

6 Steps To Your Best Year

2024 is right around the corner and an opportunity to look toward new beginnings, and make positive changes, but any time of year is the perfect time to grow in your leadership.

Before you consider what you or your business will want to do in the new year, start with **who** you want to become. So many people make “do” goals. Start with “who” goals. Who do you want to be as a leader or business? Based on who you want to become, what do you need to do? Consider these six things you need to identify so you can set goals on your way to your best year of leadership:

- A discipline to start
- The courage to stop
- A person to empower
- A system to create
- A relationship to initiate
- A risk to take

1. A discipline to start

Many people believe that success is a result of a few big steps. Nothing is further from the truth.

It's the small things that no one sees that create the results that everyone wants. Discipline closes the gap between what you want and what you achieve. It's the bridge between who you are and who you want to become. Yes, being disciplined is hard, but the best leaders will always try to choose the pain of discipline over the pain of regret. Based on who you want to be, ask yourself, “What discipline do I need to start?”

2. The courage to stop

As a leader, you want to reach your goals and push your organization forward. In order to accomplish more, you must do less. This seems counterintuitive, but the key is not simply doing more. The key is doing more of what matters. You only have so much time, energy, and resources. Consider what you need to have the courage to stop, both personally and organizationally.

3. A person to empower

So, if you stop doing more yourself, how can you and your team accomplish more than you ever have in the past? When you stop doing more yourself and start empowering others! If you don't, you will become the lid to your organization. You aren't likely to build something great alone. Instead, you need to build people. And together you build something great. But first, you must empower them.

In the previous point, we talked about having the courage to stop doing something. But that doesn't mean the responsibility isn't important or shouldn't be done. In fact, when you identify something that needs to be done, but you realize you don't have to be the one to do it, you've found the perfect opportunity to empower someone else. When you empower the right person, four things always happen:

- They feel valued.
- They will grow in their leadership.
- You are freed to focus elsewhere.
- Your organization will become stronger.

If giving up control of a task is a challenge for you, you may be stunting the growth of your people and your leadership. You can have control or you can have growth, but you can't have both.

Remember, you don't have to know it all to be a great leader! Be yourself. People would rather follow a leader who is always real than one who is always right.

4. A system to create

Most of the problems leaders have are system problems. You either have systems by intent or by default, but you have them. Your system is a result of what you have created or tolerated. If you want a better outcome, create a better system! Create a detailed plan of who does what, when, and how.

5. A relationship to initiate

Your relationships matter. If you want to change who you are, change who you're with! So many leaders primarily spend their time with those who ask for their time. They build their schedule by responding to what other want from them. When it comes to spending time with others, don't just respond. Initiate!

Reach out to someone who stretches you, pushes you, and even confuses you. You could learn a lot from someone who is in a different field or thinks differently than you. Leadership principles like success, discipline, and innovation are universal. Find great people anywhere!

If you get a meeting with someone you respect, come prepared! Ask questions, listen, and take notes. Everyone has relationships. Few people have relationships on purpose.

6. A risk to take

No one ever achieved greatness by playing it safe! If you want to be who you've always been, then do what you've always done. But if you want to change who you are, change what you do! Now is the right time to take risks.

What ideas do you have? Do you have a dream, a hunch, or a theory you'd like to try? It's time to take a risk! If you're not sure you're ready, the truth is you'll never be completely ready. If you wait until you are ready, you will always be too late.

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