

# Individual Activity: Setting Personal Goals

Empowering colleagues promotes growth, increases confidence, builds trust and boosts morale. As a result, an empowered team fosters a supportive work environment with improved productivity. Use this activity to set personal goals for empowering others and hold yourself accountable for accomplishing those goals.

## Instructions

1. Utilizing the Empowering Colleagues Skills & Tips section of this toolkit, create personal goals to empower colleagues in your laboratory. The goals should be:
  - Specific.
  - Reasonable for short-term (one week to one month) and long-term (six months to one year) time frames.
2. Develop an actionable plan.
3. Carry out the plan.
4. After one week:
  - Evaluate your progress and realign expectations as needed.
  - For completed goals, celebrate and set new goals.

*Example: My goal is to create a system to acknowledge my co-workers and direct reports in my laboratory. Once a month, I will choose a different colleague to recognize. By next week, I will determine the first colleague I will recognize and the method of recognition that they prefer.*

## Reflection

Take some time to reflect on your interactions with others. Use the following questions as starting points:

1. In what situations do colleagues come to you for help?
2. What has been positive about these interactions?  
What can you improve for the next interaction?
3. How often do you praise your colleagues?
4. How does it make you feel to be recognized?



## Recognition Ideas

Provide individual and/or group recognition via:

- In-person conversation
- Email
- Hand-written note
- Text message
- Mention at a meeting
- Small token of appreciation

Recognize:

- Exceptional work
- Things you want a colleague to do more often
- Tasks that people may not want to do but are necessary
- Gaining new skills
- Team-players
- Small milestones

Use this in conjunction with the other Empowering Colleagues resources in the [Effective Communication for Aspiring Laboratory Leaders Toolkit](#), designed by Cohort 17 of the [APHL Emerging Leader Program](#) to empower public health laboratory professionals to be better leaders by improving communication skills.

The toolkit has three sections: **Relationship Building**, **Empowering Colleagues** and **Conflict Resolution**.