

What are



for 2017?

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BY Beth Montpas

By choosing to read this article and focus on long-range planning, you have separated yourself from the 97 percent of the population who don't give thoughtful contemplation to their life's desires or chart a proper course to take their business in that direction.

Most people are more diligent about making their grocery list than they are about designing their lives. Most people can't be bothered.

But not you! Here you are, early in the year, reading and investing in yourself by spending time to be better. Congratulations!

Whenever I am asked the No. 1 skill that has been responsible for my success, I am quick to answer: my ability to set, stick to and achieve big goals (clearly written goals, no winging it).

My parents were entrepreneurs; they

are now retired Iowa farmers. My dad would see in the Des Moines Register that Zig Ziglar was coming to Des Moines, and he'd rip out the article and mail it to me. He'd tuck in the \$99 ticket price with a sticky note saying, "Take the day off work and go to this training!" I grew up with parents believing that you have to be a continual learner and reader to get ahead in life. I am grateful for parents who encouraged a growth mind-set, and now at age 49, with three teenagers in my home, I try to inspire my kids to read books and attend

seminars that can set them on a growth path.

This mind-set leads me to ask you as a business owner: Are you living the life you envisioned for yourself? Is your business where you thought it would be by now? Did you think you would be richer and healthier, have better relationships and more friends, experience more joy and have more peace of mind than you do now?

As a life and business coach, I want to help you rekindle dreams and show you they're not only possible, but also

attainable. We'll build the path that will lead you directly to those dreams. You've probably heard the definition of insanity—doing the same things over and over and expecting different results. If you want your business to be different from 2016, then now is the time to do something different.

No matter what your past retail business has been, you have a spotless future. If last year was less than great, this is your chance to punch the reset button and start fresh.

Long-range goal setting is the master skill for success, so if you don't do the work, you won't get the results. I can't tell it to you any simpler than that. You have to write clear goals; it's easier than making excuses why the store is not living up to its potential. Why Set Goals?

Start in Gratitude

Before writing your goals, begin with gratitude. What are three things that helped you move toward your achieved goals. In other words, what's great in your business right now? Or what's a win with your family, friends, finances, health or community? Scribble your answers right here in the margins.

Are you feeling blessed and abundant yet? You should. That mind-set and expectations will refocus your orientation to what's possible and what you can accomplish versus what you lack and what you have failed to get thus far.

Ground Rules for Long-Range Goal Planning

1. **DON'T JUST THINK IT; WRITE IT DOWN.** Super achievers have clear, written goals.

2. **DON'T FILTER, QUALIFY OR JUDGE YOUR IDEAS OR GOALS.** Don't factor in experience, resources or ability. If you had every skill, resource and ability in the world, what would you do and what would you set out to accomplish?

3. **THINK BIG.** A great goal is something that makes your palms a little bit sweaty.

4. **STATE GOALS IN THE POSITIVE.** Decide what you want to move toward, not away from.

- Example: I am at my ideal weight of x pounds by x date. (Not: I want to lose 20 pounds.)

- Example: I have a loving, intimate respectful relationship with my husband. (Not: I want to repair my marriage.)

- Example: We increased longarm rental hours to more than 480 hours this year.

5. **STATE IN THE I AM.** Be careful of the phrasing you use; for example, I am the owner of a profitable business. State your goals as: I am X versus I want X.

CALL TO ACTION

Within the next 24 to 48 hours, what will you do to put at least one of your goals into action and create momentum?

- **MOST IMPORTANTLY, "ACT AS IF" principle:** Begin to act now as you will act when your goal is reached. If you owned a million-dollar store, how would you walk, talk, shake hands or enter a room? If you were already a very successful business owner, how would you show up at chamber events? How would you walk down the streets of your town? How would you talk, listen and behave?
- **Be what you want** now and you will certainly become it.

- **Lastly, be careful what you sacrifice in other areas** of your life during the pursuit of what you want in one area, such as your business. Sometimes the price is too high to achieve the prize you seek. Remember, life is fragile. The key is to be sure you are giving appropriate attention and setting worthy goals in all important areas of your life.

- **True achievement** and life fulfillment is when you have success at home, at work and with your body, mind and spirit.

The world is goal-oriented. An airplane needs to have a set destination to design a flight plan to reach it. Without setting goals for 2017, you will wander aimlessly until you are hopelessly lost and confused.

You cannot hit a target you cannot see.

- Example: I have an organized store! I got rid of 200 excess bolts of fabric. (Not: I want to organize... or I want to get rid of....)

6. **BE SURE THE GOALS ARE YOUR GOALS, NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S.** Your written goals should reflect your inner ambitions, your creative spirit, not another shop owner's goals.

7. **ALIGN YOUR GOALS WITH YOUR VALUES BECAUSE SOME GOALS AREN'T WORTH GOING FOR.** Every promise has a price. Don't sacrifice your family time every weekend at the store to achieve your profitability goal; your family is too high of a price to pay.

The Start of Visioning

On a separate paper, write what you would like to become, accomplish, have or do in your business. If anything were possible, what would you aspire to? If a genie popped out of a lamp and could grant you 10 wishes, what would you write down? Don't filter or qualify as you write.

If you have an idea, it is possible. If you can think it, you can do it.

Imagine today is Dec. 31 and you're looking back on 2017. You are reflecting on all that you've accomplished in the store. What do you want to be able to say you accomplished?

Example: In my business, the goals I accomplished were...

- Rented our retreat center 80% of the available (rentable) weekends
- Had 25 participants in our Craft Happy Hour event.
- Decreased payroll to 15% of expenses.
- Advertised in new market via a TV commercial
- Increased sales by \$10,000.

How did this make me feel? I feel successful and able to compete in the current retail environment.

What other things can you accomplish? Because of our advertising efforts we gained 100 new members to our store club.

Did it teach me anything? Stepping outside of our comfort zone of normal advertising paid off. I'll continue to look at different opportunities that might be appropriate for our store.

Break It into Bites

Grab the vision you wrote and highlight the big goals in the paragraphs.

Get all the highlights into bullet form. From the bullets, create quarterly goals for your vision.

Break your quarterly goals into monthly goals.

Last step, take your monthly goals and decide which week (and day) you and your staff will complete the tasks required to meet your goals.

This daily breakdown involves attaching a day and time to each item in your calendar. Now your calendar will tell you what to do each day to reach your long-term goals. This step is

The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but that it's too low and we hit it.

not easy but it is crucial. Set aside a few hours in the next few days to complete these steps.

Final Tips

Share your completed vision and goals with your employees, your spouse, your mentor and others on your team. Have staff do these exercises at a store retreat and see how much you overlap.

Having a vision for 2017 means you have control.

Remember, this is a living document;

it can be changed at any point. It is a map to get you where you want to go. The most important part is to get your goals out of your head, onto paper and attached to a day and time. If you have it written down as more than a to-do list, you can reach your store's goals for 2017. Let your calendar run your life. Let your intellect rule, not your emotions.

