

Looking Toward a New Year ...and Beyond

6 New Year Planning Tips

The holidays are over and the new year has just begun. Hopefully you've already got a solid plan for 2008 covering all your financial, operational and sales activities. But just in case you've had to add "finish annual plan" to your New Year's resolutions, we have a few pointers to help:

Look Beyond Next Year

Confirm that your long-term goals are still consistent with where you want to be in 5, 10, 20 or even 50 years. Are there new technologies, new competition, or new laws & regulations that require you to shift your long-term focus?

Understand Past Failures

Whether they're major disasters or small setbacks, try to learn from your failures. Identify & understand the root cause of the failure, then fix those causes. Taking steps now to avoid future mistakes could pay big dividends.

Write it Down

Using a format that's well-structured and easy to use. If you don't already have a standard plan format, take time to create one...*or purchase a proven template from a CSB's consultant.*

Let Everyone Who Needs It See It

Folks can't work a plan if they don't know what's in the plan. Make it easy for the people who have to do the work to get to and use the plan.

Review It Regularly

No plan is perfect. Set time aside monthly or quarterly to formally review the plan, comparing what you expected to happen in your business against what's *actually happening*. Identify problems, unexpected successes & areas that need change.

Adjust As Necessary

The best plan is one that's used. As part of your reviews, adjust your plan to match their current business realities.

Free Planning Checklist

To help make your annual planning a bit easier, one of our consultant partners has put together a [Planning Checklist](#) to help standardize and speed up your year end planning process. You can find this checklist on-line at

http://www.spinningdisc.com/RefLibrary/Tools/Checklist_Planning_EOY.pdf



Need Help Planning?

The Council For Small Business, Inc.'s business consultants have the in-depth knowledge and hands-on business experience to help you achieve your goals this year!

Call us today to learn how our experience can help your business thrive and grow in 2008 and beyond!

THE COUNCIL

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