

Four ways to use goal-setting to improve language learning within your team

How can you use goal-setting to reinforce a culture of learning in your organization, and why should progress-based language learning be on your 2024 roadmap?

Setting clearly defined goals and milestones within a personalized training and development plan is a tried-and-tested way to keep employees engaged and motivated. Goal-setting maintains a consistent, measurable learning progress – especially when it comes to developing language skills.

A positive culture of learning is one where everyone understands the level they are currently at in their learning journey, and where they're heading next.

By setting goals, creating positive feedback loops and celebrating milestones within your employees' language-learning journeys, you'll ensure that the level of English proficiency in your team is on a steady upward trajectory. This will lead to more productivity, better collaboration, improved employee retention, and a wealth of other benefits that come from great communication skills.



Improved English language skills unlock and promote confidence, communication and collaboration throughout your organization, and goal-setting can fast-track your skills-based learning. With realistic and achievable goals firmly embedded in your culture of learning, you'll set your employees on the course for success and reinforce the overall productivity of your team.

Pearson's Skills Outlook 2022 report highlighted that communication is one of the most powerful and transferable skills for business success. We know that improving your team's English skills is a shortcut to better communication and collaboration across a multitude of contexts – from teamwork through to problem-solving.

Developing and consolidating language skills has the most impact when achievable and measurable goals are in place. Defined goals make monitoring and evaluating the ongoing development of your team more manageable, while employees feel motivated by a sense of ongoing progress, celebrating milestones reached along the way.

Professional Development Reviews (PDRs) are a good place to start when it comes to implementing learning goals with your employees, but progress should be monitored all year round to stay on track and maintain a consistent feedback loop.

Let's explore how to implement goal-setting within your team's English language learning.

Four ways to proactively use year-round goal-setting to improve language learning and communication within your team:

1 Decide and communicate your goal-setting structure

Goals must be structured well, and that can look different from organization to organization, so consider how goal-setting is consistently structured and implemented across your team.

McKinsey recommends a **3X3X3 approach** where three goals are set over a three-month period, with three other people nominated to provide support and accountability. A more widely known technique is the **SMART goal** – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

A less commonly known framework is a **PACT goal** (Purposeful, Actionable, Continuous and Trackable) championed by the **National Society of Leadership and Success**. Whichever model you adopt, make sure it's communicated well across the team and used consistently to avoid confusion.

2 Make use of technology

With a wealth of online language training apps and software available, technology offers creative ways to support employees in developing their language skills against defined goals. It's important that the software is user-friendly and interactive, and that it suits a variety of learning styles to maximize adoption.

Choose a flexible language-learning solution that has been designed to enable progressive, self-led learning within bite-sized modules. You can use a resource like **Mondly by Pearson** as a foundation for setting a series of learning goals with employees so that they have clarity on the different stages of their learning journey.

3 Monitor and measure

Learning against defined objectives is an ongoing process that should be constantly monitored and evaluated. When it comes to language learning, it's important that every employee is learning against the same benchmarks and that goals feel within reach. Use an established language assessment tool to understand current language skill levels, like **Versant by Pearson**, and then set realistic, yet progressive goals.

Language proficiency can be measured using **Pearson's Global Scale of English (GSE)**, which gives employees (and their managers) total confidence in their skill level by pinpointing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills on a 10–90 scale.

4 Always celebrate success

If a goal is achieved but not acknowledged then there's a risk that the employee could become demotivated.

The critical factor for successful goals-based learning is to ensure that progress is celebrated and employees are given due credit when they achieve a defined goal. Whether it's a mention in a team meeting, a certificate, or even a performance-based bonus or promotion, always make sure the employee knows that their efforts have been recognized. Achievements should always be recorded and used to inform future goals.

The HR professional's goal-setting checklist

- ✓ Decide and communicate your goal-setting structure
- ✓ Choose the right technology to support your aims
- ✓ Implement an ongoing way to monitor and measure progress
- ✓ Celebrate success

Boost your team's language learning development with **Mondly by Pearson** and empower your team's progress.