

Labor Day Has Passed – Time For A Mid-Year Review!

I know, I know. September is the ninth month of the year...well past mid-year. But for most of us, the first part of the year consists of January 1 to June 1 and the second part of the year is the day after Labor Day until the twelve days of Christmas begin their countdown (with lots of holidays making Swiss cheese out of our schedules in between). Therefore, this is mid-year for the majority of us.

September is a Great Month for Planning

I love planning in September. I tend to plan for both the rest of the year and for the upcoming year. At this time of year, everyone seems to have "let's get back to business" energy. The months of September and October are often as productive as the whole first half of the year.

First, Shake Off Those Summertime Cobwebs

Since this is the first week after the official end of summer, you may want to spend a week or so "shaking off the cobwebs". Take a look around at your office. Has it gone into slight or total disarray from your less focused summertime routine? Spending just a few hours (ok, more for some of us) finding homes for those stray papers or catching up on logging your expenses might be just the trick to jump-start the second half of the year for you.

Pull Out That (Somewhat) Dusty Business Plan for 2003

(This might be easier to do once you've straightened up your office!) Whether you created a specific business or marketing plan or not, take a look at what you intended to do in your business this year. Are you able to cross most things off the list, or does your list of goals look like a foreign, antiquated document from times gone by?

Don't Forget to Celebrate What You've Accomplished

Oftentimes, we accomplish our goals and quickly move on to the next ones without stopping to appreciate just how far we've come. If you didn't have a list of goals to cross off, write down what you've accomplished this year and spend some time reveling in your success. If you are feeling overwhelmed over what still needs to be done, celebrating your successes may be just the motivator to move forward.

There's Still Time to Change Course

If looking at what you had intended to accomplish leaves you feeling dazed and confused, don't panic. There's still plenty of time to re-evaluate your goals and get back on track. First, ask yourself whether your goals were realistic and specific? Many of us have goals but don't put smaller action steps into place to achieve them. Second, do your goals still fit your business? Now that you're eight months into the year, do these goals still make sense to pursue? Maybe your focus has changed and your goals need to be amended?

Where are You Now?

The point of a mid-year review is to re-assess what is important for you and your business. Even when you have a detailed plan, your priorities and focus may change slightly or be different altogether. Take this time to reflect on where you are now, today. What have you learned this year and how has it impacted the goals you had? How can you adjust your plans to reflect where you and your business are today?

A Few Questions to Consider

To help you focus on the rest of the year, take a moment to answer the following questions for yourself:

- What worked so far this year?
- What has not worked, or needs adjusting?

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- Where do you want your business to be by year-end?
- What 1 shift can you make to get there?
- What 3 specific things do you want to accomplish prior to year end?