

Designing Goals and Objectives

“Begin with the end in mind” – Steven R. Covey

Amanda McCarty & John W. Moran - 2024

Performance management is the monitoring of meaningful initiatives and strategies that demonstrate agency value and outcomes. The purpose of measuring is not only to know how the organization is performing - but to enable it to perform better.

The information within a PM System should be related to the performance of the agency. When considering goals for the PM System, include goals that are within the agency or program’s control. The PM System summarizes and reports on what the agency determines to be top priority. This work requires critical choices about what will be tracked. Everything that an agency does should not be included in the PM System. It would make the system too overwhelming to update and use. It is important to focus on measuring meaningful impact and system changes, as well as changes to population health outcomes, as a result of programs and services. While it is essential to measure progress and change throughout the health department, not all information should be included in the PM System. Just because programs, initiatives, and activities are not listed in the PM System does not mean they are not important.

For each goal statement, an agency may want to monitor three to five objectives that, if met, will result in a high likelihood of positively influencing the goal.

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GOAL

A goal is an abstract and general umbrella statement, under which specific objectives can be clustered.

A goal is an overarching principle that guides decision making.

OBJECTIVE

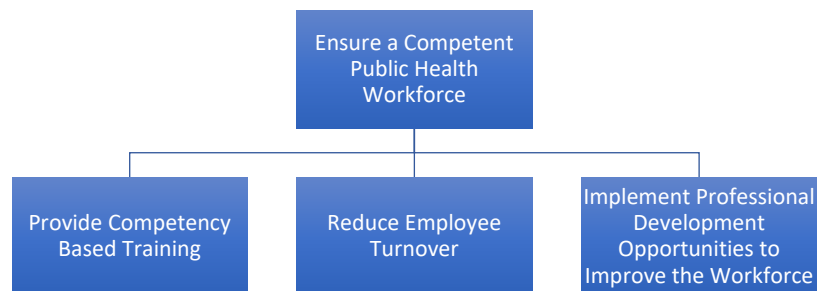
Objectives are statements that describe—in precise, measurable, and obtainable terms—defined and desired outcomes.

- The measurable component of an objective can be described in the goal, frequency, and target date of the performance measure.

Objectives – combined with the measures - are specific, measurable steps that can be taken to meet the goal. When paired with the measures, objectives should make clear **who** will do **what** by **when** and by **how much**.

Goals are broad	Objectives are narrow
Goals are general intentions	Objectives are precise
Goals are intangible	Objectives are tangible
Goals are abstract	Objectives are concrete
Goals are generally difficult to measure	Objectives are measurable

EXAMPLE GOAL & SUPPORTING OBJECTIVE



Example action words used to develop objectives:

- Ensure
- Collect
- Construct
- Design
- Develop
- Manage
- Organize
- Prepare
- Increase
- Implement
- Reduce

PM STANDARDS AND MEASURES

Performance Standards: Organizational or system expectations to improve public health practices based on internal or external goals or benchmarks

Performance Measures: Clearly defined indicators for collecting data to assess achievement of standards

Reporting of Progress: Documenting and analyzing results vs. expectations and communicating such information as feedback to guide future performance improvement decisions

Quality Improvement: A process to manage change and improve performance in public health policies, programs, or infrastructure based on standards, data, and reports

DESIGNING MEASURES

Goal	
Objective	
Measure:	
Where are we going to get the data?	
How are we going to get the data?	
What is the data source?	
What is the data frequency?	
Numerator/Denominator	
Target	
Type : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Capacity (related to ability to deliver public health services) – Process (e.g., timeliness, cost effectiveness, etc.) – Outcome (e.g., program impact, effectiveness, etc.) – Output (e.g., services provided, customers served, etc.) 	
Rationale: Does this measure assess achievement of the objective?	

EXAMPLE OF GOAL, SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES & ASSOCIATED MEASURES

