GOAL-A-RAMA 1

Focus: Goal setting

Time: 10 minutes

Objectives:

1. Learn the importance of setting goals
2. Appreciate how goals influence performance and achievement
3. Understand the difference between vague and specifically defined goals

Materials needed:

- Masking tape
- Small boxes, containers, or bowls
- Small candies, pennies, or tokens

Introduction:
Developing goals defines individual and group purposes. When goals are defined, the future is outlined, compelling us to move forward. Goals also provide direction for evaluation of resource allocation. The absence of goals can place a department in peril.

Directions:

1. Make a long line on the floor with the masking tape, and place several bowls on one side of the line, spaced two or three feet apart from each other, about five feet from the line (adjust the distance to make the task somewhat challenging).
2. Have some participants stand in a row on the other side of the line and give them some candies, tokens, or pennies to toss into the bowls.
3. Instruct them exactly as follows: “Here are some pennies. There are the bowls.” Now see how many pennies they get into the bowls over the next minute. Record that number on a flipchart or whiteboard for everyone to see. If they ask for more specific instructions, do not give any other instructions other than general comments such as, “Just do whatever seems appropriate.” OR “That sounds good.”
4. After everyone has tossed the pennies, empty the bowls and give people more pennies. Now instruct them as follows: “Allow me to define your goal a bit more clearly. See if you can throw some pennies into the bows. Ready, begin.” After one minute has passed, stop throwing, and count the number of pennies in the bowls. Record the number.
5. Empty the bowls and give people more pennies. This time say: “You just threw [say the number] pennies into the bowls. Your goal now is to throw as many pennies as possible into each bowl, and make sure you throw more pennies into the bowls than you did last time.” After a minute, stop throwing and count the pennies in the bowls. Record the number.
6. Lead a discussion about the importance of goal setting, and the advantage of defining specific goals rather than vague ones.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Which instructions worked better? Why?
2. How is performance affected when no goals are stated? When goals are vague? When goals are specific?
3. How does this apply to our department goals? Are they vague? Specific enough?
4. How might our department goals be refined to improve performance?