Introduction

Teams need goals to focus energy, prioritize resources, and break complex tasks into manageable parts. But teams rarely set practical or well-aligned goals, thus wasting their time and resources. To help your team stay on track, use their time efficiently, and feel more motivated by their short-term accomplishment, focus on goal setting.

Goal Alignment

Every goal should be one that supports a higher level, longer-term or more strategic goal or, alternatively, some aspect of the organization's vision. Your team should only be working on goals that are directly tied to an organizational imperative. If it cannot align with such imperative, then (1) the organization's goals may need to be revisited or (2) the team needs to change its focus or disband.

SMART Goals

- S—Simple: Goals need to be clear and easily understood.
- M—Measurable: Goals should be measurable in some quantitative or qualitative way.
- A—Achievable: Goals should be within the scope and purview of the team.
- R—Realistic: Goals should be challenging but realistic to accomplish.
- T—Time Bounded: Goals should have a deadline, a time line, or a time frame.

FUZZY Goals

Vague, ambiguous, or otherwise "fuzzy" goals should be turned into a SMART goals or eliminated. Use the following technique to convert or eliminate fuzzy goals.

1. Write down the fuzzy goal.
2. Ask the team to **describe what they would be observing** if the fuzzy goal was satisfactorily accomplished, and capture these observable descriptions.
3. If any of these are still fuzzy, ask the same question to break this element down even further into observable descriptions.
4. Turn all of the new observable aspects of the original fuzzy goal into individual SMART goals, thus converting fuzzy goals into observable SMART goals.