

### What's Really Important?

There are many things you have to do to achieve your desired business results. The most important step to take is to translate these business initiatives into the priorities that determine where you should spend your valuable time. Concurrently, you need to review and set your personal priorities for the next 3 to 6 months. The result of this exercise is to determine the list of your personal and business priorities where you will focus your time and attention. This essay is focused on how to quickly and effectively set and monitor your priorities.

#### Personal Priorities

Before setting business priorities, it's very important to consider your personal priorities. These can include the balance of work and personal time, time for learning, for hobbies and for your friends and family. Before proceeding, it's important to spend some quality time reflecting on the personal side of your life for it is all too easy to be overwhelmed by business issues and priorities.

After you've thought about your personal priorities, combine them with your business priorities. This is the list of the most important things you should be focusing on. Take the time to carefully review, refine and prioritize this list before proceeding since this should be the driver of all your activities. Make sure that the list also has the right balance of personal and professional priorities.

#### Follow These 3 Steps

1. Identify the top 3-5 things where you need to spend your time to achieve your business commitments in the second half of the year.
2. Identify the top 3-5 things you want to personally achieve for the remainder of the year.
3. Determine how you will track achievement of each of your most important priorities.

While these steps may appear obvious, the real challenge is narrowing what usually is a long list of important things to do into the 6-10 priorities that will really move the needle: 3-5 business priorities and 3-5 personal priorities. This is where you really need the quiet time to think, reflect and finalize what is really important to you and your business.

#### Set 3-5 Business Priorities

When you review all your key operational initiatives, think about those that you need to personally lead vs. just oversee. Because of organizational structure, cross-functional issues or importance, some will require your personal time and attention. Others can be delegated to members of your leadership team while you periodically review results vs. plan. It's critical to separate these two types of priorities and manage each accordingly.

### Set 3-5 Personal Priorities

Take some time to seriously reflect on what you want to achieve personally for your own growth, development, health or welfare. There may be subjects, either business or pleasure, that you would like to learn more about. Perhaps it's spending more time with your family, your hobby or community activities. Whatever the subject, identify those things that will make you feel like a better person when they are done over the next six months.

### Determine how you will track achievement of each set of priorities

Having set these priorities, think about how you will know if you have been successful in achieving them. One obvious way is the business results you achieve. Some will be measured by time spent. Sometimes, the tracking metric will be as simple as completion of a course, reading a book or learning a new skill. Whatever the priority, make sure that you can determine how you will know that you have been successful

### Maintain Balance

Watch carefully that business priorities do not overtake personal priorities. While sometimes necessary in the short term, prolonged imbalance can hinder your ability to perform at the highest levels and also detract from your personal development and growth that is critical to sustained success. Make sure that you have time for rest and relaxation, personal development and time for reflection to continuously improve.