

# SMALL CHANGES can make a BIG DIFFERENCE

Scrap the resolutions and opt for small changes that will bring big business benefits. CAM Coach Mark Shields shares his secrets...

**L**ET'S start with some numbers. Firstly, only 10% of therapists will change their businesses for the better in 2017. That means 90% of us will perform at the same level, or even see our businesses decline. Almost three quarters of people set themselves life changing goals in January, but just 40% of CAM Practitioners look to implement meaningful and significant changes to our businesses. Even more astounding, few of us will actually manage to make significant improvements to our business and lives. So how can you be sure you're one of the minority that ends the year with a better, stronger business?

2017 has the potential to offer unprecedented opportunities to those willing to take them due to a combination of events in the sectors of finance, science, self-awareness, the UK's exit from the EU and global connectivity. As professional therapists, we should seek to psychologically reset all the clocks and dials to zero so we can embark on a series of new ideas and best practices to ensure our business success in 2017.

### UNDERSTANDING BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

A New Year's resolution is a commitment that an individual makes to a project or the reforming of a habit. It's often a business and lifestyle change designed to be advantageous both personally and professionally. As all members of the Life Coaching community already know, "If you always do what you've always done you'll always get what you've always got!" If you want to change then you have to start to do things differently.

### START WITH YOUR VISION

January is a great time to reflect on the previous year's performance and plan new and exciting changes for 2017. When I am coaching or mentoring therapists at the beginning of any new year I always begin the process with the creation of a new and exciting business vision. Then it's time to set a series of achievable goals and actions to deliver this vision.

The desired outcome can be achieved by taking small steps - or business nudges as I call them - rather than great big steps which may cause us to stumble. In my experience these nudges or small steps lead to progress and progress leads to momentum. This momentum spurs us to become more resourceful, take more action, unlock more of our potential and improve our business results.

### CSMART GOAL SETTING

Let me share with you my professional CAM Coach BIG GOLDEN steps to ensure you achieve your business goals. The first step is create a meaningful new and exciting business vision for your business. Decide on the step changes you need to make to deliver your vision. Ensure your vision is commercially focused and includes 5 new income driving initiatives and activities.

### MAKE SURE YOU:

- Review your charging process and ensure your charges reflect your qualifications, location and services offered.
- Complete a full review of your website, your global world advert and make appropriate changes.
- Set yourself some new targets and ensure you include targets for how many client enquiries and appointments you want each week, how much income you need to deliver, and how many of your enquiries you want to turn into appointments. This I call practitioner proficiencies
- Design at least 3 new client packages as part of your New Year proposition.
- Re-write your new business plan to ensure it is aligned to your new business vision.
- Complete a full business review of the previous year identifying business trends, periods of high activity and opportunity.

Write everything down. A goal is only an idea until you write it down. Seems obvious doesn't it? However in my experience only 1 in a 100 therapists can produce a set of written goals when asked to present them.

Ensure you apply the goal setting principle CSMART to each of your business goals. CSMART stands for:

**C = Commitment.** You are wasting your time if you're not serious about achieving.

**S = Specific.** Ensure your goal is real to you and the results are easy to see and feel.

**M = Measurable.** Ensure when setting your goal that the results can be measured and progress monitored. When you see progress being made you will pick up momentum and take more action which in turn will generate better measurable results for you. Levels of confidence and belief increase and away you go.

**A = Achievable.** If you set unrealistic goals, they will seem overwhelming and you will quickly lose confidence and belief. If this happens, your plan has a good chance of failing and often won't get off the ground. Remember small steps and business nudges is the way to go!

**R = Realistic.** Be realistic, but challenging, when setting your new years resolutions. It will help with sustaining your program and action in achieving your goal.

**T = Timescales.** Most important of all as focus and direction are vital when implementing change in your business. You need to be organized with clear timescales and objectives from the outset.

*I'd advise you to focus on a maximum of 3 goals at any one time. You will lose focus if you work on more than that.*

### THE NEXT STEP

Once you have decided on your new business vision, goals and actions, the next step is to write each one down ensuring the written goal fits the CSMART criteria. Set yourself a maximum of five actions per goal in the form of a structured and formal written plan.

### IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOW THROUGH

Many people fail to achieve their business goals as they miss one final step. This is called follow through. Reviewing, monitoring, reevaluating are all vitally important on the journey for change, so set yourself a regular review period and time and stick to it.

*In my world of life coaching this is known as the GROW model:*

**G=** Goal  
**R=** Reality what you have achieved

**O=** Options, what can we do differently  
**W=** Way forward

If you follow the model and steps I have outlined, and write your goals down, you will already have 100% more chance of achieving your 2017 business goals than you had before you read this article! Think what more you can achieve by applying the full CSMART and GROW models into your 2017 business goals. Your results will astound you! ■

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