

Sarangapni Club is a weekend hangout of 4 budding youngsters just out of college and trying to build careers in Information Technology in Mumbai. Read the link for details https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eXKsYJw7BDX-pegg53Acy4k8BVb_xzK7/view?usp=sharing

It was the year end and appraisals were taking place in all organizations. While Padma, Prabha, Kaushik and Kingo had not yet gone through their first performance appraisal in their life, they used to lot of talk about it. Padma said she was very nervous about it; Kaushik was very cool, Prabha said she was not bothered by it as she had done her job properly while Kingo was certain that he will get the best possible rating.

Padma said “I hope that there must be a very quantitative method for appraisals based on quantitative goals and achievements. There is too much left to the discretion of your supervisor.” While everyone agreed that some aspects can be quantified, certain aspects had to be left to the discretion of the supervisor. Kingo lightened the atmosphere “Look at Bridge – there is no subjectivity. You either make your goal or you don’t make it. A very quantitative appraisal”

Prabha countered Kingo’s comment, “If you set the goal too low, then everybody will achieve their targets easily. It is like bidding a partial and making a grand slam. Technically, you have achieved your goal but the goal was not set properly”. Kaushik interjected saying “Goal setting has to be 20 to 25 per cent higher than normal. If goal is set too low, everyone will achieve it. It is hence recommended that we bid close games in Bridge and challenge ourselves”. The ever quantitative Padma came up with numbers – you must bid vulnerable games if you can make it 36 per cent of the time, non vulnerable games 40 per cent of the time and little slams at 50 per cent change while grand slams are bid when you can count up to 13 tricks”

Prabha added, “We must ask our HR folks to learn Bridge. They will then be better equipped to set goals properly and measure performance against it. Goals have to be reasonable – one should not overbid or underbid – must be challenging enough for the given resources”. Kaushik made a point that it is best to set goals based on a well-documented system just we have systems documentation for Bridge. Kingo, not one to left out of the conversation, had the final word, “We must do our best to achieve the goals and exceed it only after you are certain of meeting the goals. It is like ensuring your contract before trying for overtricks.

Tailpiece. The sweet young thing always had the most difficult question at the end of the conversation –“If this is the case, why are all Bridge people not HR managers”. I pondered for an answer and said” Goal setting is only one of the jobs in HR. Bridge players are not so good on other skills required to be an HR manager.