

Set Your Objective!

NEW EDITION

FACTSHEET

Establish **SMART** objectives - and put them to the test. Great fun and reveals common failings - every time.

- 75 minutes + debrief**
- 3-24** (up to 4 teams with 3-6 per team)
- For staff at any level**
- No computer required**
- 395 ex VAT**



Learning objectives

- Allows for group decision-making on setting objectives
- Highlights the need to have realistic, achievable objectives
- Illustrates the importance of time frames - how long will this task take?
- Allows groups to prioritise tasks according to urgency and importance
- Tests teams' ability to work together under pressure

About the activity

This two-part activity is about time management, setting objectives and teamwork. Participants represent management teams and 'today' they have a limited amount of time to complete a number of tasks. In Part 1 of the activity they set their objectives by deciding which tasks to take on and in Part 2 they actually do their chosen tasks. Will they achieve their chosen objectives?

The tasks, eight in all, vary in degree of urgency and difficulty - and the type of skills required. Each carries a point score to reflect this (although teams are not told to amass points. It's there as a bit of a distraction - a 'red-herring'). Set Your Objective is about deciding which tasks are key and getting them done efficiently, successfully, on time - and not being distracted from this objective. Teams need to realise that points don't help, although they don't always!

So which *are* the key tasks and which of those can be realistically achieved in the allotted time? Teams have 35-40 minutes to study the tasks (issued on Task-cards), decide which to tackle and submit their plan on a Contract Sheet. The cards give only outline details, the full details are issued on Data-cards in Part 2, the Action Phase. So teams cannot actually start any tasks until Part 2.

The brief also details two other tasks. A *Main Task* which teams *must* complete - it's in their brief and involves making a tower from the artstraws. The second is an *Unexpected Task* which simulates the unexpected events that inevitably get in the way of achieving objectives. Did teams leave enough leeway in their planning?

The Action Phase lasts 25 minutes. Trying to do *ALL* the tasks will result in failure, but just how many tasks, and which ones, should teams attempt? They need to set *SMART* objectives!

Pack contents

- Trainer's Notes
- Team Folder containing a brief & eight task-cards
- Set of eight data-cards
- Score sheet
- Contract sheet
- Unexpected task
- Handout: Team review
- Artstraws
- Resources: A4 card, rulers, scissors, sticky-tape, coloured pens.

Ideally suited to

Any course on time management, prioritising and setting SMART objectives.

SMART objectives are:

- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Achievable**
- **Relevant**
- **Time-framed**

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Customer reviews

” We use Set Your Objective! on our ILM 2 programme so that delegates can learn how to *plan* and *monitor* work. It *mirrors real life* with priority tasks that have to be completed, but tasks that look easier and more fun often take up more time than planned. Will they allocate the right tasks to the right people, will they monitor progress against the plan, what about Plan B if the *unexpected* happens. They *learn*, the hard way, but for you the trainer- everything you need is provided by Northgate!

Neil Porter, Training Specialist, Supervisory Development, BAPCO, Bahrain

” Love Set Your Objective!. *Works 100% every time. Excellent!*

Martin Clarke, Director, Inspire Change



Trainer's role (full guidance supplied in Trainer's Notes)

- Divide participants into teams (up to four teams per session).
- Introduce the activity and issue a Team Folder to each team. Allow 40 minutes, the Planning Phase, to decide which tasks to do.
- After 40 minutes, collect Teams' Contract Sheet and issue Data-cards relevant to those tasks that each team has chosen.
- Begin the 25-minute Action Phase. 15 minutes in, issue the Unexpected Task.
- At the end, check each team's Main Task. Did they achieve that objective? Use use a separate Record Sheet for each team.
- Lead a Debrief on team experiences and key lessons about planning, time management and setting objectives.
- Point out that the activity is about setting SMART objectives, not scoring points. Did the points distract people or cause them to make poor choices?
- Link the lessons to the workplace and to how team members can improve their own performance at work.

Northgate says...

It's all too easy to rush into "doing something" rather than taking the time to "take stock". Yes, there's things to get on with and time is short, but look before you leap! It's a great lesson - along with many other lessons - you'll get from **Set Your Objective!**

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