

S.M.A.R.T. Formula Resources



Aligning Employee Performance with Agency Strategic and Operational Goals





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Objectives

- 1. Review performance management procedural steps, myths and critical components**
- 2. Learn S.M.A.R.T. Formula acronym and definitions**
- 3. Learn how to use the S.M.A.R.T. Formula to write work outcomes for an individual performance plan**



As shown in the slide above, individual performance plans are designed to directly support the Governor's priorities for the State of Tennessee. Strategic and/or operational goals are developed in each agency, all of which support and directly relate to the overall state priorities. Work outcomes should be written so that individual performance plans align with the accomplishment of the overall agency's strategic/operational goals or the Governor's priorities for the state.

Performance Management Procedural Steps

- 1. Individual performance planning**
- 2. A minimum of 2 interim review discussions during the review cycle**
- 3. Annual performance review**

Individual performance plans are part of the overall performance management process and the first procedural step. S.M.A.R.T. is the formula which guides the development of work outcome statements. Steps of that process are designed to foster ongoing dialogue between the employee and the rater. During the initial discussion, work outcomes written using the S.M.A.R.T. formula are developed and integrated in an overall plan for the employee.

Interim reviews are used to review progress and discuss the employee's current performance. The annual performance review provides the opportunity to rate the employee's success in achieving standards of performance set in the individual performance plan.

Individual Performance Plan Myths

- **The performance plan is the same as the job specification or description**
- **If it isn't on the performance plan, then the employee cannot be held accountable for it**
- **Only 3 work outcomes can be on the performance plan**
- **This S.M.A.R.T. process will eventually go away, and we will go back to writing performance plans like we did before**

Individual performance plans are not the same as a job description. Performance plans relate directly to specific work outcomes established for an individual employee in their specific position. Job descriptions are more broad, reflecting all possible assignments that make up a job class. Job specifications include knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies relevant to the class, special qualifications, and descriptions of general duties common to that job class.

While individual performance plans define the expected standards of performance, general employee performance and behavior issues may be addressed through other means, such as coaching. In some instances, it may be necessary for a supervisor to administer discipline.

Individual performance plans should include 4-6 work outcomes that are critical to successful performance of the job. Work outcomes must be achievable for the employee. The S.M.A.R.T. process is fully endorsed by the executive leadership of the state and incorporated into state statutes.

Critical Components of PM

1. **Using the S.M.A.R.T. Formula is a requirement of the Performance Management Program.**
2. **All performance expectations are to be written to the mid-point of the rating scale. These expectations describe a solid performer. A rating of "Valued" is used to describe performance of a work outcome that meets the expectations. This rating implies that the standards for expected performance of a work outcome are met. There are no major deficiencies in the employee's performance of the work outcome.**
3. **It is the supervisor's responsibility to describe what expectations for a rating above "Valued" might look like.**
4. **Performance plans should have 4-6 work outcome statements.**
5. **Work outcomes should be listed in priority order with most important on top.**
6. **All references to policy driven activities should be removed (i.e. attendance, punctuality, conduct etc.)**

Note that old performance plans often contained work outcomes driven by policy, behavioral or disciplinary issues. These might include things like standards of dress, compliance with time reporting, etc. Performance planning should be restricted to work outcomes that relate directly to the strategic and/or operational goals of the agency or the Governor's priorities. Work outcomes not related to this should be removed. Any issues that arise and are policy or conduct related should be dealt with through coaching or other relevant processes.

Components of an Individual Performance Plan

Work Outcomes – Expected standards of performance- the end results

Action Steps – Potential or possible actions taken to produce results in support of the work outcome

When preparing an individual performance plan, work outcomes should be selected which relate directly to the expected standards of performance for the employee. Each of the critical work outcomes may be supported by action steps which identify potential or key actions necessary to accomplish the work outcomes. Remember that work outcomes must be written using the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measureable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Sensitive) Formula.

Specific

Work Outcomes must specify what the employee needs to achieve.



Prepare and turn in Fiscal Budget Report



Fiscal to-date-budget (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014) report of all budget information by September 30, 2014, and a Fiscal to-date-budget Report of all budget information through May 30, 2014 with a 100% accuracy rate when compared with the financials from the DOHR Fiscal Office to be turned in to the Director by June 15, 2014.

Specific means that an observable action, behavior, or achievement is described. A work outcome should describe the specific work of the employee. In being specific, a work outcome should give someone unfamiliar with the position an idea of what the employee's work entails. Work outcomes are not generic. They must describe a specific work outcome or action which clearly and fully describe what must be accomplished. The red X denotes a work outcome that is not written specific. The green check indicates a work outcome that is specific.

Specific Work Outcomes are...

- **Concrete**
- **Detailed**
- **Focused**
- **Well-defined**
- **Results-based**

Specific answers the questions...

- **What exactly is to be done, with and for whom?**
- **What strategies will be used?**
- **Is it well understood?**
- **Is it clear what needs to happen?**
- **Will it lead to the desired result?**

Listed above are questions that one can ask to determine if the work outcome is indeed specific.

Measurable

Work Outcomes need to be measurable to determine if it has been met.



Provide professional training.



By September 30, 2014, demonstrate advanced facilitation skills based on best practices and industry standards to promote excellence in statewide learning and development as evidenced by rubric, manager observation and customer check list.

A work outcome must be measurable so that the degree of progress can be determined. It is important to have measures that will encourage and motivate and will allow one to determine when the work outcome has been achieved or not. The red X denotes a work outcome that is not measurable. The green check indicates a work outcome that is measurable.

Measurable Work Outcomes are...

- **Quantifiable**
- **Easily seen or visible**
- **Tangible**

Measurable answers the questions..

- **How will you know it is completed?**
- **Is there a reliable system in place to measure progress?**
- **How much?**
- **How many?**

Above are questions to consider when determining if a work outcome is measurable.

Tools for Measurement

- **Visual Observation**
- **Logs or notes kept by supervisor**
- **Written activity or work logs kept by employee**
- **Discussions with employees/quarterly meetings**
- **User or customer feedback**
- **Written progress or productivity reports**

Tools for measurement are not limited by reports or discussions. Statistical reports, measurements of output based on quantities produced, or any other number of means may be used to measure success. The key element is that a measurement directly determines the degree of success in completing a work outcome.

Achievable

Work Outcomes must be achievable and be able to be met with the available resources.



Effective December 1, 2013 track training outcomes for all employees in the state of Tennessee both soft skill and technical skill training by January 2014.



By September 30, 2014, provide a written report to the Director of Learning and Talent Development, which measures the impact of training on employees statewide using data from participant pre and post test, customer satisfaction surveys, and observation.

The work outcome must be capable of being accomplished based on the skills, knowledge and resources available. The performance measure may be challenging, but not so much so as to cause frustration. All measures should be written to the mid-point of the rating scale, meaning measures should be achievable at the level it takes to be fully successful in the position. The red X denotes a work outcome that is not achievable. The green check indicates an achievable work outcome.

Achievable Work Outcomes are...

- Capable of being accomplished
- Attainable within the timeframe given
- Realistic employee expectations

Achievable answers the questions...

- **Can it be met within the proposed timeframe?**
- **Are the limitations and constraints understood?**
- **Can it be met with the available resources?**
- **Is it possible?**

Above are questions that one may ask to determine if the work outcome is achievable.

Relevant

Work Outcomes must relate to the overall strategic and/or operational goals of the agency or the Governor's priorities and the specific job the employee is required to perform.



Increase customer base.



Beginning November 1, 2013 secure a minimum of three new customer groups and four expanded business projects from current customers for a minimum of \$150,000 revenue, which accounts for ¼ of the agency budget by September 30, 2014.

Work outcomes not directly related to the employee's specific job function should not be included. The red X is an indication of a work outcome that is not relevant. Please note that relevance is determined by examining the key responsibilities of the job and checking for alignment with the agency's strategic and operational goals.

Relevant Work Outcomes are...

- **Critical to the success of the job**
- **Aligned with the strategic and/or operational goals of the agency or the Governor's priorities**

Relevant Answers the Questions...

- **Can the employee make an impact on the situation?**
- **Does the employee have the knowledge, authority and ability to accomplish the work outcome?**
- **Does it align with the agency's strategic and/or operational goals or the Governor's priorities?**

Above are questions that one may ask to determine if the work outcome is achievable.

Time Sensitive

Work Outcomes must have a time limit for completion.



Demonstrate project management skills.



Act as project lead on one leadership initiative per quarter beginning October 1, 2013 and ending August 30th 2014. Leadership Initiatives will be determined by the Director of Learning & Talent Development. A Leadership Initiative Outcome Report should be submitted to the Director of Learning and Talent Development one week after the completion of each of the initiatives to determine if project benchmarks were achieved.

Work outcomes should have a begin date and an end date. Please note that the begin date for a work outcome can be the actual start of the performance management cycle. Work outcomes may also have a specified begin date that starts later in the performance management cycle. Check points for review may also be included. Agreed timeframes create the necessary urgency and prompt action. The red X is an example of a work outcome that does not meet the time sensitive criteria. The green check is an example of a work outcome that is time sensitive.

Time Sensitive Work Outcomes are...

- **Based on reasonable timelines**
- **Grounded in start dates and end dates**

Time Sensitive answers the questions...

- **Is the start and finish date/time for the work outcome clearly set?**
- **Is the set date/time within the capacity of those to whom the work outcome is assigned?**
- **Is the date/time for accomplishment reasonable?**

Above are questions to help determine if a work outcome meets the time sensitive criteria.

S.M.A.R.T. Formula Planning Tool

"There's a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when circumstance permits. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results."

– Unknown

| Specific | Measurable | Achievable | Relevant | Time Sensitive |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Work outcomes should specify what they need to achieve. | The work outcomes need to be able to be measured as to whether or not they have been met. | The work outcomes must be able to be met with the resources available. | The work outcomes are important to the agency's goals and the specific job function. | The work outcomes need to have a time limit for completion. |
| Specific means the work outcome is concrete, detailed, focused and well defined. It must be straightforward and emphasize action and the required outcome. The work outcome must communicate what you want to see happen. | A work outcomes must be measurable so that its progress can be determined. It's important to have measures that will encourage and motivate and will allow one to determine when the work outcome has been achieved or not. | The work outcomes must be capable of being accomplished based on the skills, knowledge and resources available. The work outcome can be challenging, but not so much so as to cause frustration. | The work outcomes must relate to the overall agency strategic and/or operational goals. | Work outcomes should have a begin date and an end date. Please note that the begin date for a work outcome can be the actual start of the performance management cycle. Agreed timeframes create the necessary urgency and prompts action. |
| <p>What exactly is to be done, with and for whom?</p> <p>What strategies will be used?</p> <p>Is the work outcome well understood?</p> <p>Is the work outcome described with action verbs?</p> <p>Is it clear who is involved?</p> <p>Is it clear where this will happen?</p> <p>Is it clear what needs to happen?</p> <p>Is the outcome clear?</p> <p>Will this work outcome lead to the desired results?</p> | <p>How will it be known the work outcome has been achieved or not?</p> <p>Is there a reliable system in place to measure progress towards the achievement of the work outcome?</p> <p>How much?</p> <p>How many?</p> | <p>Can the work outcome be met within the proposed timeframe?</p> <p>Are the limitations and constraints understood?</p> <p>Can the work outcome be met with the available resources?</p> <p>Is the work outcome possible?</p> | <p>Can the people with whom the work outcome is set make an impact on the situation?</p> <p>Do those tasked with the work outcome have the necessary knowledge, authority and skill to accomplish the work outcome?</p> <p>Will this work outcome help the agency reach its strategic and/or operational goals.</p> | <p>Is the start and finish date/time for the work outcome clearly set?</p> <p>Is the set date/time within the capacity of those to whom the work outcome is assigned?</p> <p>Is the date/time for accomplishment reasonable?</p> |



The S.M.A.R.T Formula Planning Tool is a resource that you can print off to use to assist you in writing work outcomes and action steps for the individual performance plan. It provides a snapshot of each component of the S.M.A.R.T. acronym.

Skills Practice

Practice rewriting Examples #1 and #2 into work outcomes and action steps using the S.M.A.R.T. formula.

One suggested solution follows each example. Suggested solutions do not represent the only answer.

Example #1

***Create a year end report
and turn it in to the Director.***

Example #1

S.M.A.R.T.

Work Outcome

- Create a 6 month report with information gathered for the second half of the fiscal year Jan/1 /2014 – 6/30/2014 using the SLS Learning Management Database regarding the return on investment of all Learning and Development programs to be turned in to the Chief Learning Officer by July 30, 2014.

Action Steps

- Compile data in an Excel spread sheet indicating the name of workshop, unique individuals trained, date trained, and agency representation by July 30, 2014 to support the report.
- Create an Excel spreadsheet that indicates total training hours facilitated, total hours facilitated by individual SLS staff, and number of total training hours per individual workshop delivered for the second half of the fiscal year by July 30, 2014.
- Conduct data analysis of customer satisfaction with services and products offered by SLS using information from customer satisfaction surveys for each learning and development offering and create a summary of the analysis by July 30, 2014.

Example #2

Increase customer base.

Example #2

S.M.A.R.T.

Work Outcome:

Beginning November 1, 2013 secure a minimum of three new customer groups and four expanded business projects from current customers for a minimum of \$150,000 revenue, which accounts for ¼ of the agency budget by September 30, 2014.

Action Steps:

- Submit a report using SLS form 6791, which indicates revenue generated by “existing business customers” representing the previous month’s activity on the first Friday of each month by the end of business.
- Plan and deliver two Brown Bag Lunch and Learn Workshops for HROs and/or agency trainers to communicate product updates, revisions and future products to promote business and generate revenue. Agendas and sign in sheets for the workshops should be submitted to the Chief Learning Officer by 12:00 pm on the day following the workshop.
- Submit a written report to the Chief Learning Officer recommending revisions to the website based on current curricula offered to customers on the last day of each month by the end of business.
- Schedule and conduct a minimum of three new customer contact meetings per month to promote business and generate revenue. Provide a list of new customers generated and potential customers with contact information to the Chief Learning Officer two days after the meeting by the end of business.

In Summary

- Individual performance plans are the core of Performance Management Program.
- Individual performance plans should support the agency's strategic and/or operational goals or the Governor's priorities
- Work outcomes should be specific to critical outcomes for the individual employee
- Individual performance plans should have 4-6 work outcome statements
- All work outcomes must be written using the S.M.A.R.T. (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time Sensitive) Formula

Great Job!

**Please direct questions
regarding how to write work
outcomes using the
S.M.A.R.T. Formula to
sarah.e.scott@tn.gov**