

## Setting Goals

Once you've identified your interests, priorities, strengths and weaknesses-you know who you are. What are your next steps? To manage your career, you have to know where you want to go and have a plan to get there. That means setting some goals.

There are several different kinds of goals. You can set goals that:

- lead to personal growth
- enrich your current job until new opportunities arise
- prepare you for promotion
- help you make a lateral move

If you don't have a clear sense of which direction your career should take, you can set exploratory goals. Exploratory goals can take the form of internships, inter-unit assignments, cross training, or simply networking with people in other units.

Here are some general guidelines to use when setting your goals:

- Develop goals with different time spans: three months, one year, five years
- Be as specific as possible
- Communicate your goals to those who can help you reach them
- Let your goals be flexible; change them when your circumstances change
- Plan short-range, mini-goals that build on each other and help you reach your long-term goals
- Keep motivated; this will help you power your way to your goals and keep working at them

Make sure your goals are clear, well defined and carefully spelled out. Review your goals and ask yourself the following questions:

- Is your goal **clear**? Does it express a clear, specific idea of what you want to do?
- Is your goal **realistic**? Do you have the confidence to accomplish it?
- Is your goal **achievable**? Do you have the skills, abilities and time to attain the goal?
- Is your goal **measurable**? What result in time, money and/or quality are you aiming for?
- Are you **committed** to obtaining your goal? What are you willing to change to make the goal a reality?
- Have you solicited the **support** you need from your supervisor, family members and teammates?

An important next step is to continuously evaluate your effort.