



CAPRICORN
...it's just easier!™

Other resources in step 9j:

- **No other resources**

Six mistakes to avoid in 2017

Every new year brings a new-found enthusiasm and optimism that this year will be better than all the others, and you will be implementing those great ideas you have been thinking about it.

You hit the ground running in January and things finally get back to normal once the holiday period comes to end and the kids go back to school. The workshop is busy and the hot weather is draining and before you know it, you are back into the grind and motivation is flagging.

Suddenly it will be Easter and 2017 is looking very much like 2016. All those things you wanted to achieve will just have to wait.

Sound familiar?

Don't worry, you are not alone. This is the challenge that faces every small business owner.

Only the very few can mentally pull themselves out of their workshop and find some time to work on their business and so break that cycle.

So here's six simple mistakes to avoid in 2017 – take them seriously and you may well have a better year.

1. Don't write down your goals and targets. It's a proven fact that those who write down their goals are much more likely to achieve them than those who don't. Don't discount this simple chore. It could be the most important thing you do all year.

Take an afternoon off and list down the things you want to achieve. Your list could include sales goals, average dollar sale goal, productivity targets, implementation of marketing plan, new signage for the workshop or even investing in a new scan tool.

Once you have finalised your goals you need to share them with appropriate people such as your personal or business partner and staff members. Why? So they can help hold you accountable to achieve your goals. If staff can influence your goal, make sure they are aware of it so they know what is expected of them.

2. Focus on what employees do poorly. 99% of customers can be satisfied with your service but you lose sleep over the 1% who complain.

The same concept applies to staff. They do a good job 99% of the time. Unfortunately managers seem to notice only the 1% of the time when mistakes are made. Of course if staff are making mistakes they need to know about it, but they won't be motivated if all they hear are negative comments.

Start noticing all the good things your staff do and let them know. Praising positive performance when it occurs not only reinforces good behavior, but it improves morale. It is well known that when morale improves, so does productivity.

3. Don't bother about training. Workshop owners who embrace training will be able to stay in the game and build more profitable, successful businesses. Those who are too busy to invest in training or think that they know it all have some very interesting years ahead.

Make training mandatory in your workshop and set a goal that all appropriate staff need to attend a minimum of 12 hours training this year. The successful completion of this training regime could be a condition of employment or be tied to an annual bonus.

4. Don't say good morning to your staff. Everybody has tough days and personal upsets. However, the business owner or manager is responsible for the morale of the workshop. The motivation and morale exhibited by employees is often a reflection of the business owners. So if you think your staff lack motivation, it might be time to look in the mirror.

Start the day on the right foot by putting all your troubles aside, smile and say 'good morning' to all employees. In the morning stress of a workshop, it's easy to overlook this simple greeting. If the first thing your staff hears is 'When you're ready I need you to' is often interpreted by staff as lack of management appreciation.

5. Solve problems for your staff. Workshop owners and managers are expected to help and teach employees, but not expected to do their job for them.

In diagnostics, the temptation is for the senior staff to jump in and solve a tricky problem. That might be great for short term productivity but doesn't teach employees how to diagnose problems. Never tell staff the answer. Great teachers will lead their pupils to the answer, rather than handing it to them on a plate. Remember the adage – give a man a fish and he will eat for a day; teach him how to fish and he will eat for a lifetime. It's no different in business.

6. Try to be everything to everybody. Most workshop shop owners have big hearts and they want to help as many people as possible. Yet they fail to realise that they can never be everything to everybody. They need to realise that those customers who want to supply their own parts, or don't want to pay for a diagnostic investigation, are more than likely to be more trouble than they are worth.

It's OK to politely tell people that you can't help them and they will be better served down the road.

So if you want 2017 to be your big year, don't make the six fatal mistakes listed above.

The place to start is www.tatbiz.net.au/capricorn

Just go for it