



MONARCH MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE

Open Course Network · Micro-Course 17

COURSE PROSPECTUS

Setting Goals That Drive Performance

A two-week, applied micro-course on Goal-Setting Theory — a practical method for turning a vague aim into a specific, challenging goal that is the right type for the task, believed reachable, genuinely committed to, and guarded against its own side-effects, worked on one real goal you carry all the way through.

2 wks

Two weekly modules

12

Sections

70%

To pass · unlimited attempts

Monarch Management Institute

UGSM-Monarch Business School Switzerland · umonarch.ch/MMI

Online Management Education for Working Professionals

At a glance

Duration	2 weeks — two weekly modules of six sections
Study time	≈ 14 directed hours (5–8 per week)
Level	Introductory-intermediate; no prior study of motivation theory required · no prerequisites
Assessment	2 auto-graded scenario assessments · 70% to pass · unlimited attempts
Award	Monarch-endorsed Certificate of Knowledge
Format	Fully online, self-directed

What you will gain

By the end of this course you will be able to design and defend a complete goal that improves motivation and performance while guarding against the side-effects of goals.

And what it counts toward

You earn the Monarch-endorsed Certificate of Knowledge and 2 MMI-Credits. MMI-Credits carry toward MMI program progression (PD-001).

What this course is

Setting Goals That Drive Performance is a fully online, self-directed micro-course on how to set a goal that actually moves performance. Most managers reach for encouragement instead of direction — "do your best", "really focus this quarter" — and it feels like leadership while changing almost nothing, because "your best" is a standard almost any effort can satisfy. Decades of research show that the way a goal is set, not merely that one exists, decides whether it lifts performance or wastes the effort spent chasing it. This course teaches the discipline behind that finding: how to make a goal specific, calibrate its difficulty, choose the right type for the task, ground it in belief, secure commitment, wire in progress information, resource it, and guard it against the side-effects a careless hard target can cause.

You choose one real aim you are responsible for in the opening section — a metric you want to move, a standard you want a team to reach, or the course's running case if you prefer to focus — and carry it through all twelve sections, finishing with a complete, defended goal-system you could put in front of the person who will pursue it.

The goal-design moves you will learn

- **Specificity** — turn a vague aim into a goal with a named metric, level and deadline
- **Difficulty** — calibrate a goal that genuinely stretches without outrunning ability
- **Goal type** — diagnose whether a performance goal or a learning goal fits the task
- **Self-efficacy** — ground the goal in the belief that it can be reached
- **Commitment and feedback** — secure genuine acceptance and wire in progress information
- **Guardrails** — protect a demanding goal from tunnel vision, gaming and crowded-out learning

Who this course is for

- Managers who set goals for a team and want them to lift performance, not function as noise
- Team leaders and supervisors responsible for a metric or standard who need a target that stretches without breaking
- Consultants and internal advisers who design goals or incentive structures and must anticipate their side-effects
- Reflective managers and BBA, MBA or DBA candidates seeking a rigorous, applied grip on Goal-Setting Theory — no prior study of motivation theory assumed

What you will accomplish

- Explain why specific, challenging goals raise performance, and state an aim as a specific goal
- Calibrate a goal's difficulty and choose the right goal type for the task
- Ground a goal in self-efficacy, using proximal sub-goals that build the belief it can be reached
- Secure genuine commitment and wire in the progress information that lets effort be steered
- Match support to task complexity and resource a demanding goal so it can actually be met
- Guard a goal against tunnel vision, gaming and crowded-out learning, and run the high-performance cycle

Your fortnight, section by section

Module 1 — Setting Goals That Stretch

Section	Title
1	Why Specific, Challenging Goals Raise Performance

Section	Title
2	Making a Goal Specific
3	Calibrating the Difficulty of a Goal
4	Learning Goals versus Performance Goals
5	Self-Efficacy and Believing the Goal Is Reachable
6	Assembling the Goal

Module 2 — Supporting Goals So They Deliver

Section	Title
1	Building Goal Commitment
2	Progress Information That Keeps a Goal on Track
3	Task Complexity and the Resources a Goal Needs
4	Guarding Against the Side-Effects of Goals
5	The High-Performance Cycle
6	Designing and Defending the Whole Goal

Each section follows the same four steps — Explain, Show, Do, Feedback — worked through a running case (Dana Rourke's customer-care team at Northwind Appliances) and then on the goal you choose.

The running case

Alongside your own goal you follow Northwind Appliances, a fictional mid-sized appliance maker whose customer-care team has seen first-contact resolution slide to sixty-eight percent and callbacks rise over two quarters. Dana Rourke, newly appointed to lead the team, rewrites the vague aim "get service back on track" into a specific, hard goal — raise first-contact resolution to eighty percent, at current quality, by the end of the quarter — calibrates its difficulty, carves out a learning goal for a new product line her team has never been trained on, and grounds it in weekly proximal targets. She then secures real commitment, posts progress so effort can be steered, resources the stretch, and guardrails it so it cannot be gamed. As a running caution, Ray Coulter, a sales manager, sets a blunt revenue quota tied to a cliff-edge bonus, supplies no rationale, no progress information and no resources for an unfamiliar product — and watches his team game it. Real studies — a truck-loading field experiment, a children's proximal-goals learning study, research on learning versus performance goals, and a set of cautionary corporate failures — appear only as sourced illustrations of the ideas.

Assessment and certificate

Each module concludes with one auto-graded scenario assessment: a fifteen-item scenario drawn from a larger bank, presenting unfamiliar goals and situations so it tests judgment rather than recall, with two formative checkpoints inside every section along the way. A score of **70%** passes, with unlimited untimed attempts, and a full explanation is shown for every item. On passing both module assessments you earn the **Monarch-endorsed Certificate of Knowledge**.

Taught with its limits

A specific, hard goal is powerful, but the course teaches its limits alongside the method — that the same properties which make a goal motivating can narrow attention too far, invite gaming under a cliff-edge reward, or push people to scramble for results before a workable method exists; that a hard goal without commitment, feedback or resources predictably underperforms however well it was written; and that a demanding goal must be guardrailed, not merely set. You leave able to design a goal that stretches performance without producing the distortion a careless one can cause.

Bring one real goal, and learn to set it so it delivers.

