

# Set PUSH goals to spur excellence

Setting goals is more art than science. You want people to give full effort to attain ambitious goals without making the targets so outlandish that employees lose hope.

To strike that balance, think in terms of PUSH goals: passionate, urgent, specific, hairy.

✓ **Passionate** goals mean something special to you and the organization. You communicate these goals with such enthusiasm that people cannot wait to pursue them.

To convey passion, emphasize how achieving the goal will impact your organization.

✓ **Urgent** goals come with a ticking clock. There's no time for dallying—every hour counts.

To underscore urgency, take long-term goals and break them down into short-term objectives. For instance, translate annual performance measures into monthly or quarterly outputs.

✓ **Specific** goals are easy to track and often quantifiable. There's no ambiguity about what matters most and how you intend to measure it.

Alert employees of the numbers you're watching and the metrics you value most.

✓ **Hairy** goals are tough and challenging to achieve. They require employees to venture outside their comfort zone and expand their skills.

Urging a hard-driving salesperson to boost sales is not especially hairy—it's par for the course. But if you set a goal for a top producer to train a laggard to excel, that creates a fresh challenge and gives superior contributors a chance to develop in new directions.

— Adapted from *Manager 3.0*, Brad Karsh and Courtney Templin, AMACOM.