

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12

“Three Priorities”

Take Action

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Content

- List your companies priorities, the priorities of your department, your boss's priorities and your priorities. Are they aligned? How many are there? If there are more than three, can you eliminate any priorities off the list ?
- Focus on your top three priorities every day. Track how much time in a day you work on them.
- If your time is being spread across too many priorities, brainstorm ways to increase time spent on your top three.
- Share your newfound dedication to three priorities with your team and your boss. Explain why three priorities will augment success, and solicit their help to improve on your three priorities.
- Invest time on Stuffthatworksbooks.com to find ways others have made collaboration work for them

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Action 1

List your companies priorities, the priorities of your department, your boss's priorities and your priorities. Are they aligned? How many are there? If there are more than three, can you eliminate any priorities off the list ?

ACTION

This is a great exercise to do at least twice per year.

It helps to prioritize each priority list. Often the items will be similar across the organization but they are in different priority for different areas of the organization. These differences in prioritization can lead to non alignment.

There are always more than three items on our lists. Most of us do not have the ability to eliminate items from the lists. In this case it is important to be effective at influencing the prioritization and building consensus on that prioritization.

For example: If we all agree that revenue growth is the top priority then we have common ground for moving forward and making resource choices.

EXAMPLES

COMPANY	DEPARTMENT	BOSS	PERSONAL
Revenue growth	New Distribution	New Distribution	Customer A Growth
Profit Growth	New Items Success	New Item Success	Customer "A" New Item Success
New Products	On Budget	Under Budget	Do not over spend
New Channels	Sales per person Increase	All positions filled	Top Ranked Salesperson
Share Growth	Customer Satisfaction	Key Customer Growth	Customer A Satisfaction

In the example above it is clear that I need to add New Distribution to the top of my list.

My department and my boss both have it as their top priority. To be more effective I need to align.

The fact that it was not even on my list is a problem. I need to become more connected with my boss.

This is the value of this exercise.

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Action 2

Focus on your top three priorities every day. Track how much time in a day you work on them.

ACTION.

Keep the tracking simple.

It is an eye opening exercise and will allow you to improve your time allocations.

Once you have the data there are a host of actions you can take. Here are a few thoughts based on the example at the side.

1. Streamline my budget efforts. Schedule only 1 hour per day to get the job done. Find ways to be more efficient. Perhaps only look at large invoices over only when an item is of a certain size.
2. Schedule more time to work on new distribution. Fix it at three hours per day and ensure I do that first.
3. Ensure that as the interviews wrap up I allocate that time to the top three not to other activities.

EXAMPLES

PRIORITY	TIME	RESULTS
New Distribution	1 Hours 10%	Finished Gap Analysis
Customer "A" New Item Success	0.5 Hours 5%	Reviewed New Item Presentation
Do not over spend	3 Hours 30%	Reviewed Budget reports and confirmed invoices were correct
All Other	5.5 Hours 55%	Majority of time spent on conducting interviews for open positions and a host of administrative tasks

In the example above it is clear that I am not spending as much time on my top priority as I need to.

The good thing about the above time allocation is that about one half of my time is being spent on my top 3 priorities. This is actually a very good percentage. I usually find that less than 10% of my time is allocated to top 3.

This information is helpful in managing your time and gaining support from others to get things prioritized.

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Action 3

If your time is being spread across too many priorities, brainstorm ways to increase time spent on your top three.

ACTION.

There are many books on time management. I find that they can be very helpful. I try to read at least one every year. This is one of those things that we all appear to be doomed to struggle with forever. So embrace it and schedule time to work at it every year.

To the right you will find several tactics for how to allocate your time more effectively to your top priorities.

A few principals that will help are:

1. Do first things first. Deliberately schedule time to work on your top 3 priorities every day and do it.
2. Avoid interruptions. Simply tell people not now I am working on my top priorities. Please schedule time to discuss this topic later.
3. Challenge yourself to spend X% of your day on the top 3

EXAMPLES

Hey Team,

I will be unavailable for meetings from 8-9 each morning. I am committing this time to our number one priority of gaining new distribution.

I have scheduled time from 9-9:30 to deal with any needs that might arise due to my not availability from 8-9.

Thanks,

Joe

Ideas for Focus on TOP 3

1. Schedule time to work on top 3
2. Schedule time away from desk in meeting room to work on top 3 to avoid distractions
3. Work at home one day a week and focus on top 3 only
4. Use do not disturb sign and closed door one hour per day to work on top 3

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Action 4

Share your newfound dedication to three priorities with your team and your boss. Explain why three priorities will augment success, and solicit their help to improve on your three priorities.

ACTION.

I find that transparency with others can really help you achieve your goals.

People are curious and for the most part want to help you. If you share what you are doing you will obtain some great feedback and you will get their support usually.

I often find that others struggle with similar issues. They are quick to share what has worked for them and where they have fallen short.

These conversations will make you smarter and will motivate both of you to support one another. Together you are more likely to succeed.

SO share and prosper.

EXAMPLES

Hey Team,

I am having a hard time getting any traction against our top priority of new distribution.

I was wondering if anyone had any best practices I could use to improve my results?

Thanks,

Joe

Hey Boss,

I have been struggling to get enough time to succeed at new distribution.

I have scheduled 4 hours tomorrow to focus on this priority.

I will be in the development room if you need me during that time.

Joe

Stuff That Works At Work

Chapter 12 Take Action: Action 5

Invest time on Stuffthatworksbooks.com to discover more ways to add fun to daily office life.

ACTION.

This is an easy one.

I believe that each of us can help someone else.

There is so much to know and to experience. You just can not do it on your own. So the best way forward is to share and learn from each other.

Technology makes this so easy today. That is why I built the web site Stuffthatworksbooks.com.

It only reaches its potential if you join in and add the stuff that works that you have found. Please make a contribution today. Help others find the Stuff That Works.

Others have already shared their stuff that works so be sure to check the site often as there is probably something to improve every area of your life.

The community is waiting and growing. I hope you will join in and make a positive difference.

Thank you!

EXAMPLES

CONTRIBUTE

It is easy to share your Stuff That Works.

Simply click on “Contribute” from the main menu.

Then select “Submit an Idea”.

Easy!

Learn From Others

It is easy to Learn Stuff That Works from others.

Simply click on “Contribute” from the main menu.

Then select “Search for Stuff That Works”.