

1 High achievement

Analysing yourself

The essential ingredients for success are to:

- decide what personal success you want
- create a personal vision of success
- adopt a quantum leap approach
- believe success will happen
- focus on success goals
- be undeterred by setbacks.

The starting point for high achievement in your personal and business life is to review positively your strengths and weaknesses. A basic self-assessment should review:

- What am I good at?
- What do I enjoy doing or would enjoy given the chance?
- What kinds of business would I like to work in or to own?
- What are my assets?
- What work situations, frustrations and stresses do I wish to avoid?

You should ask yourself questions such as these regularly to provide opportunities to focus on what you would like to make happen and to aim for the high achievement of desired results.

Setting goals

High achievement depends on first of all identifying and setting goals, then setting about making them happen by addressing and dealing with those key issues on which success or failure depend.

Three-year goals

- The goal(s) I will achieve within three years are:

- Subgoal(s) which need to be achieved are:

One-year goals

- The goal(s) I will achieve within one year are:

- Subgoal(s) which need to be achieved are:

In setting these goals you should adopt a quantum leap approach to achieve dramatic results; for example, to triple profits within three years.

You must fix on these goals and use iron determination to make them happen by focusing on the reasons for achieving success:

- My success goals are important to me because:

- My success goals are achievable because:

- The obstacles to be overcome are:

- The priorities to focus on are:

2 Time management

Assessing your time-management skills

Time management is not an end in itself. It is the means to an end. When linked with setting and meeting goals it provides a way of getting really high achievement out of individuals and others with whom they come into contact.

How do you rate your time management skills? Do you:

- 1 Have success goals written down?
YES/NO
- 2 Agree your success goals with your boss wherever he or she should be involved?
YES/NO
- 3 Give the impression to people that you are well organised, really on top of your job, and still have time for people?
YES/NO
- 4 Find enough time to tackle the important projects?
YES/NO
- 5 Have a reputation for invariably meeting deadlines?
YES/NO
- 6 Ask your PA/Assistant which jobs she or he could do for you?
YES/NO
- 7 Work away from the office occasionally to concentrate on a particular job?
YES/NO
- 8 Reply to correspondence quickly?
YES/NO
- 9 Regularly return telephone calls and emails sufficiently promptly?
YES/NO
- 10 Make enough use of technology to save you time?
YES/NO

- 11 Deliberately decide to leave certain jobs undone, until someone complains?
YES/NO
- 12 Make a list of what jobs, telephone calls and emails must or should be done today?
YES/NO
- 13 Often take work home or go into the office at weekends?
YES/NO
- 14 Feel it is better to do a job yourself than to train someone else to do it for you?
YES/NO
- 15 Allow people to waste your time by dropping in for a chat?
YES/NO
- 16 Open the post each morning?
YES/NO
- 17 Write things in longhand for you or your PA/Assistant to input?
YES/NO
- 18 Spend time doing jobs which a junior person could do as well as you?
YES/NO
- 19 Arrange your own meetings?
YES/NO
- 20 Waste time filing things or finding files and information?
YES/NO
- 21 Sometimes go home feeling the day has been consumed by interruptions?
YES/NO
- 22 Accept telephone calls during informal meetings?
YES/NO
- 23 Spend too much time in unproductive meetings?
YES/NO
- 24 Arrive late for meetings quite often?
YES/NO
- 25 Spend too much time being chased by others and chasing others about missed deadlines?
YES/NO
- 26 Think you are too much of a perfectionist for your own good?
YES/NO

- 27 Accept requests to do something, when it makes more sense for someone else to do it?
YES/NO

To be rated a 100 per cent effective manager, you should have answered YES to questions 1 to 12 and NO to questions 13 to 27. How did you perform? Is there room for improvement?

Focusing on results and opportunities

In order to use time-management techniques, it is essential to be results-driven and to do this effectively means identifying key results and assessing major opportunities as follows:

Key results to be achieved in order of importance (time spent on them, ranked 1 to 5):

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | deadline: |
| 2 | deadline: |
| 3 | deadline: |
| 4 | deadline: |
| 5 | deadline: |

The major opportunities to be pursued in order of importance (time spent on them, ranked 1 to 5):

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1 | deadline: |
| 2 | deadline: |
| 3 | deadline: |
| 4 | deadline: |
| 5 | deadline: |

Using your diary/organiser for better time management

The trick is to plan your year first and your day last.

- 1 Enter key year planning dates in your diary/organiser:
 - regular meetings for the year
 - known one-off events (for example, AGM, sales conference, trade fairs, budget preparation)
 - holidays
 - family occasions
 - key tasks (for example, strategic workshop, East Asia visit, customer visits).

- 2 Plan your next month and:
 - count unplanned days available
 - duck less important events
 - reserve a meeting-free day each week
 - reserve key task time.

- 3 Plan this week:
 - develop regular habits (for example, weekly team lunch, Friday afternoon in the office).

- 4 Plan each day at the outset and:
 - develop regular habits
 - fix management-by-walking-about (MBWA) or open door times
 - set personal assistant (PA) times
 - list and rank jobs and phone calls
 - use PA/Assistant to follow up
 - make daily action lists
 - remember 'stress' can be reduced by planning to use your time to tackle areas of concern.

How to manage each day

- Plan each day at the start or better still the night before.
 - Make a list of tasks, work out time needed for each and prioritise.
 - Isolate the key task and make sure it gets done.
 - Don't be too ambitious and clutter each day with tasks that can wait.
 - Build a time for solitude and/or to handle an issue that could crop up.
 - Reduce interruptions from phone calls, visitors and so on at times earmarked for task completion.
 - Tie in each day with the week, the month, the year and your goals.
- 5 Follow up effectively by using three follow-up files and/or reminders in your diary/organiser:
- this week
 - next week
 - this month.
- 6 Diary/daily planning format in print or electronic organiser
- Adopt a system which can accommodate detailed timings and sections (in each day) to list 'tasks to be done' and 'phone calls/emails to be made/sent'.

3 Personal effectiveness

This chapter summarises a variety of areas that should be addressed in seeking ways of improving the way you operate in business.

Appearances

You should make your own appearance and that of your office reflect the achievement of your success goals. An action plan is needed for:

- your own appearance – hair, weight, clothes, and so on.
- your office appearance – walls, ceilings, tidiness, decoration.

Create a successful achieving style and remember: you never get a second chance to make a first impression.

Perhaps the most important aspect of appearance (and one which affects the ability to tackle important tasks) is how your desk and computer desktop are managed.

Ways to clear your desk and desktop

- Don't leave any papers on it when you leave.
- Don't have papers out for more than one task at a time.
- Don't keep papers hanging around:
 - diarise when to action and then file them;
 - dump unwanted items;
 - pass on with action notes (handwritten, don't wait for printed formats).
- Don't let filing pile up (do it yourself if need be).
- Don't get side-tracked into reading items that should be put in a separate to-be-read file or pile.
- For computer desktop and emails:
 - use folders for organising material on the desktop