

## Want To Achieve Your Goals This Year? Start By Doing This



What do you want to accomplish in 2017? It's time to set some goals.

The start of the New Year is the perfect time for entrepreneurs and business owners to set goals for the next 12 months. You've closed your books on 2016, so, if you haven't already, it's time to make plans for 2017.

If you do any kind of goal-setting, you are among the 20% who do, according to Leonie Dawson; 80% of people give no thought whatsoever to goals. Dawson, an Australian author and mentor who advises women business owners, says that another 16% contemplate goals but don't write them down.

Only 4% of people actually take the time to write their goals down and of those, only 1% regularly refer back to them during the year.

Those are the people most likely to achieve their goals.

The advantage that 1% has is a historical record of their goals they can refer back to at the end of the year, to see how they fared. Being able to reflect on past successes, as well as unmet goals, is a key component of successful goal setting for the future.

Knowing what you accomplished, and perhaps why, is helpful as you look ahead to set new goals and intentions for the coming year.

## What Did You Accomplish Last Year?

Whether you wrote goals down or not this time last year, take some time to think about what you achieved in the last 365 days. Did you:

- Reach a new revenue milestone
- Land an important new client
- Increase the number of customers served
- Add more employees
- Score a new line or wholesale relationship
- Improve profitability
- Acquire more social media followers

The more you can quantify those accomplishments, the easier your forward-looking goal-setting becomes. So consider:

- What gross revenue figure did you achieve? What kind of growth rate was that above last year?
- What is the annual projected revenue that important new client will generate for your business?
- How many total customers did you serve last year?
- How many employees do you now have? How many more than the previous year?
- What is the anticipated annual sales value of that new product line?
- What percent profitability did you hit? Was that higher than last year?
- How many social media followers do you have now versus last year?

Convert as many goals as possible to numbers. Saying you increased sales, for example, doesn't inform your planning. How much did sales rise? And why? That's what you need to know so you can continue to build on that growth.

## What Is Reasonable For The Coming Year?

It's easy to pull a number out of the air and set that as your goal. Want \$5 million in sales? Two hundred customers? One million in profits? Without any context, those may be too high, too low, or right on the money. You really can't tell without knowing how you've done in the past.

However, if you know that sales last year were \$4 million and your annual growth rate has been 25%, a sales target of \$5 million is well within reason.

The key to successfully charting your course for next year is being able to look back on your accomplishments, to first revel in what you achieved. And then set the bar higher for the coming 12 months.

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