

- 'Liaise with xxxxx' – why you are liaising with xxxxx? What is it that the liaison will achieve?
- 'Contribute to yyyyy' – why is it important to contribute to yyyyy? What are you hoping to achieve?
- 'Learn about zzzzz' – why are you learning about it? What will you be able to do when you have learned about it?
- 'Continue to do xxxxx' – why do you need to continue with it? What will this achieve?

Use the Personal Development Plan to record development needs, completing a course should not be an objective.

Stick to 5 or 6 key objectives

Don't set too many objectives

Focus on priorities – where energy and effort should be directed – which are important to the achievement of the team, service and Clinical Service Centre action plans. Having too many objectives dilutes their impact and makes it hard for you to prioritise your time. It also makes them less achievable.

Don't just restate the 'day job'

Objectives should be longer term (appraisal cycles typically look at the whole year ahead) and focus on what is new, or needs to be improved or done differently. It should not be a list of tasks, or regurgitation of the job description.

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Examples of SMART Objectives

These are examples of how to write a SMART objective, they do not profess to be technically accurate or appropriate for specific jobs but can be used as a guide to developing your own.

If you have SMART objectives you would like to share, please send them to manld@porthosp.nhs.uk so they can be added to a central repository, and shared as best practice.

Clinical and Non-Clinical Leadership and Management roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Quality	✗ Objective: “Reduce hospital acquired infections”	✓ Objective: “Reduce the number of patients acquiring infections whilst an inpatient, by ensuring that the service complies with hand hygiene and antibiotic prescribing regimens”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Infection control audits demonstrate improved compliance rates comparable to national average ✓ Number of Thrombophlebitis cases reduces to below the national average 	30/12/2016
	✗ Objective: “Analyse Patient Complaints”	✓ Objective: “By the end of February 2017, identify any concerning themes within Patient complaints and engage directly with the ward teams to agree priority changes to be made to improve the overall patient experience”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of patient complaints has reduced to below national average for peers ✓ Patient feedback and priority themes clearly displayed in ward areas ✓ Staff reporting that they feel able to contribute to improvements as reported by the National Staff Survey increased against previous year 	28/02/2017
	✗ Objective: “Review SIRIs and propose learning opportunities”	✓ Objective: “Identify any themes from SIRI’s, review and implement learning opportunities to improve the overall patient experience”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reduction in number of incidents related to previous SIRI’s comparable with national average ✓ Evidence of shared learning and implemented changes to practice as a result. 	28/02/2017

Clinical and Non-Clinical Leadership and Management roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Standards	X Objective: "To reduce delayed discharge of medically fit patients"	✓ Objective: "To reduce the number of medically fit patients experiencing delayed discharge as a result of integrated discharge planning delays by [amount%]"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 100% implementation across all wards of the SAFER Patient Flow Bundle ✓ Number of patients discharged in line with targets of SAFER Patient Flow Bundle for specific ward 	31/03/2017
	X Objective: "Ensure Constitutional Standards are met for Emergency Department performance"	✓ Objective: "To ensure all patients awaiting care or treatment receive appropriate intervention as indicated for their condition in line with NHS Constitutional Standards"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Compliance with the Emergency Department 4-hour standard improves in accordance with agreed trajectory ✓ CQC standards are delivered in line with the PHT CQC Improvement Plan ✓ Improvement in patient feedback/reduction in complaints to [amount]. 	30/12/2016
	X Objective: "Complete the review of the Theatre Utilisation project"	✓ Objective: "Complete the review of the Theatre Utilisation project and present report to Senior Management Team (SMT) with recommendations for actions to achieve efficiency savings, together with estimated financial savings, risk assessments and equality impact analysis"	✓ Report presented to SMT by 30 th September containing recommendations that are clearly outlined to enable SMT to make a decision	30/09/2016
	X Objective: "Work with colleagues in the Outpatient Booking team to achieve service improvements"	✓ Objective: "By the end of March, reduce the average waiting time to have a urologist appointment by streamlining administrative and communication processes with Outpatient Booking Centre colleagues"	✓ Average waiting time for Urologist appointments reduced by [by amount% or to amount weeks]	31/03/2017

Clinical and Non-Clinical Leadership and Management roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Financial Health	<p>✗ Objective: “Reduce Temporary Spend”</p>	<p>✓ Objective: “Reduce temporary workforce spend in [<i>department</i>] by [<i>amount %</i>] by the end of December 2016 and identify alternative substantive workforce roles to ensure a sustainable and affordable workforce model exists; to deliver safe and effective services”</p>	<p>✓ Temporary workforce costs have reduced by [<i>amount %</i>] from August 2016 levels</p> <p>✓ Financially in balance for pay and are meeting Cost Improvement Plan (CIP) target for temporary workforce</p> <p>✓ A clear workforce plan has been developed identifying new role requirements with an implementation plan</p>	31/12/2016
	<p>✗ Objective: “Delivery of CIP Targets”</p>	<p>✓ Objective: “Identify and implement opportunities to ensure the department contributes more than 6% of annual turnover to Cost Improvement Plans (CIP) throughout 2017/2018”</p>	<p>✓ Clear project plans are developed and approved outlining the required actions to ensure delivery of CIP commencing from 1st April 2017</p> <p>✓ Implementation of CIP plans takes place resulting in required savings being achieved in full and on plan</p> <p>✓ All risks associated with potential CIPs are reviewed and mitigated</p>	31/03/2017

Clinical and Non-Clinical Leadership and Management roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Organisational Health	X Objective: "Improve Appraisal and Essential Skills Compliance"	✓ Objective: "Ensure all staff within your team engage in a robust appraisal performance review annually, and have completed all Statutory and Mandatory Training required for their specific role within the mandated timeframe"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Exceed Appraisal Target of 85% for team ✓ Staff are clear on expectations and are supported to perform the duties of their role, including receiving the appropriate personal development ✓ Staff satisfaction regarding quality of objectives as reported by the NSS has increased against previous year ✓ Exceed 85% Essential Skills Compliance Target for service 	31/03/2017
	X Objective: "Improve Staff Engagement"	✓ Objective: "Ensure open lines of communication with all staff using Staff Led Change Methodology to implement changes within the department"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ National Staff Survey 2016 evidences an increase in the number of key findings improving ✓ At least 2 Staff Led Change conversations held to kickstart changes in the department ✓ At least Staff Led Change champions identified, recruited and actively promoting Staff Led Change 	31/03/2017
	X Objective: "Improve Leadership ability"	✓ Objective: "Demonstrate effective leadership behaviours in accordance with the elements of the NHS Healthcare Leadership Model"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HLM self assessment and 360 Feedback process completed, with agreed development plan in place to address any areas of improvement identified 	31/03/2017
	X Objective: "Improve staff health and wellbeing"	✓ Objective: "Support all staff within [Team] will be supported to improve and maintain their health and wellbeing aligned to PHT Wellbeing Policy"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Health and Wellbeing will be discussed at 1:1's and in Appraisals, and other opportunities as appropriate ✓ At least 75% of frontline staff have a flu jab ✓ All staff with sickness absence breaching Trust Bradford Index triggers have an action plan for reducing absence. ✓ Sickness absence rate at [Amount%] or lower by end December 2016 	31/12/2016

Front line roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Standards	✗ Objective: "Join on call rota"	✓ Objective: "By the end of March 2017, ensure you are appropriately skilled and compliant with all aspects of Physiotherapy On-Call Competency Framework"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ You able to participate in the Physiotherapy On-Call rota competently and independently ✓ Competency framework achieved 	31/03/2017
	✗ Objective: "Speed up discharges"	✓ Objective: "Take personal responsibility to ensure patients are safely discharged in accordance with the SAFER Patient Flow Bundle"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of patients safely discharged in line with targets of SAFER Patient Flow Bundle 	31/10/2016
	✗ Objectives: "Desktop Procedures"	✓ Objective: "Develop and implement Desktop Procedures for the recruitment process which supports full compliance with pre employment recruitment checks."	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Efficient desktop procedure is implemented and communicated to recruitment staff. ✓ 100% adherence to desktop procedures by all staff participating in recruitment process. 	31/12/2016

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Organisational Health	✗ Objective: "Increase engagement"	✓ Objective: "Engage in organisational priorities and support and develop less experienced colleagues"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of staff receiving development and support ✓ Number of ideas and opportunities for development and improvements raised 	31/03/2017

Front line roles example objectives

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Quality	X Objective: "Manage Friends and Family Test"	✓ Objective: "Identify and implement innovative ways to increase response rates for Friends and Family Test and develop and implement solutions to address issues highlighted"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Response rate increased to target of [amount] ✓ Action plan developed and implemented to address issues ✓ Improvement in recommendation of PHT as a place to receive care and treatment ratings for Friends and Family Test 	31/12/2016
	X Objective: "Able to administer medicines to patients without supervision"	✓ Objective: "As a registered nurse, to be able to administer medicines to patients without supervision by following correct procedures for drug administration through being aware of the NMC's requirements; Trust guidelines/policies and legal responsibility in the management, checking and administration of controlled drugs within 3 months"	✓ Within 3 months, this will be demonstrated by effective communication with patients ensuring that they are aware of the drugs given and why; accurate documentation on the drugs charts; administering medication via an NG / PEG tube; and by demonstrating the ability to safely and correctly check IV fluids, IV antibiotics and blood transfusions (as the 2 nd nurse – but not to administer IV fluids, IV antibiotics or blood transfusions)"	31/12/2016

	Not a SMART Objective	SMART Objective (Specific, Achievable, Relevant)	Measure of Success (Measurable)	Completion Date (Timescale)
Financial Health	X Objective: "Reduce waste"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Objective: "Identify opportunities within the team to reduce waste which result in a financial saving" ✓ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Number of opportunities raised ✓ Level of financial saving realised 	31/03/2017