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Tips for a Successful Year-End Review



Your year-end review is an opportunity to seize. It gives you an audience with your boss that allows you to shine in ways that can move you forward in your career. If that's not how you think of it, here are some tips to help you shift your approach and the way you think about the meeting.

- 1. Begin planning for next year's review right after this one.** Whatever goals are set for you, whether by you or your boss, develop a plan for how you'll accomplish those goals, set benchmarks and targets throughout the year to keep you motivated – quarterly or maybe even monthly benchmarks of what



Make Your Work Journal Come Alive.

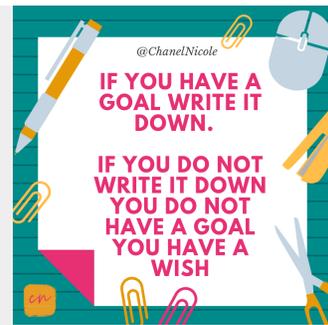
It doesn't have to be long-drawn out paragraphs that suck up your time.

Document your accomplishments even in simple ways.



you would like to have accomplished with very clear, measurable targets that will keep you on track to achieve those goals by the time your next review rolls around. Keep the written goals and targets visible to you and make the steps to achieve them part of your to-do list every time you update it.

- 2. Pay attention to your accomplishments to know your own value.** So often when we accomplish a task, we're immediately on to the next one and we barely notice what we've accomplished. That's part of the culture of businesses and workplaces constantly striving for more and everyone feeling like they have to work harder and faster. So, I encourage you to begin a journal for yourself to write down what you've accomplished. Whether it is big or small, get in the habit of writing it down. When you do, include what value it brought, whether it was to help a co-worker, client or customer, bring in a big sale, solve a problem, overcome an obstacle, etc. etc. The list goes on. Also, take note of the monetary value that resulted. If you can add a dollar amount to it, all the better, but don't think it has no value just because it doesn't have a dollar sign attached.
- 3. Play well with others.** Being highly accomplished is important, but if you are winning at the expense of others or stepping on others to climb the ladder of success, believe me, it will be noticed and not appreciated. Maybe in the most ruthless of organizations that is tolerated and maybe even rewarded, but in most organizations, it will work against you. Instead, be known for



A few words about **THE POTENTIAL TO DO MORE...**

How do you demonstrate the potential to "do more" as in the quote above? Number 11 from this article talks about having a "stretch goal" as being a plus. I defined a stretch goal as one that pushes you outside your comfort zone and/or challenges you to learn or apply new skills. I can point to a number of those throughout my career. I will tell you about my scariest. With most of my stretch goals, I was nervous. I lost sleep worrying about everything going well, and usually, the first attempt wasn't perfect. That's normal with stretch goals. In my first career as a labor relations consultant, I represented my clients in arbitration cases, which work just like a courtroom - opening statements, presenting your evidence through exhibits and

being collaborative and helpful to others on your team as well as other teams. Give others credit where credit is due.

4. Approach your review as you would a job interview. While you know your boss better than you would someone you are interviewing with, it is good to approach your review with the mindset you would have if you were interviewing with this person for a job. That means putting your best foot forward, knowing your value, highlighting your successes and how it has helped the organization, where your strengths are and what you're looking for in career growth and opportunities, which I'll address further down. It also means that you want to be cautious about being overly honest in a way that shows you in a bad light or is self-deprecating. I am not suggesting that you be dishonest in any way, but be positive and present yourself in a positive light.

5. Recognize your team's success without diminishing your own contributions. It is important to show support for your team and be willing to recognize that everyone is more successful with great teamwork, but in a review, you also need to be able to articulate your own contributions to that teamwork.

6. Take responsibility for what didn't go well. The best way to address missed goals, mistakes or setbacks is to be honest that it didn't go as planned, what got in the way – which is different from making excuses – and

questioning witnesses, cross-examining your opponent's witnesses, delivering a compelling closing statement and writing a legal brief to support your case after the hearing. I am not an attorney; this was intense legal work and was a stretch for me. I can tell you that at my first arbitration, my knees were LITERALLY knocking together! That was the most scared I ever was in my career. It was a tough case and I didn't win that one, but I went on to do many arbitrations and won the overwhelming majority of them. I got good at it. The point is, it is sometimes really scary to take on something you've never done before. It's definitely easier to just not take it on. However, demonstrating that you are a continuous learner, that you are willing to take on challenges and grow and that you can do more, makes you more promotable. Good luck with your next stretch goal!



be willing to admit where you made mistakes. You can do that by sharing what didn't work and what you learned and how you would handle it differently in the future to avoid the same result again. Everybody makes mistakes and targets aren't always hit, but if you can demonstrate that you learned something from it and that you have already begun to approach things differently or will in the future, that will show the boss what he or she wants to hear.

7. **Don't blame others.** This goes hand in hand with #6 above, but blaming others for what they didn't do isn't any better than making excuses. If your success relies on someone else getting something done, then it's also your responsibility to be checking in on that person to see that they are on target to get done what you need and if they're not, figure out how to get it done! Blaming others will not serve you well, particularly in an annual review.

8. **Be prepared to report on progress from prior feedback.** If you received feedback in a prior review or anytime during the year, then be prepared to share what you have done with that feedback and how you have grown and improved in that area.

9. **Look for opportunities beyond your specific goals.** In addition to the goals you have either chosen or been assigned throughout the year, look for opportunities to make contributions in ways



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Speaking Topics

Is your organization looking for a professional development speaker, a webinar or a workshop?

Here are a few of my speaking topics:

Everything is Negotiable - Do It Skillfully

Handle Difficult Conversations with Confidence

Position Yourself for Career Growth

Coaching & Mentoring Skills for Leaders

Quick-Start Your New Leadership Role

Managing the People Side of Change

Managing "Up" -

that will add to your value and be sure to record those in your journal. Look for areas where there's a gap between the goal and what exists. How can you find a way to fill that gap? Where is there a problem that isn't being addressed? Take the initiative to figure out a solution. Think strategically to help your organization. Where can profits be increased or money saved by improving processes or making something more efficient or finding another supplier of good quality with a cheaper price or minimizing waste? These can all be opportunities that others are simply overlooking because they are too busy. Waste exists in every organization. Where you see it, find a better way. Then figure out how much money it saved the organization so you can share that in your review. Anytime you can equate something you did to a monetary value gets you noticed!

10. **Know your worth and be brave in asking for a raise if appropriate.** Many states have made it illegal to prohibit employees from talking with each other about their salaries. If you have information that you are not being paid what you should, then ask for a raise. If you have performed well and served the organization well, meeting or particularly exceeding goals over the last year, ask for a raise. In some organizations, raises are not negotiable, they are set – so know how raises are determined in your own organization. If you are going to ask for a raise, do it as a positive request after sharing your accomplishments and the value you are bringing and be sure such a request never sounds like a threat.

**Working Effectively
with Superiors**

**Enhance Your Time
Management**

Stress is an Inside Job

**Results Through Goal-
Setting and Feedback
(A series)**

Conflict Series

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Services:**

- **Leadership Development**
- **Team Development**
- **Customized Training and Facilitation**
- **Strategic Planning**

11. **Come prepared with your own goals for the coming year.** Get ahead of the game by bringing your own proposal for next year's goals. Obviously, your boss has the final say on your goals, but you can have your own in addition to any your boss assigns. It will show initiative though, for you to arrive already prepared with goals. Having a stretch goal is also a plus. A stretch goal is one that pushes you outside your comfort zone and/or challenges you to learn or apply new skills.

12. **Talk about your career goals and ask about what opportunities are available for your career growth and what you need to do to be viewed as ready for that next step up.** Don't assume the boss is always looking out for how you can be promoted or what type of direction you'd like to take in the organization. Take responsibility for your own career development. Discuss with your boss what choices could be available to you and what is required and how you could meet those requirements. Ask for assignments that better prepare you for those future opportunities and let your boss know what you want so they can help prepare you and be aware to think of you when those opportunities present themselves. You never want to be in the position of asking why you didn't get a promotion only to have your boss respond with, "I didn't know you were interested in that type of role."

Do your best work and be prepared to promote yourself. Be aware of the value you bring and

**know how to present that value! Best of luck
with your next review!**



Do you struggle to identify and articulate your value? You're not alone. It's actually common for people to see others' value more easily than their own. Let me help you. As a coach, this is one of my best skills. I help my clients uncover their value and become enthusiastic in how they communicate it.

Click below to schedule time with me.



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