

Workday reorganization: Start with goals each day

Written by Julie Desmond
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Pick up any paper and you'll see news about some company's reorganization. Businesses reorganize as a matter of course. They get leaner, they rein in loose ends, they identify opportunities and they move forward toward something better for the business and for its shareholders and customers. Why not take a cue from the big wigs and reorganize yourself?

With a nod toward books like *The Four Day Work Week* and a wink at my sales friend who comes in at 9:30, leaves by 3 and makes as much money as anyone, I launched a month-long experiment. It worked for me, so it might work for you, too.

Start with goals. Most people wake up Monday morning with either the joy or dread of having a general idea of what they want to accomplish during the work week. By writing down those goals, you can clearly see that you will never reach the end of the list by Friday afternoon. Or will you?

Break down the goals. If you need to have three project meetings this week, when will you have those? Block out the time on your calendar, and then make those appointments. If you need to make fifty phone calls this week, that's ten per day. When will you make those calls? Block out the time on your calendar and keep these appointments with yourself.

How will you know you've hit your goals? You'll look at your scorecard. Just for a week, track your activity. A scorecard can be as simple as checkmarks on a task list or it can be more elaborate. I put boxes behind my written goals: for three meetings, three boxes. Instead of checking them off, I wrote a couple letters to remind myself of who the meeting was with, to avoid taking credit for the same meeting twice.

Cushions help. With a five day week ahead of me, I wedged my goals into four days (50 calls per week would be 12.5 per day). Ever get called into meetings or projects unexpectedly? Rather than worry about reaching the finish line, I had worked in some breathing room. By Tuesday afternoon, I had reached my Wednesday afternoon goal, and an unplanned meeting became an opportunity rather than a distraction.

Remember, you are not a hamster on a wheel. You are an organized professional reaching the goals you've laid out for yourself. If you want to sell five widgets this week, that's an average of one per day. If you sell three on Monday, you only have to sell two more to hit your goal. Don't put off until Friday what you can do today; do take Friday off if your efficiency gets you to the bottom line faster than usual. Or spend Friday raising the bar, setting new goals for yourself. Once you know how you will accomplish everything, there's no end to what you can accomplish. You just need to get reorganized.

Julie Desmond is IT Recruiting Manager for George Konik Associates, Inc. Send your resume and career planning questions to jdesmond@georgekonik.com.