



DBE ENTERPRISES

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New Year's Resolutions for Business Owners & Entrepreneurs

by Susan Dunn

Making resolutions means resolving to do something, committing to do something. In Emotional Intelligence terms this is called Intentionality. It means saying what you mean, and meaning what you say. What are your intentions for your life this coming year? What do you intend to do to make this happen?

1. Put your resolutions in writing.

Show them to someone - spouse, friend, coach. Post them on the office wall, refrigerator and dashboard. Send a copy to your coach.

2. Make a list of names and addresses of people you can promote your business to.

You don't have to start an e-zine yet, or do a direct snail-mailing, but start making the list. Resolve to increase the list you already have by 100%. Everywhere you go, get names, business cards, email addresses.

3. For marketing, be at least 6 weeks ahead in your mind.

In December, you should be thinking about Valentine's promotions, and have Easter already in your mind. Think your services or products can't be promoted this way? I just got back from my dentist's where I saw a stand with brochures for TOOTH WHITENING. One of them said "Fall into a whiter smile," and was decorated with fall leaves. The one next to it had Christmas graphics and said, "Tooth whitening makes a great gift for someone you love."

Have I made my point? If you're a coach, offer a special on relationship coaching for Valentine's. If you run a nursery, have a special on Valentine topiary.

4. Revamp your website.

Yes, the Internet moves fast and the styles come and go quickly. Take time to research websites of your competition, and see what's new out there. Websites should be revamped every 6-12 months.

5. Resolve to learn something new.

Whatever your field, learning something new is the best way to keep yourself growing and on the competitive edge. Learn how to do your own website, learn how to create an e-zine, learn a new language, take an accounting course, get an MBA. Do everything you can to increase your knowledge; it will make you more profitable, more marketable, and more desirable in today's market climate.

6. Increase your emotional intelligence.

Chances are you're on top of the skills and knowledge in your field. If you're a doctor or therapist, you take the mandatory continuing education. If you're in business, you're adding an MBA or taking advantage of the great online and weekend degree opportunities. But are you increasing your emotional intelligence? It accounts more for your success and happiness than your IQ. It accounts for the majority of promotions and firings. Take an Internet course and get coaching in emotional intelligence. It crosses all categories and fields, benefiting both your work and personal life.

7. Make your last resolution -- TAKE ACTION!

Writing down your resolutions will trigger your innate goal-accomplishment drives, but taking action is essential. Take action on every resolution within 30 days after writing them.

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8. Get organized.

Use an Accountability System for your resolutions! Accountability Systems work. I use the Gooding Accountability System myself and for my clients. For most of us it's the initial organization and then tracking the follow-through. The more you've got going on, the more there is to keep track of. An Accountability System makes this easy for you. Use one for your resolutions.

9. You can make your resolutions general as long as you include incremental action steps as subpoints.

If your list reads Lose Weight, Make More Money, and Find a Wife you're being so vague you're defeating the purpose. It isn't a WISH LIST, it's a list of things you intend to accomplish. Make that "Lose 20 lbs. by April 1 by exercising 30 minutes every day, eating less than 100 grams of fat a day, eliminating sweets" and whatever else will get you to your goal.

10. Compare your list to last year's list.

If it's the same, you're in trouble and you need to face up to it. Something isn't working for you, and if you keep doing what you've been doing, you'll keep getting what you've been getting. If you've had "Find a Career I Love" for 3 years in a row, deal with it. Either acknowledge you're not going to do it, and take it off your list, or marshal the forces you need to make it happen - get a coach, for instance. There's nothing more demoralizing than a goal you never achieve.

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PFA Notice:

The Met. Council's PFA program only accepts W/MBE businesses listed with the State Department of Administration and the DBE Unified Certification Program.

For more information call Roderic Southall at 651-602-1184.

| Contractor/Consultants | Total Contract Amount | Total Paid to Date | DBE Paid to Date | (1) DBE % Actual to Date | (2) DBE % Total Contract Value | Target DBE % Goal |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Minnesota Transit Constructions (MnTC) | 318,542,687 | 280,901,395 | 37,918,531 | 13.50% | 11.90% | 15% |
| Other Contractors | 6,118,466 | 5,786,965 | 751,654 | 12.99% | 12.29% | |
| O'Brien Kreitzberg (OBK) (3) | 16,900,000 | 15,745,956 | 2,848,316 | 18.09% | 16.85% | 15% |
| Marsh | 545,000 | 395,000 | 128,689 | 32.58% | 23.61% | 5% |
| Other Consultants | 26,034,307 | 23,373,056 | 1,440,088 | 6.16% | 5.53% | |
| SUB-TOTAL | 368,140,460 | 326,202,372 | 43,087,278 | 13.21% | 11.70% | |
| Other Commitments * | 91,556,767 | 81,497,077 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| TOTAL | 459,697,227 | 407,699,449 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |

* ROW Cooperative Agreements, Other Direct Costs, etc. (1) Calculates DBE percentage based upon DBE dollars expended vs. contract dollars paid to-date (actuals). (2) Calculates DBE percentage based upon DBE dollars expended vs. total contract value. (3) Value as of November 2003 - Preliminary