

Your 24-hour action plan for  
getting where you want to go and creating the time to get there



**Oaktree Accountants Ltd**

Tel: 01264 324103  
E-mail: [info@oaktreebm.co.uk](mailto:info@oaktreebm.co.uk)

## Introduction

### Two warnings

This guide sets out exactly what you need to do to start getting where you want to go in business and in life.

But before you read on, it is only fair that we give you a couple of warnings.

### The first steps

The nine steps we have mapped out for you in these pages constitute an enormous first stride. But, even so, they are still just that... a single stride on a journey of many thousands of miles.

Please, please, please do not fall into the trap of assuming that once you have taken this stride you can put your feet up and relax. Nothing could be further from the truth!

### Action is the key

However good your ideas and intentions are... they will come to absolutely nothing unless they are turned into action.

So, focus on taking action. And start taking it today!

## Step by step checklist

Step	Action	Completed
<b>1</b>	<p>Re-read the notes you took during our discussion, and transfer any initial action points to the action planner provided for you on page 10</p> <p><i>NB: This step will only be relevant if you have already started to discuss your goals with us.</i></p>	
<b>2</b>	<p>Research shows that people with up to date written goals are as much as 3100% more successful than people who do not have up to date written goals. So, with that in mind, use the form on page 4 to think about and articulate your personal goals</p>	
<b>3</b>	<p>Having done that, use the form on page 5 to think about and articulate your goals for your business</p>	
<b>4</b>	<p>Use the time management quizzes on pages 6 and 7, and the numbers that matter on page 8 to assess how effective you are at moving towards your personal and business goals</p> <p><i>Note: If you are a multi owner / multi manager business you will need to discuss your responses to steps 3 and 4 with your colleagues, and agree on a shared set of goals</i></p>	
<b>5</b>	<p>Consider the key time management ideas on page 9</p>	
<b>6</b>	<p>Think carefully about everything you have just done and read. What are the implications for what you are doing - and what you <u>should</u> be doing?</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p>Transfer the things you should be doing to the action planner on page 10</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p>Contact Oaktree Accountants to arrange a meeting to discuss what else you can do to achieve your goals - and transfer the action points arising to your action planner on page 10</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p>Review your action planner. Prioritise it. And start taking action!</p>	

## Your personal goals

<b>What <u>you</u> want (your “goal”)</b>
<b>Why <u>you</u> want it</b>  Pain if you fail  Gain if you succeed
<b>What <u>you</u> must do to get it</b>

### Notes:

1. Make five or six photocopies of this page - one for each goal.
2. Use the first box to write down your goal - ie what you would really like to achieve. Make sure that it is a SMART goal i.e. one that is:

**S - Specific** (i.e. “retire with £300,000” instead of “retire with a lot of money”)

**M - Measurable** (i.e. “help all of my children to get a degree” instead of “good education”)

**A - Awesome** (i.e. it must fill you with excitement and inspiration, otherwise you will not see it through)

**R - Realistic** - (i.e. challenging goals are great, but do not stray into cloud cuckoo land)

**T - Timed** - (i.e. “retire by 2020” instead of “retire eventually”)

3. In the second box write down:

- The “pain” that you and those you love will experience if you do not achieve your goal, ie ill health, poverty, unhappiness etc. (Why do this? Because recognising this pain is an enormous motivating force that will help you to work even harder to make sure you do not fail!)
- What you will gain when you succeed - i.e. wealth, health, happiness, a prosperous retirement etc. What will you see, hear, and feel? And what else will your success allow you to achieve/do?

4. In the third box write down the key things (*not* everything) you will need to achieve your goal. For example, it could be new resources, contacts, skills, actions etc.
5. Repeat this process using a new sheet for every single goal you would like to achieve.
6. Lay out all your goals in front of you and decide which are the most important to you, which are less important and which (if any) are, on reflection, not important after all.
7. Take the goals that are most important to you and transfer the actions from box three to your action planner on page 10 of this guide

## Your business goals

<b>What <u>you</u> want (your “goal”)</b>
<b>Why <u>you</u> want it</b>  Pain if you fail  Gain if you succeed
<b>What <u>you</u> must do to get it</b>

### Notes:

1. Use this form in the same way as you did for your personal goals... the only difference is that this time you are taking a much narrower focus by concentrating exclusively on the goals of your business.
2. Examples of goals might include:
  - To grow your sales by 100% over the next three years
  - To have your first three franchises operating by the end of the year 2020
  - To sell the business for at least £1,500,000 by July 2025
  - To have increased the product range from 5 to 15 different kinds of widgets by the end of 2020

## Are you doing the right things for yourself?

Key areas of your life	% of your time you wish you were spending on this area of your life	% of your time you are spending on this area of your life	Gap
Sleep	33%		
Business			
<b>In</b> the business (inward)			
<b>In</b> the business (customer facing)			
<b>ON</b> the business			
Family time			
ME time (hobbies interests, having fun)			
ME time – health and fitness			
Necessities (housework, school runs, dressing/bathing/other!)			
List other important stuff			
	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

### Notes:

1. Starting from the personal goals you set out on page 4, use the left-hand column to list out the broad areas of your life that are important to you.
2. Use column two to record the percentage of your time that you would like to spend in each of these areas in an ideal world. NB Please make sure that the column adds up to 100%.
3. Use column three to record (very approximately) the percentage of your time you think you are spending in each area. NB All that is required is a rough and ready approximation here. Do not waste time trying to get pinpoint accuracy... the aim is just to get a broad feel.
4. Use column four to calculate the gap between column two and three
5. Does the gap analysis suggest that you need to make changes to achieve your goals? If it does, what changes are you going to make?

NB: In the % of time section you will note that I have entered 33% against Sleep. It is easy to try and spin lots of plates and justify it by having less sleep. Science tells us that if we do not sleep for 8 hours per day (33%) then we are at risk from many diseases, our IQ level drops by 10% and we may live a much shorter life. Conversely, having more than 8 hours sleep can have a similar impact and so it is important to aim for 8 hours sleep per night.

## Are you doing the right things as a business?

Key areas the management team in your business is spending its time on	% of their time you wish they were spending on this area of the business	% of their time they are spending on this area of the business	Gap
Working <u>IN</u> the business on inward facing activities e.g. <input type="checkbox"/> Business management <input type="checkbox"/> People management <input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways of working IN the inward facing parts of the business			
Working <u>IN</u> the business on customer facing activities e.g. <input type="checkbox"/> Winning new customers <input type="checkbox"/> Serving existing customers <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways of working IN the customer facing parts of the business			
Working <u>ON</u> the business to develop <input type="checkbox"/> Winning strategies for your firm <input type="checkbox"/> Better ways of serving/helping customers <input type="checkbox"/> The skills and knowledge of your team <input type="checkbox"/> Other ways of working ON the business			
	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

### Notes:

1. Follow the same basic steps as set out in the notes on page 6
2. Does the gap analysis suggest that you need to make changes to achieve your goals?
3. If it does, what changes are you going to make?

## What are the numbers that matter?

Key numbers that matter to you and your business	Your ideal numbers	The numbers now	Gap
Turnover			
Profits			
Personal income			
Holidays			

### Notes:

1. Follow the same basic steps as set out in the notes on page 6 but looking at the numbers that matter whether those numbers are monetary, time, blood pressure, weight etc. What is important is to capture the numbers that matter, ascertain where the ideal is, ascertain where the now is and identify the GAP.

## Need more time?

If you are one of the many businesspeople who needs to free up more time to rise to the many challenges you face, here are ten practical ways you can do exactly that.

Ten time saving strategies	Relevant? ✓
The most important way you can ever use your time is to decide what is most important, and then do it. In other words, you must always put <i>first things first</i> .	
Look at each task and ask, 'will this move me closer towards achieving my goals?' If the answer is 'no', only do that task after you have done the other tasks that will.	
Remember the 80:20 rule... ie that 20% of the effort usually generates 80% of the results. Make sure you identify (and do) everything in that 20% group.	
Use the above tests to draw up a prioritised "To Do" list every day.	
<p>According to Sir John Harvey-Jones, "leaders should only do what only they can do".</p> <p>So ask yourself the question 'How much of my time is spent doing work I am over skilled for?' Multiply that figure by how much your time is worth an hour (remember motor mechanics are regularly charged out at £40+ an hour) to calculate the money you are wasting every year by being ineffective at delegating. And then multiply that figure by the number of years until you retire to give you an estimate of the money you can save by becoming an effective delegator.</p> <p>Having terrified yourself at the thought of all those hundreds of thousands of pounds going to waste, invest a few pounds in <i>The One Minute Manager Meets the Monkey</i> (Ken Blanchard, Harper Collins). It will show you how to simply, quickly, and easily reclaim the time and money that is rightfully yours by mastering the art of delegation.</p>	
Having mastered the art of delegation yourself, help everyone else to master it too. That way everybody will be able to delegate large parts of their workload - saving you an enormous amount of money and creating a much more satisfying work environment.	
Make meetings quicker, more effective and less wasteful by: holding them standing up (where appropriate), holding them at 5.30pm (will tend to be much shorter than 10am meetings!), circulating a written agenda beforehand (makes objectives clear and allows people to opt out if not relevant) and agreeing an action plan before departing.	
Work out your 'prime time' (i.e. the time of the day that you are most creative and productive - which, for me, is early in the morning) and reserve that part of each day for your most important tasks.	
Do not procrastinate - especially with seemingly difficult or unpleasant tasks. As Mark Twain once said, 'If you must eat a frog, don't look at it too long!'	
Invest in a recording app for your smart phone and use it to capture all those great ideas that tend to crop up at the least convenient times.	





## Action planner contd.

Action	Responsible	Priority	Completed
<p>And finally... remember that however many actions you have identified on this action planner, they are still only the start of a never-ending journey toward business achievement. So, do not even think about resting on your laurels. After all, today's laurels are tomorrow's compost!</p>			