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**Media and communication studies**

**GST 122 English assignment**

Goal setting involves the development of an action plan designed to motivate and guide a person or group toward a goal. Goal setting can be guided by goal-setting criteria (or rules) such as SMART criteria. Goal setting is a major component of personal-development and management literature.

Studies by Edwin A. Locke and his colleagues have shown that more specific and ambitious goals lead to more performance improvement than easy or general goals. The goals should be specific, time constrained and difficult. Difficult goals should be set ideally at the 90th percentile of performance assuming that motivation and not ability is limiting attainment of that level of performance. As long as the person accepts the goal, has the ability to attain it, and does not have conflicting goals, there is a positive linear relationship between goal difficulty and task performance.

The theory states that the simplest most direct motivational explanation of why some people perform better than others is because they have different performance goals. The essence of the theory is fourfold. First, difficult specific goals lead to significantly higher performance than easy goals, no goals, or even the setting of an abstract goal such as urging people to do their best. Second, holding ability constant, as this is a theory of motivation, and given that there is goal commitment, the higher the goal the higher the performance. Third, variables such as praise, feedback, or the involvement of people in decision-making only influences behavior to the extent that it leads to the setting of and commitment to a specific difficult goal. Fourth, goal-setting, in addition to affecting the three mechanisms of motivation, namely, choice, effort, and persistence, can also have a cognitive benefit. It can influence choice, effort, and persistence to discover ways to attain the goal.

People perform better when they are committed to achieving certain goals. Through an understanding of the effect of goal setting on individual performance, organizations are able to use goal setting to benefit organizational performance. In addition, another aspect that goes with goal commitment is also goal acceptance. This is an individuals willingness to pursue their specific goal. Locke and Latham (2002) have indicated three moderators that indicate goal setting success:

The importance of the expected outcomes of goal attainment,

Self-efficacy: one’s belief that they are able to achieve the goals,

Commitment to others: promises or engagements to others can strongly improve commitment.

Expanding the three from above, the level of commitment is influenced by external factors. Such as the person assigning the goal, setting the standard for the person to achieve/perform. This influences the level of commitment by how compliant the individual is with the one assigning the goal. An external factor can also be the role models of the individual. For example, say an individual looks up to their manager and cares about his or her opinion, the individual is more likely to listen to goal-setting strategies from that individual, and ultimately become more committed to their desired goal.

Internal factors can derive from their participation level in the work to achieve the goal. What they expect from themselves can either flourish their success, or destroy it. Also, the individual may want to appear superior to their peers or competitors. They want to achieve the goal the best and be known for it. The self-reward of accomplishing a goal, is usually one of the main keys that keep individuals committed. For example, if an individual was working toward becoming the president of their company, if they achieve their goal, they could reward themselves with something of importance to them.

Another route individuals can take to set their goals is to follow (STD) that is, setting their goals to be Specific, Time-bound, and difficult. Specifically, an individuals goal should be set at the 90th percentile of difficulty.

Common personal goals include losing weight, achieving good grades, and saving money. The strategy for goal setting begins with the big picture; taking a look at the big picture before breaking it into smaller components allows one to focus on the primary goal. Once the main goal is set, breaking it up into smaller, more achievable components helps in the planning portion of setting the goal. These smaller, more obtainable objectives promote self-esteem and provide instant feedback to keep the individual on task.

Time management is the practice of systematically finishing tasks assigned by superiors or one’s self in an efficient and timely manner. Time management steps require identifying the objective and laying out a plan that maximizes efficiency and execution of the objective. There are many useful mobile apps that help with personal goal setting; some of the categories include budgeting, wellness, calendar and productivity apps.

The book What They Don’t Teach You in the Harvard Business School is known for citing a study which found that written goals have a significant effect on financial success, but in 1996 Fast Company determined that this study did not occur. In 2015, a research study on goals found those who wrote them down accomplished them at a significantly higher rate than those who did not.