

MONDAY MORNING MANAGER

MANAGEMENT TIPS » BY HARVEY SCHACHTER



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The best-laid plans often go awry, as poet Robert Burns told us a couple of centuries ago. We can develop all the brilliant strategies and goals we want, but without effective implementation, they likely won't amount to much. On the Profit Path blog, consultant Jim Stewart sets out four laws for effective implementation

Forget perfection

Keep in mind that 80 per cent of something is better than 100 per cent of nothing. Don't wait for the perfect moment or the perfect plan. "You must take what you have and make a start - now, today. Because if you don't, then there will also be some reason not to start tomorrow and before you know it the month or the quarter or the year have gone - and you'll have accomplished nothing," Mr. Stewart stresses.

Persist

You may have heard the story of the 10 salespeople who all hear about the same potential deal. In the early stages, as they find out how demanding the prospect is, how slow he is to return calls, and how difficult it is to gain an appointment, four of them give up. Then four more drop out as the prospect raises objections about some elements of their proposals, fusses over price, and asks for referrals. In the end, only two salespeople are in the running. The reward for persisting is that they have improved their odds from one in 10 to one in two by simply persisting.

Adapt

Your plan won't work as intended. Repeat: Your plan won't work as intended. It is based on assumptions, some of which will be erroneous, and many factors you can't control. So review the plans regularly, assess what happened to your assumptions, and adapt your strategy and plans to the evolving reality.

Commitment

Make sure that sufficient resources are allocated to the vital task of implementation. "No half-hearted measures - buy high-quality raw materials, train everyone thoroughly, make the right equipment available and put enough people on the job. Because anything less than total commitment will jeopardize the goal," he cautions.



More than 200 years ago, Scottish poet Robert Burns wrote about how plans can go off track. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS