



Your guide to being more effective in 2017

Breaking New Year's resolutions has become almost as much of a cliché as making them in the first place. Despite starting off with the best of intentions, people often pour cold water on Dry January before the Christmas decorations have even come down. So how do you actually achieve the goals you've set yourself? Here are our tips on being more effective at work.

Define the dream

They say you can't achieve a dream if you don't believe you can do it. While it's all very well challenging yourself to become CEO or achieve that Thor body by summer holiday season, believing it means nothing without having a tangible plan in place. Think about what you need to achieve in order to get to where you want to go and come up with a list of realistic, digestible tasks to accomplish.

Dodge the doom and gloom

Whether you know it's happening or not, it's only natural to be affected by your environment. A negative vibe in the office can quickly rub off on you. So maintain a positive demeanour and don't get overly drawn into negative or potentially destructive conversations. Instead, look for solutions or give your colleagues the support they need to overcome their challenges.

When you're off, stay off

The vast majority of office jobs shouldn't be important enough to keep you awake at night. Sometimes you need to take a step back and remember you're not saving people's lives or running a country. When you're on holiday, turn off your work phone and don't check your emails or social channels. If you have a look, you'll find yourself thinking about work. And if you start thinking about it, you might just find yourself doing it.

Make sure you're learning

It's easy to get sucked into a cycle of mindlessly doing your job without picking up any new skills or wisdom. So every day, ask yourself what you've learned. Be a sponge: absorb the knowledge around you. You'd be surprised at how much you'll pick up just by being in a particular environment and paying attention. If you're not learning anything, it might be time to think about a change of approach or even career.

Don't stop reading

Don't just read the websites, blogs or publications relevant to your area of work. Keep a close eye on the material that gets distributed around your team. When you receive your fifth work-related forward of the day, it's tempting to consign it straight to the trash folder. But take the time to scan the content. It all helps you to add to your knowledge and gain a better understanding of what you do.

Take more breaks

It sounds like exactly the opposite way of being more effective at work, but taking regular, short breaks helps you circumnavigate mental blocks and recharge your brain. When you come back, you might be able to see a problem from a different angle. Plus, it's amazing how often you'll think of something while you're away from your desk.

Stop multitasking!

As well as being a bit of a buzzword, multitasking can reduce your ability to focus on one thing and therefore, your ability to do it well. Of course, urgent things can always come along and jump the queue. But wherever possible, put your energy into one task at a time and know that you've done it as well as you possibly could.

For more advice on being more effective at work in the new year, [speak to one of our consultants](#) now.