

EMyth

How to Make 2018 Your Best Year yet:

Your Annual Plan

2018



Why Is an Annual Plan Important?

Creating an Annual Plan will help you move toward your goals. It's the bridge between the vision you set for your business and the actual work it will take you and your business to move toward that vision. Too often, annual planning – if it's done at all – is a rote, static exercise that results in a document that gathers dust in a file cabinet.

You're about to discover a completely new version of the Annual Plan—one that actually serves you. It works because it starts with your passion and gives you the tools to translate that passion into specific actions. What's more, this Annual Plan will grow and evolve with your business. It allows you to adapt to changes in your business, and helps you learn and improve your process along the way.

Your attitude, and how you translate your goals into projects and tasks are the key factors that will make your 2018 Annual Plan a success.

In this Document, you will:

- Understand the importance of building an Annual Plan.
- Assess how your business is currently performing so you know what to focus on.
- Walk away with clear "next steps" to get on track in 2018.

Steps to Create Your Annual Plan:

Your Annual Plan isn't something that you can bang out in a last minute one-hour session. It's something that takes thoughtful contemplation and time. Do yourself a favor and start working on it now.

Step One: Imagine the impact you want your business plan to have.

Step Two: Assess the current state of your business.

Step Three: Prioritize to create a short list of goals.

Step Four: Create quarterly goals and monthly actions.

Step Five: Empower your team to own and track results.

Step Six: Document your process and adapt to the unexpected.

Step 1: Set the Goal for Your Annual Plan

Take a moment, step back, and imagine what you want to accomplish in the coming year. Try to answer the following questions:

What is the theme of your Annual Plan? Hint: Think of a word or phrase that would sum up what is most important for your company to know in the coming year.

What kind of impact would you like your plan to have?

When will you finish this plan? Set yourself a goal date:

Keep in mind, this is not your final version. You may want to revisit these questions after you've completed your assessment to make sure your plan is in line with what your business really needs. Don't be afraid to revise and re-work but keep in mind that this vision will be your guide for the remainder of the year.

Step 2: Assess the Current Condition of Your Business

One of the most important steps in creating your Annual Plan is to assess the current condition of your business. Answer each item honestly and objectively so you have a clear and truthful understanding of where you and your business stand now. This will uncover areas that need development and opportunities for growth.

LEADERSHIP

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate your current leadership abilities?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Are you in touch with your values and company mission to insure you create a business that is personally satisfying and reflects your needs and aspirations?

YES NO NOT SURE

Have you communicated your company's future direction and your standards, expectations and measures for production to your employees in a way that challenges and inspires them to achieve?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you communicate clearly and directly, even in difficult situations?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you set the tone and put systems and structures in place that allow employees to put forth their best efforts and as a result find their own personal and professional satisfaction?

YES NO NOT SURE

BRAND

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate the effectiveness of your company's brand?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Does your company have an intentional and comprehensive sensory package that successfully attracts your primary target market?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

Are your employees clear about your unique value and commitment to your customers and how their position influences the overall customer experience?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

Do you have a marketing strategy that is effectively creating brand recognition with your target markets?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

FINANCE

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate the financial health of your company?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Are you getting the financial reports you need and do you trust the validity of the information they contain?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

Are you confident reading and interpreting your financial reports?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

Do you have ongoing, effective financial management systems for annual budgets, cash management, and tracking of key financial indicators?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

Is your company regularly achieving its financial targets?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YES	NO	NOT SURE

MANAGEMENT

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate your management ability and the effectiveness of the other managers in your company?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Do you have a comprehensive and documented organization chart and detailed position descriptions for all positions on the chart?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you and your staff have a systemic strategy for producing predictable results and fostering innovation?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you and your managers know how to mentor employees and develop productive working relationships?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you have recruiting and hiring processes in place that ensure you are getting the best possible person for every vacant position?

YES NO NOT SURE

Does the management culture in your business encourage employees to be fully engaged and highly self-motivated?

YES NO NOT SURE

MARKETING

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate your company's current marketing activities and your ability to generate the right number of quality leads?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Do you have an effective lead generation process that provides a steady stream of high-quality leads?

YES NO NOT SURE

Is your company taking advantage of a variety of different channels for generating leads?

YES NO NOT SURE

Are you sure that your current marketing messages are having the desired impact on prospective customers?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you have an effective social media strategy and presence?

YES NO NOT SURE

SALES

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive),
how would you rate your company's ability to generate the desired level of sales revenue?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Do your salespeople use a documented sales process that effectively converts new leads into customers? YES NO NOT SURE

Do you set challenging sales goals for each salesperson and do they regularly achieve them? YES NO NOT SURE

Do you have an effective process for proactively creating new and on-going sales from existing customers? YES NO NOT SURE

Are your existing customers routinely referring new leads? YES NO NOT SURE

DELIVERY

On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being least positive, 10 being most positive), how would you rate your company's ability to deliver your products/services to customers in a way that consistently meets and often exceeds their expectations?

What do you think is needed to make this a 10?

Do you have a long-term strategy for driving innovation of the products and services your company offers?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you have a documented process that ensures products/services are delivered to customers accurately and on time?

YES NO NOT SURE

Are you certain that your company delivers a high level of customer service, each and every day?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do you have a process that ensures customers get a consistently high quality product/service?

YES NO NOT SURE

Do your company culture and procedures promote exceeding customers' expectations with each transaction?

YES NO NOT SURE

Step 3: Prioritize Your Needs

Now that you have a clear sense of where your business stands, it's time to start prioritizing what you will do in 2018. Take a first pass at your priorities.

Using the business assessment you just completed, rank each of the seven dynamics from lowest to highest. Once you've listed each of the dynamics, determine your top three priorities within each category. Review the follow up questions from your assessment for help getting started.

A note about priorities: commit to a short, realistic list of projects that reflect the needs you discovered while assessing your business. Put all other ideas on a someday/maybe list.

- 1.** _____
1.1 _____
1.2 _____
1.3 _____

- 2.** _____
2.1 _____
2.2 _____
2.3 _____

- 3.** _____
3.1 _____
3.2 _____
3.3 _____

- 4.** _____
4.1 _____
4.2 _____
4.3 _____

5. _____

5.1 _____

5.2 _____

5.3 _____

6. _____

6.1 _____

6.2 _____

6.3 _____

7. _____

7.1 _____

7.2 _____

7.3 _____

Step 3 (cont.): Prioritize your Needs – Take a Second Pass

Pause. Step away from this process for a few hours or a few days. You've put a lot of work into this already. Now it's time to take it up a notch. You don't want to go into 2018 with a nebulous pile of 28 "priorities." Now that you've given yourself a break, come back to your priorities list with a fresh mind. Pick out the top ten things you need to do next year in order to achieve your vision.

Priority #1: _____

Priority #2: _____

Priority #3: _____

Priority #4: _____

Priority #5: _____

Priority #6: _____

Priority #7: _____

Priority #8: _____

Priority #9: _____

Priority #10: _____

Step 4: Create Your Plan

Now it's time to translate your priorities into actions. Use the guide below to map out your year with quarterly goals and monthly actions.

1st Quarter Goals

JAN

FEB

MAR

2nd Quarter Goals

APR

MAY

JUN

3rd Quarter Goals

JUL

AUG

SEP

4th Quarter Goals

OCT

NOV

DEC

Example

1st Quarter Goals

Leadership and Management:

Become a more inspirational leader and implement key management systems throughout the company

JAN *Recommit to my Purpose Statement and company values and vision*

Develop process for employee engagement in company values, vision

FEB *Do a self-assessment and focus on improving my management qualities.*

MAR *Consider one or two strategies for increasing employees' buy-in to our mission, promise, and goals.*

2nd Quarter Goals

Finance:

Create a financial plan for growing the business; develop and implement systems needed to support this

APR *Analyze our financial statements and find areas that need improvement*

Reset our key financial indicators

MAY *Create a budget to support attaining financial targets*

JUN *Work with managers to determine and develop needed systems*

And so on, you get the idea.

What's Next?

It feels good to start taking control of your business, doesn't it? Don't lose your momentum!

Here are the next steps to help you get on track—and stay on track for next year.

First: Schedule time to work on the next steps to finish your plan.

- I will write my first priorities (Date, Time) _____
- I will review and edit my priorities (Date, Time) _____
- I will assign accountabilities and due dates (Date, Time) _____

Next: Bring in your team. Share the Annual Plan and empower them to take responsibility for it.

Schedule time each month to revisit your plan, document your process, and make adjustments as needed. Not only will this help you keep on track with your goals, it will be a source of learning and inspiration for next year's plan.

Going through this process is designed to engage you with a new clarity about the organization of your business; what's missing and what's great.

As you start to look at your goals for 2018, and document a plan for action, this is a perfect time to talk about your business with an EMyth coach.

"Destiny is not a matter of chance, but of choice.
Not something to wish for, but attain."

William Jennings Bryan
Former U.S. Secretary of State