



2016 NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

“Tomorrow is the first blank page of a 365-page book. Write a good one.” — Brad Paisley

It is that time of year again, the time during which we take stock of our successes (and perhaps failures) and begin to put our minds on how to do better in the new year. In this issue of InfoPays, we list a few business resolutions to help you with your resolution planning this season.

1. Have a clear vision of your strategic goals.

Try this exercise: spend only 20 minutes planning your year in a one-page strategic plan format. When you finish, put the plan somewhere where you could see it daily. That one sheet of paper developed quickly and spontaneously is sure to keep you focused on the essentials, helping you stay away from distractions.

2. Manage your prospects.

Have you been working on prospects that no longer return your calls/emails? Winning new clients is an expensive process so be sure to fill your sales funnel with people who are likely to buy from you. And those who cannot make a decision in the foreseeable future you should follow up with at a later date, making sure your major effort goes to those with an immediate need for your product/service.

3. Don't be afraid to say "no".

Knowing what not to spend our time and energy on has become even more important than knowing what to spend it on. Learn to say "no" without worrying too much if that will hurt others' feelings.

4. Put effectiveness first.

Harness the power of proper time management and deliberate prioritization. Know when to wait and know when to hurry up, and don't forget to apply patience, vision, and common sense along the way.



5. Embrace social media.

Social media is not going away anytime soon. If you have lagged behind on this trend, get on social media today. Choose what works best for your target market, and run with it. If you don't quite understand it yet, be sure to do the legwork required to get up to speed on the social revolution or perhaps hire an expert to help you in the process.

6. Focus your time on moneymaking.

Stop busy work that does not generate any value. Instead, make every attempt possible to focus your time on income-generating activities. This means non-income generating work needs to be delegated to your subordinates while you focus on activities such as publicity, marketing, and sales. Your team will thank you later!

WHERE DOES YOUR TIME GO?

"I am definitely going to take a course on time management... just as soon as I can work it into my schedule."

– Louis E. Boone

Time management is a vital aspect of personal effectiveness. With that in mind, IPS recommends the below 5 time management tips for your New Year's resolution:

1. Find out where your time goes.

Try to log your time on a timesheet. This will give you insight as to whether or not you may need to improve your productivity, sharpen your schedule planning skills or delegate more.

2. Identify problem areas.

Most people's time management suffers from certain problem areas. However, while the majority of us know how other departments' errors and inefficiencies can negatively affect our own time, it is important to note that this problem area is out of our control. The real opportunity for improvement lies in settling our own inefficiencies such as putting off problems, avoiding unwanted tasks or poor planning.

3. Define objectives.

Ensure that your job responsibilities are clearly defined and documented in a written format. You and your entire team will appreciate having clear directions on accountability.

4. Focus on self-improvement.

Plan

Plan your next week and review the plan every morning, adjusting your schedule as you go. Based on experience, decide what would be a reasonable slack time.



Prioritize

The tasks you enjoy the most are not always ranked high on the priority list. Learn to stick to priorities, and try to build contingency plans for which activities you can afford to delay if something unplanned happened.

Delegate

Delegation is one of those things "easier said than done", but if delegated to the right person, under the right circumstances, it is a skill that can significantly improve your performance at work.

5. Make time for play, not only work.

Overwork is counterproductive. Plan time for leisure to not only maintain high-performance at work but also to live a happy, balanced life.

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