Guidance on SMART Goal Setting

1. **Specific**
   There's no point setting vague goals that don't achieve anything specific. Research by the creators of goal setting theory, Locke & Latham, found that in 90% of studies conducted, specific and challenging goals lead to higher performance than when people were set either easy goals, "do your best" goals or no goals at all. It's important for both you and your employees to have clear and established aims, to avoid potentially setting goals so broad that they are overwhelming and therefore too difficult to set into action.

2. **Measurable**
   Once you have a specific goal pinned down, it's important to be able to measure the success or completion of the goal. This doesn't have to be in the traditional sense, like on a numeric scale or a statistic, it just must be measurable in some sense, so that it is clear when you have reached or are close to reaching your goal. This is a great way to keep track of progress in the workplace, for both you as a manager and your team members: if the goal is to reach a certain number of followers on Twitter, for example, having a measurable goal in the form of a number is a sure-fire way of measuring and independently keeping track of progress.

3. **Assignable**
   A SMART goal must be assignable to someone be it yourself, your team, or individual team members. If you decide you want to achieve something as a team it is important that someone is responsible for tracking progress, implementing action steps, and keeping the team motivated towards reaching this goal.

4. **Relevant**
   It is essential that any goals set for teams or individuals are relevant to company-wide aims. Of course, goal-completion is important and having goals met or worked towards is the overall idea when setting them, but this is only beneficial when the goals are productive in the workplace environment and will contribute to company success in some way. As a manager, it is particularly important that you help your employees link their goals back to the wider team and company-wide goals. One of the best ways to motivate your employees is to make sure they know how their work is contributing to the bigger picture.

5. **Timely**
   Goals must be time related. It's not productive to set a deadline too far in the future for a simple task, or an unrealistically short deadline for something complex and time-consuming. This common pitfall can be incredibly demotivating for staff. They're either left with an abundance of time in which they are not pushing themselves, or left feeling stressed and demotivated when they fail to complete goals in the timeframe provided. The same applies in a management position. Ensure that, whether goals are for yourself, or involve others, the appropriate time frame is provided so that neither you nor your team members are left feeling discouraged.

The following are a few examples of some SMART goals you can set in the workplace, outlining how they meet the above criteria:

S. *Provide more growth and learning opportunities to each member of my team*

M. *Give feedback to each member at least 2 times per month*

A. *Feedback should come from manager*

R. *Improves team communication and feedback culture*

T. *Provided before the end of the next quarter*

S. *Have customers complete satisfaction rating surveys at the beginning of their contract and again after two quarters*

M. Increase customer satisfaction by 15% over the next two quarters

A. *Customer success team to analyze and report improvements every two weeks*

R. *Become well-known as a company for our focus on customer satisfaction*

T. *The following 2 quarters*