



Preparing for Success as a Business Owner in 3 Easy Steps

In working with my coaching clients over the past 18 years, I've found 3 steps that increase the probability of success in the coming year. Those who take the time to follow these steps are the ones who have the best results at the end of the year.



1. Assess last year. Grab last year's calendar and review it month by month. Take note of *The Winners*, the activities that make you smile or laugh out loud, touch your heart or get you energized! Make a list of these successes and achievements. Now look for *The Lessons*, the activities that didn't work so well for you. What were the breakdowns, failures, or disappointments? Are there actions you'll stop doing, start doing, or continue doing? What do you need to let go of? Now, come to a place of *Gratitude*. Take a little time to reflect and say "thank you" for what and who you are thankful for. It can be a written note, a gift or just a quiet moment to reflect. The key is to take time to acknowledge.

2. Make a Master Plan for this year. Give yourself some quiet time and put on some relaxing music. Draw a circle with six to eight sections to reflect the areas of your work/life that are most important to you this year. Keep these in mind as you set your goals. Write down goals for each of the important areas. Open your mind to ALL the possibilities. Start each goal with "I am" or "I will". Don't even THINK about restricting yourself. Remember, you're building what you want in your life. To help you with this process, here are some key questions to ask yourself:

What do I want to do with my business this year?

What do I want to have in my business this year?

What contribution do I want to make?

What do I want to learn?

Who do I want to meet and spend my time with to further my business?

How much do I want to earn, save, and invest?

What will I do for fun and optimum health?

3. Keep your plan alive and fresh. The more present you are to your goals, the more apt they are to happen. You could create a vision map to hang over your desk or use as a screen saver on your computer. Place your goals where you look every day – the refrigerator door, the bathroom mirror, the back of your office door. Take time at the end of each day for an assessment. What were your "wins" and your lessons? What are you grateful for?

Have fun! And may this be a year of many successes for you!

Andrea Novakowski is a business coach, working exclusively with people who own their own businesses. In 30 years as a business owner herself, Andrea has built two companies, one of which she sold to Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA in the mid-90's. She is the author of *Top 7 Coaching Tips for Business Owners* and has been voted a "Top Ten Coach" by *The Boston Herald*, three times. Andrea has an MBA from Babson College.