



DPMAP: 21st Century Performance Management

IMCOM Update - #14

DPMAP: Writing SMART Standards - “T”

Standards should be written using the SMART criteria, providing the framework for developing effective results and expectations.

In order to help you remember the criteria for an effective performance standard, we will utilize the acronym SMART, where the letters S-M-A-R-T have a particular meaning. Not every performance standard has to have a quantitative standard assigned to it. Whenever possible, supervisors should include specific deadlines, time limitations, budget restrictions, or other standards for quality, quantity, timeliness, or cost-effectiveness.

While not every performance standard lends itself to utilizing all five aspects of the SMART criteria, supervisors should strive to include as many of the SMART elements as possible.

Let's take them one at a time...

“T” is for “Timely.” When will the goal start, or when will it be completed?

If possible, standards should outline a specific time frame. For some physical conditions, this may be a number of months; for some operational performance standards, results can be tracked daily.

Standards should not be written to reflect assignments or goals that are longer than the performance appraisal cycle. Likewise, a performance standard should not be for less than 90 days in duration. If a multiple-phase project is being evaluated, it is important to name the specific outcome that is expected for the current performance appraisal cycle.

The timeframe associated with each performance standard needs to be understood and communicated clearly so that expectations for results are understood and acceptable.

The performance element should specify a timeframe associated with production of the product or service. Such timeframes help clarify performance expectations and ensure the work gets done in a timely manner. Timeframes can be within a certain period of time or by a certain date and must be within the performance appraisal cycle.

Until next time.....Stay Tuned and Stay Positive!