



People Make The Difference whitepaper

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New Year, new ideas, new drive: Hit the ground running in 2016

Last month as the year came to a close, I wrote about the importance of taking the time to reflect on what has worked well and what hasn't in the past year and planning for the year ahead. And now that January has rolled around, it's the perfect time to make changes as a result of this thinking time. But of course if you find yourself reading this article later in the year, if something isn't working, it's always the right time to make changes!

I'm a big believer in starting with some quick wins to keep you motivated and drive your success. Here are some fast and easy changes you can make now that will have a genuine impact on your business.

Communicate better

- Schedule a regular team meeting time.
- Change up the format of your team meetings if they are getting stale or not working. Maybe try setting a time limit or focusing on a single topic or inviting a special guest to speak on a topic.
- Or if team meetings are proving to be a waste of time for your business, make it clear to your team that there are direct lines of communication to you. If there are problems, don't wait for the official meeting to discuss it!

Get personal

- If you realised that you don't actually know your team members that well, set a goal to meet one on one with a few employees each month – schedule the first meetings today!
- Find out your team's thoughts on a semi-regular (but not compulsory – everyone is busy and has different priorities) social outing to get to know each other outside the confines of the work environment. Get input from your team on the frequency and type of activities that they would like to be involved in.

Invigorate your mind

- If you are feeling bored and uninspired, make Friday afternoon learning time. Watch a 30 minute TED talk or read an article on your favourite business website to spur new ideas.

Commit to a cause

- Business lost its heart? Pick a new cause to support either financially or in-kind and get your team involved too with generating ideas and taking action.
- Remember, community involvement doesn't need to be about money. It's about uniting your team behind a common goal that serves other people. So if you can't make a financial donation, encourage team members to volunteer or provide other forms of support.

Manage your time

- Is working 14 hours a day really a productive use of your time? Studies after studies show that more isn't necessarily better and while there are occasional times when you need to burn the midnight oil, it shouldn't be a daily occurrence. Use the New Year to create new time management habits so that you can prioritise your health and non-work activities that elevate your energy and actually help you to be more productive at work. This might mean leaving early one afternoon to spend time with your kids, making sure you take a minimum 30 minute lunch break each day, or turning off email notifications on your phone so you stop checking for messages last thing before bed and wrecking your rest time.

We know that as leaders it can be hard to do everything and there is often resistance to change – both from our teams and from ourselves. Starting with a few small tweaks that are easy to maintain can build your confidence and motivation for taking on some of the more revolutionary changes you may have thought of over the break.

To help you break down plans into achievable actions that will get results for your team and your business, People Make The Difference has our one-on-one coaching services, in-house workshops and Coach-on-Call for those times when you get a bit stuck and need some quick advice. To find out more, visit www.peoplemakethedifference.com.au or call +61 412 333 415.