

## **Why am I not moving ahead?**

### **Process versus Outcome...**

Do you know where you are going and what you plan to do when you get there? This is the time of year for taking stock. How close did you come to meeting your goals for 2019?

Before you do your count down and move yourself into the new year, maybe it would be best to take a few minutes and think about last year. So, grab a piece of paper, something to write with and maybe even a ruler. Full disclosure – I started with one piece of paper, but I ended up using four.

### **Ready? Let's do this...**

Take your paper and draw some columns on it or if you prefer four boxes. Label each one: Things I accomplished. Things that moved me forward. Things I thought about doing but didn't. Things that did not work out the way I had envisioned (did not move me forward).

I don't want to end the year on a negative note; however, it works best if you think about the downside of your year as well as the upside. Both the highs and the lows have important lessons to teach.

Fill out each section as mindfully and honestly as possible. Each column or page will become an important starting point for 2020.

### **Process versus Outcome**

Let's look at how this works, because I believe that most people plan the new year a little backwards. Most of us learn how to plan in school, and we go through life doing things the way we learned in those early years.

The problem is that school is process focused. You are shown a technique and encouraged to replicate what you saw. This allows you to gain hands on experience, build up your confidence and master your new skill.

Many students become so focused on the process and its mastery, that they lose sight of what they really wanted to accomplish. In school this usually translates into focusing on the grade you will

earn for each course rather than challenging courses that will build your career. In business it can cause you to lose focus and forget about the “why”. You hire a coach to help you master social media. At the end of the training, you can do great newsletters, email sequences and you have thousands of followers. Wonderful! You have mastered the process of communicating through social media.

But was this what you really intended to do?

Let me share something I have learned in nearly 20 years of teaching and coaching. People who are focused on the process instead of the outcome, finish the course or training and go back to the types of careers, businesses and lives they had before; only now they have a new skill.

## **Start with the Outcome Front and Centre**

Instead of learning another process, for 2020 let’s start with the outcome front and centre. A good understanding of the outcome you desire will give you clarity, keep you focused and provide you with measurable results.

**Here are three steps to get you started:**

### **STEP 1: Identify the problem you are trying to solve.**

This works whether you like to work weekly, monthly or quarterly. This step will help you to achieve clarity. As in the example above that individual hired a coach to help them become a better user of social media. Looking at this goal honestly, what was the real issue? Dig a little deeper and you will probably find that the real outcome they were looking for was probably closer to finding an easier way to get better clients or increase their sales.

### **STEP 2: What is your goal specifically?**

You may need to spend a little time thinking about this. In step 1 you determined what the problem was. This next step will require you to think about which solution would solve this problem. If you are looking for an easier way to get better clients, what specific outcome are you looking for? You will need to clarify this for yourself. Think about the purpose for finding better clients. Are you looking for a specific type of client, or a specific product or service that you can offer them, or are you looking for a change in your business offerings? Dig deep and be clear about your purpose. Spend some time here developing an outcome statement. Outcome statements describe the changes

you are looking for, they should be measurable and realistic. Don't be afraid to ask your self why a few times – it will help you look at things in greater depth.

### **STEP 3: Clear outcomes need to be measurable.**

How will you know when you have the outcome you are looking for? If you have taken time and care with the first two steps, you will already have a pretty good idea of what success looks like. Your problem will be solved, you will have accomplished your goal and you will be looking for the next challenge.

### **Focusing on Outcomes Will Change Your Business**

Clear outcomes will allow you to take an initiative and see it through to the end. Become specific and clear about what you want to do with your business. There will be no more getting lost in a process that is not moving you forward. You will be focused on the problem you are trying to solve and the result you are looking for at the end.

Start today. What problem will you solve and how will solving that problem move your business forward? What can you do starting today to get yourself moving towards that outcome? There is still time to make 2020 your best year ever!