

HOW TO MAKE NEW YEARS RESOLUTIONS WORK

Patrick Hoey

The start of a new year, allows us all to stop and take note of what we achieved last year. And it also allows us to set new goals and plans for this year, to try to make this year a better year. In early January, most of us may have thought about what we'd like 2015 to bring to us, but in the couple of months since, have we noted any actual plans and steps to achieve these?

Well it's never too late. Take thirty minutes one night, and sit down and write what plans and projects you would like to occur in 2015. They maybe business, personal or family related. These thirty minutes is what we talk about, to take time to work ON your business, instead of just IN your business. But it also relates to you personally, and to your family.

Ideas might include: business turnover targets; exercise three times a week; go on the family holiday; change to a better record keeping software; lose 10kg; employ someone and delegate more tasks; watch my child's sport more regularly; play golf more often, and get the handicap under 10; set up a SMSF; etc.

So noting the goal or project is the first step. If it is a Goal target, it should be SMART (Specific, and Steps, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Recorded, Timeframe). But it might also be to implement a project, which you can use some of the SMART words to help you achieve that project.

The next step, is writing a plan of how you are going to reach these goals. Break the goal or project down into small steps and timelines, so you can gradually work towards the ultimate goal/project. This will help you plan your way to success. If each step seems too big, then break it down again. The smaller the steps will allow you to feel more satisfied when you finish each step, which will help keep you motivated to reach the final goal or project. Good luck (which you won't need luck, just good planning!).

S

Specific & Steps – note exactly what it is to be achieved, and what steps along the way are needed to help you achieve the end goal.

M

Measurable – how can the end goal be measured, and what are the measurements at each step along the way?

A

Achievable – is the target achievable, and do I have the control to reach this?

R

Relevant & Recorded – is the goal relevant enough to me to want to achieve it? And how am I going to record it, and review it?

T

Timeframe – what is the end timeframe of completion, and what are the step timeframes along the process?



HOW TO MINIMISE 47% FRINGE BENEFITS TAX

Vik Sharma

Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) is a tax payable by the employer, for any personal benefits provided to the employee. For the 2014/15 FBT year, the tax rate is 47% on the grossed up amount. If any FBT is payable for benefits provided to an employee, this benefit and FBT will usually be negotiated in the employee's salary package. We usually like to avoid FBT by including an employee contribution for the private use of any benefit – however this usually only occurs when you're the owner, as we include this contribution from your drawings account. It can be negotiated when you're just an employee, and that they use their after-tax wage to pay back the private use.

The 2014/15 Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) year ends on 31st March 2015. At this time, we will be sending a blue FBT form to all our business clients, requesting details such as car odometer readings and yearly costs such as Fuel, Repairs, Registration and Insurance and any other employee benefits as detailed below.

Common examples of other Fringe Benefits provided by an employer to an employee include:

- Access to work car for private purposes;
- Car parking facilities;
- Cheaper loan;
- Access to leisure activity (i.e. gym membership);
- Social Functions;
- Entertainment;
- Reimbursement of an expense incurred by an employee, such as school fees;
- Provided housing or accommodation.

This information is very important to us to reduce any 47% Fringe Benefits Tax liabilities owing by your business, so we ask for these to be completed and returned to us as soon as possible after 31st March 2015.

If you have any questions or doubts about FBT, please contact our office.

"Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

-Theodore Roosevelt

ACCOUNT(ABLE) BOOK CLUB

Sue Ivers



Sir Richard Branson – Screw it, Let's do it!

Account(able) has implemented a "Quick Reads" program where each month staff will read the same book and hold a group discussion on how we can implement these ideas/life lessons into our personal and professional lives. This month we read "Screw it, Let's do it" a short biography by Sir Richard Branson on life lessons and the guidelines he utilises in business to make him one of the world's most successful businessmen.

Although this book is fairly self-indulgent I think many of the lessons advocated in his book can be applied today. Richard Branson was not born with an endless supply of money, he came from an average middle class family and started Virgin records whilst at university, through "Student magazine" he founded and expanded into selling mail-order records. Virgin Records was the money/backing behind Virgin Airways (Virgin records was sold to EMI in 1992 for 500 Million pounds). The idea of Virgin Airways came to Richard in 1977 whilst stuck on an island, bound for Puerto Rico. After a cancelled flight, he chartered a plane for \$2,000 and divided this by the number of people on the flight- it came to \$39 per head, he borrowed a blackboard and wrote on it "Virgin Airways \$39 single flight to Puerto Rico" and with that the idea of Virgin Airways was born, although it was not until 1984 that Virgin Atlantic Airways took its inaugural flight.

Many small successful business' are started like this, "Body shop" products were created in a kitchen by Anita Roddick and has gone on to become a global empire.

Life Lesson: you need to work hard, believe in what you do, calculate the risks and then take them. There are many opportunities and business ventures that can be undertaken without the need to spend huge amounts of money, if your business plan is sound, you believe it can be done, have goals, prepare well and have faith in you.

If you would like to read "Screw it, Let's Do It" contact Di McAuliffe at our office and you can borrow a copy - perhaps you will be inspired to be the next Sir Richard Branson!

Property loan variable rates of 4.34% and 5 year fixed rates of 4.59% - call Account(able) Home Loans & Finance for a free loan review.

TAKE THE BORING OUT OF BOOKKEEPING

In the early stages of owning a small business, many people find they also have to be the bookkeeper. This can mean less time spent doing what you love. Even if you have a dedicated bookkeeper, finding a way to stay on top of the latest numbers can be tricky. Your bookkeeping software plays a huge role in determining whether the process is quick and fun, or tedious and time consuming.

Bookkeeping software shouldn't be painful

At first, you may be frustrated by handling finances, or worse, second-guess your decision to open your own business. You may be overwhelmed by monotonous jobs and hidden responsibilities.

Most people using traditional bookkeeping software have the same complaints. They say the process of entering data and then sorting it is a pain. Not to mention all the headaches involved in getting it prepared for their accountant. In a world where computers are connected online, these problems needn't exist anymore. The accounting landscape has shifted dramatically. Online bookkeeping software connects to the internet to automatically collect your data, and then sort it for you.

Bookkeeping is much less painful when your bookkeeper and accountant can login and view up-to-date accounts online – anytime, from anywhere.

Cashflow is key to business success

So why does bookkeeping matter when it comes to cash-flow? Well, if your books aren't in order, then it's hard to get an accurate picture of your financial position. As every small business owner knows, cashflow is the ultimate key to success or failure.

People fall into the trap of looking at their bank balance and thinking it represents the money available to pay their bills. But the bank balance is an illusion. You can't see the liabilities that are looming, such as taxes or bills. When you can't see up-to-date cashflow, you're like a pilot in fog. Without any instruments to see altitude, speed, or direction, you're flying blind.

XERO Record keeping - Cloud Accounting

At Account(able) many of our clients and including ourselves now use Xero to run their Business. The feedback we have had has been more than positive from the clients that are using it through to the Accountants that work on their files.

We are running a Cloud Accounting Seminar on the following dates:

Wednesday the 25th March at 6.30pm

Thursday the 2nd April at 12.30pm

Call now on 5366 1000 to book you place. Or alternatively call us if you would like to discuss Cloud Accounting further or learn more about Xero Software – our bookkeepers would be more than happy to help you.