

Being SMART About Setting Goals

A lot of people create excitement around ideas, but then those lofty goals more often than not, fall to the wayside. Why is this? To begin with, let's look at the excuses we use to justify why our goals fail. Notice,

- I don't have time / I'm too busy
- I don't have enough money
- It's (insert someone else's name)'s fault
- It's too hard / harder than I expected
- I'll do it later
- I don't know how
- It's just not "the right time"

Let's talk about setting goals. You have to be SMART about your goals. SMART goals are:

- S – Specific
- M - Measurable
- A - Attainable
- R - Realistic
- T - Timely

Common Business Goals:

- Make more money (how much?)
- Generate more sales
- Meet more people (how many? / How?)
- Generate more leads

What happens if you don't meet your goals? It's ok! Just take a realistic look at what happened, and set a new milestone date. Just don't go back to the excuse list!

If you don't respect yourself or hold yourself in high enough regard, why should other people?

Learn to keep your commitments to yourself first, and then you will be better prepared to deal with the commitments to others in your life - your clients, family, and employees.



Watch how others start regarding you when you take yourself seriously.

What if you really don't have time? Oh right...you're *different*. The truth is, that everybody has time for the things that are important to them. If you don't have time, the maybe it just isn't really a priority for you (and, that's OK!).

If someone offered you a million pounds to do something you "don't have time to do," would you find time?

Keys to accomplishing your goals:

- Write them down - tape them to your wall, or carry them in a notebook. Look at them every day.

Tell other people - enlist others in helping to make you accountable.

- Ask people for help - don't assume people know what you want or need. Try being direct it's a rare trait these days.

In conclusion - being SMART about your goals, is the key to achieving them.

If You Can't Measure It, You Can't Manage It

Companies may be able to survive for a while if managers aren't using data to make decisions, but they will eventually see their demise; likely sooner than later.

Those companies to benchmark off are the ones who are not only surviving, but thriving!

Pick your favourite phrase: TQM, Process Management, Quality Circles, Improvement Teams, Standards and Measurement departments or any other title you prefer.

The function is the same. Look at baseline data – percentages, pounds, hours, quantities – and continuously monitor the performance. There should not be any task that a supervisor or staff members perform that cannot be measured.

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

Take a fast food restaurant for example. There are a plethora of areas that can be measured such as days without an accident, customer wait time in line, length of time burgers are in the warmer, amount of money off in the drawers, customer complaints, etc.

Graph it out and keep a spread sheet of your figures. Clearly you're looking for improvement. If there was a decline, brainstorm, find the root cause and then fix the problem. The process is the same no matter what industry you're managing.

Whether you manufacture widgets, if you are the CEO of an internet marketing firm or if you sell cookies, take a look at all the steps involved in day to day operations.

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How To Plan, Schedule And Run A Meeting



Meetings have become an inevitable part of doing business for almost every business owner.

There are meetings with clients, meetings with employees and meetings with peers or associates.

Almost everyone has suffered through too many meetings that take up too much time and accomplish too little.

In fact, you may find that you yourself have now become numb to that fact that your meetings aren't as good as they could be.

And everywhere you look, it seems as if somebody has another idea about how to fix your meetings, and make them more focused, more productive, and – dare I say it? More fun!

So what can you do about it?

Relax and keep reading, because you're about to find the information that can help you maintain the status quo – a list of tips and ideas for meeting planning – the wrong way!

1. Schedule your meetings at bad times - (for example, how about setting up a "must attend" meeting late on Friday afternoon or right after lunch?)

2. Make sure your meetings all start late and run overtime - (and whenever possible, scheduling meetings when someone is up against a deadline, or on a tight schedule).

3. Maintain a consistent lack of focus on what topics will be covered – (don't use an agenda).

4. Ensure there is a poor level of rapport in the group – (people don't talk to each other, or they complain, or engage in other unsuitable behaviour).

5. Don't arrive at a decision - (find new ways to keep covering the same ground, or continue asking for input rather than creating a plan of action.)

6. Don't use parliamentary procedures - (so that the correct methods for amending or making a motion, following the agenda and taking turns before speaking are not being followed).

7. Choose a poor location and environment for your meetings - (for example, trying to fit 15 people into a closet-sized room that doesn't have windows or a proper ventilation system.)

8. Schedule meetings to go over routine topics - (instead of sending a memo or email.)

9. Don't talk to your group, or make your meetings interactive - (talking "at" them, lecturing or going off on wild tangents.)

10. Never asking for feedback from participants, or allowing others to present ideas or get involved.

There you have it! Just follow those ten simple tips, and you're guaranteed to instil fear, loathing and boredom into even the most intrepid of meeting participants!



If You Can't Measure It, You Can't Manage It

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Assign values to the process.

Set goals.

Review the results on a daily, weekly or monthly basis.

Charts and graphs are an excellent tool to visually remind you of where you have been and where you plan to go.

In the midst of measuring your subordinates' performance, don't neglect to measure and manage your own operations.

Don't think for a minute that your boss isn't looking at your performance.

And if you're the top dog, you had better be managing yourself well, or you will never succeed at managing others.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are financial and non-financial metrics used to help an organisation define and measure progress toward organisational goals.

KPIs can be delivered through Business Intelligence techniques to assess the present state of the business and to assist in prescribing a course of action.

KPIs are frequently used to "value" difficult to measure activities such as the benefits of leadership development, engagement, service, and satisfaction. KPIs are typically tied to an organisation's strategy (as exemplified through techniques such as the Balanced Scorecard).

If you are not measuring the performance of your business, please contact us now to find out how to implement this important aspect of business management.

UKBATM
UK Business Advisors Ltd

UK Business Advisors Limited
White House, 66 Altwood Road
Maidenhead, Berkshire, SL6 4PZ
Tel: 0870 420 2756 Fax: 0709 280 8482
Email: info@ukba.co.uk Web: www.ukba.co.uk

Next month: 10 Steps To A Successful Negotiation :: Strategies For Business Success – Buy Or Lease

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