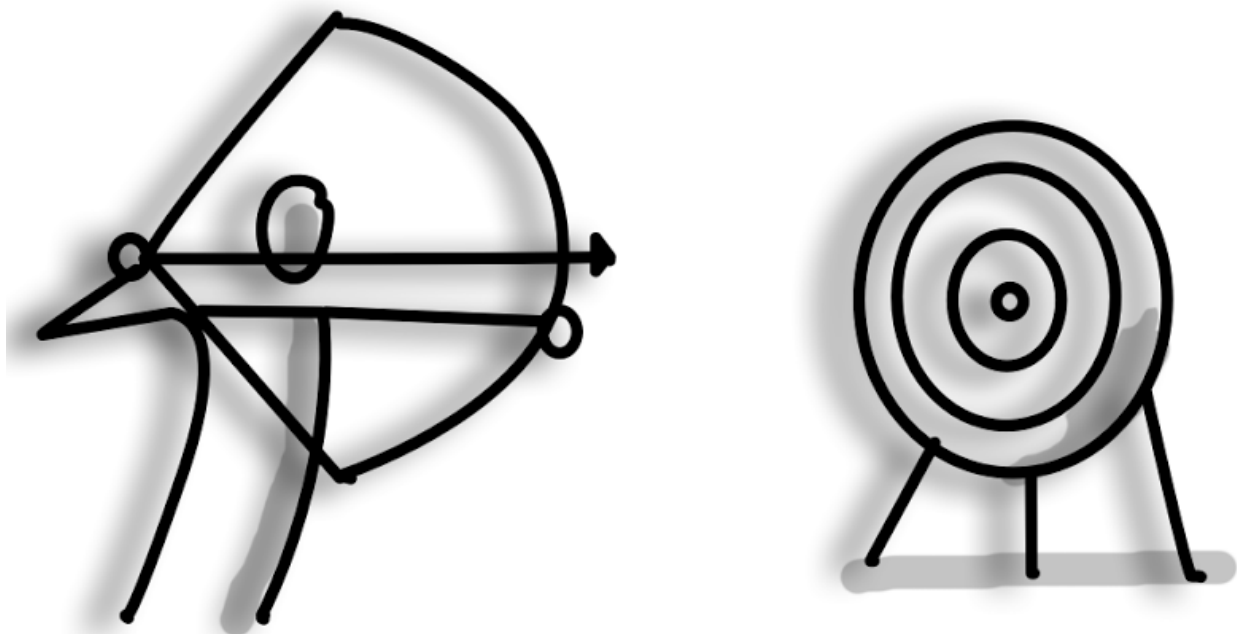# ENDPUNKT – solution focussed goal criteria for defining your meaningful, motivating and sticking goals

ontheagilepath.net/2015/11/endpunkt-solution-focussed-goal-criteria-for-defining-your-meaningful-motivating-and-sticking-goals.html

By Sebastian Radics

With this blog post I start a series of posts related to solution focussed coaching. Based on the awesome book Agile Teams lösungsfokussiert coachen (DE) I'm going to share my insights starting with some helpful criteria to define goals.

First of all, lets have a look on the definition of the term goal.

> A goal is a desired result that a person or a system envisions, plans and commits to achieve: a personal or organizational desired end-point in some sort of assumed development.

For a good team collaboration it is of high importance to know the commonly shared desired goal. Defining good goals takes time, needs endurance and patience.

The following criteria help to define and check a goal. (Unfortunately the german memory hook ENDPUNKT does not match the englisch translation. For all readers from Germany and all who would like to learn some new German you can find the translation too.)

achievable – **e**rreichbar

It has a special meaning for goals and its achievability provides confidence. Confidence leads to higher engagement.
Ask whether the goal is in team's circle of control. Find framing parameters – factors outside the teams control. Ask *what for* to check the parameter and for ways to remove it.

To check for achievability ask:

- How confident are you, that you can reach the goal the way it's defined at the moment?
- What resources do you have, that guarantee, that you can reach the goal?
- In what way parameters not under your control need to change?
- How can you rephrase the goal that you can reach it yourself (independent?)
- What else would be helpful that you can reach the goal with high confidence?
- How do you notice that you reached your goal at the end?
- How would others notice it?

verifiable/noticeable – **n**achweisbar
- How do you know that the goal is achieved?
- How do others notice it?

detailed and concrete – **d**etailliert
The more details the team describes, the more the picture of the goal becomes colored and real. The belief that they can reach it gets increased when creating a pictured of the desired outcome. Ask:
- What needs to happen here today that you are happy with the result?
- How can others see that you worked on the goal successfully?
- What would be a small or huge change?
- If you could record yourself with a camera, how can you see that you're moving towards achieving your goal when watching the movie?

positive – **p**ositiv
Focus on what should be (and not what shouldn't). Ask for the *instead* to transform negative phrasing by using the following questions:
- What do you want instead?
- What is supposed to be instead of …?

environmentally compatible – **u**mwelttauglich
There is an influence to your environment when the goal is reached. What is it? Is that change of the environment maybe in your way? Check for influences in your team, other departments, customers, other companies and one's private environment.
Not checking the environmental influence often leads to missed objections (that later on undermine commitment). Check by asking:

- Assume that you really reach that goal – What would be different for you?
- What consequences would a goal achievement have for you? And what for people in your environment (team, departments,…)?

- Who is the first person that will noticed that you achieved your goal? By what? And how would she react? How else?

useful – **n**ützlich
For what are we working in that goal? Provide a meaning for the way to work on it. To find a purpose is an individual task. Every team member can share their insights to open perspectives for everyone to define their individual purpose. Ask:
- What are your personal advantages by reaching that goal?
- What would be new possibilities for you and your team?
- For what else would it be good to reach that goal?

correct (language wise) – **k**orrekt
Use the wording used by the team. As a facilitator it can easily happen that one is rephrasing by mistake (this way one can change the original meaning and undermine commitment for the goal).
Apply **clean language** – by avoiding the use if own content, wording, judgements and interpretations.
(recommend book: Clean Language:Revealing Metaphors and Opening Minds)

great (motivating and meaningful) – **t**oll
Provide a meaning. It should be something for the better, considering everyone involved.
Adress the intrinsic motivators – mastery, purpose and autonomy.
The *ENDPUNKT* criteria are a combination of:

- SMART (**s**pecific, **m**easurable, **a**ssignable, **r**ealistic, **t**ime related)
- CLEAR (**c**hallenging, **l**egal, **e**xciting, **a**greed, **r**ecorded) and
- PURE (**p**ositive, **u**nderstood, **r**ealistic, **e**thical)

and add the relation for a goal to:

- the goals context (environmentally compatible)
- the *noticeability* from the outside
- the important aspect of the *correct* language and
- the *meaning*

One can support the team to link the goal with a meaning by asking questions like:

What advantages do you have when achieving the defined goal?

What new opportunities are offered when the goal is achieved?

Whats the use of achieving that goal in your opinion?

What is your opinion on these solution focussed goal criteria? Do you already use it? Thanks for sharing your insights and opinion by your comment 😉