

## 7 Tips to Get Organized - From Mr Dis-organized Himself

By Lyndsay Swinton

If you're anything like me, you work hard, but you know you could achieve much more if only you could get organized. But then, you've tried all sorts of things to get you organized, from paper files, to task lists in Outlook, mind maps and post it notes. But it doesn't work – one way or another you always end up swamped.

Recently, my team and I have completed an organizational process that has revolutionized the way we work, and multiplied productivity, focus and effectiveness. Here are my 7 tips for those of you who, like me, thought yourselves terminally disorganized.

### **1. Write your goals down**

Yes I know you've heard it before. Now stop nodding knowingly and write them down, all of them, in no particular order. You can prioritize them later. Do this for yourself and get each member of your team to do it too.

### **2. Write a one page goal plan**

Write a 1-year plan containing the title of every goal with who owns it. Make it one page only – if it's any bigger shrink the font size. You want it on one page so everyone can call it your 'one page business plan'. That way, it will never feel overwhelming. If there are too many goals for one page, put them into a 'backburner' document.

### **3. Plan and do monthly one-to-ones**

Organize monthly one-to-one's with each member of your team. Put them in the diary now. You will use these to review progress on goals and make sure your team members have everything they need to move forward with their objectives.

#### **4. Plan and do quarterly reviews**

Organize quarterly review meetings with your whole team. Each member presents his or her results for the past quarter, and tells everyone what they are going to do next quarter. Store the documents for next time so people know they have to make realistic predictions and live up to them.

#### **5. Reward success**

Reward people who do what they say they are going to. Nothing extravagant, just enough to let them know you noticed (a music voucher, a night out), and to let the rest of the team know you're watching.

#### **6. Set external deadlines**

Set external deadlines for yourself, and encourage your team to do so. Points 1 to 5 will accomplish this to a great extent, as everyone knows they are responsible to the rest of the team. Most people would rather avoid the embarrassment of saying to others they've missed goals, and prefer to bask in the glorious sunshine of completing goals.

#### **7. Keep at it**

Keep doing it. You will slip. Do not let that discourage you. I promise you, I was the most terminally disorganized team leader before [Lyndsay Swinton](#) showed me the light. I will never go back.

By Roger Elliott, a happy [www.mftrou.com](http://www.mftrou.com) client.

Roger Elliott is Managing Director of [Uncommon Knowledge Ltd](#), a small and vigorous team of dedicated people who are really, really pleased he finally got organized.

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