

LEAD

Three Reasons Why Good Leaders Spend Time Planning It's not about the plan, it's about the planning. [🔗](#)

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Who wants to spend valuable time planning and preparing when you can just dive in, right? Let's just dive in, get to work, and see what happens.

Then, let's do it again, because it is sure to be a failure the first time.

That's how it works. You can jump in without a plan, but it's going to be a waste of your time since you will just have to do it over again.

Have you ever heard the quote "Failing to plan is planning to fail?" That essentially means if you don't put a plan in place, you can expect to fail each and every time.

If you prefer to do it right the first time, adhere to the 5P rule: Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance. In other words, if you want to be a success, you better start planning.

Just how does planning help you succeed? Check these reasons out.

Planning Creates Focus

If you don't have a plan, you won't have a focus. You'll go in numerous directions, trying to figure out what to do next. You will get caught up in demands from employees, customers, and more, and you won't know what to do or what action to take.

That changes when you have a strategic plan in place, though. Your strategic plan will outline exactly what you need to do at all times. You won't question what's next or get distracted because it will all be mapped out for you.

Instead of going from Point A to Point C and back to Point B, you will do everything in order, just as it's intended. You won't run around, trying to put out fires. You'll take care of business in the proper way.

Planning Reduces Risks

It's impossible to completely eliminate risks in the business world. No risk no reward, right? Still, you don't want to face one risk after the next. As a leader, it's up to you to minimize risks every way you can, and strategic planning accomplishes that.

Let's think about what a strategic plan does. It takes your strengths and weaknesses into account, and it also looks at opportunities and threats presented in the outside world. By understanding the obstacles you face and the tools you have at your disposal, you're able to minimize the risk and maximize the reward. In other words, you can navigate those annoying obstacles and come out on the other side.

Planning Improves Day-to-Day Decision Making

Your plan will likely have long-term goals in mind, but when you create a strategic plan, you also improve day-to-day decision making. Everyone at your organization will analyze decisions based on the long-term plan. That will allow people to make decisions that will help you reach your long-term goal.

Of course, proper communication is essential for this to work. You need to let everyone in on the plan, so each member of your organization can help achieve it. Otherwise, everyone will be on different pages, and that will make it hard to achieve your goals.

Why Do Plans Fail?

So, you know you need a plan, but is that enough? Is just having a plan going to ensure you succeed?

Nope.

In reality, plans fail all the time. Just putting a plan down on paper isn't enough. You have to make sure you do it properly.

Common reasons plans fail include:

- Failing to have the right people involved

- The unwillingness to adapt and change

- Not fully committing to the plan

- Ignoring the facts

- Setting unrealistic goals

Those are common reasons for failure, but they're far from the biggest. The biggest reason plans fail has to do with accountability.

If you don't have accountability in place, you will fail. Well, at least you probably will.

If you have an idea or a goal without accountability, you have a 10 percent chance of completing it.

That's not very good, is it?

Now, if you put accountability in place, you increase the odds to 95 percent. That means success is almost determined.

With that in mind, you have to include accountability into your plan. Make sure your plan for accountability is foolproof so you can't avoid being held accountable.

The Takeaway

Planning is the key to success. If you fail to plan, you plan to fail, so come up with a plan and follow through. Just remember, it's hard to follow through and achieve goals if you don't have accountability in place. Find a way to hold yourself accountable so you can reach your business goals.

If you do this properly, it will be much harder for you to fail. You'll be more successful in everything you do if you start with a plan. Come up with it, write it down, and get ready to succeed.