



PETRA PLANNING

LIFE PLANNING: 4 STEPS TO IMPROVING
YOUR LIFE WITH A JOURNAL



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

In my [last column](#), I gave some insights on how you can adopt a roadmap for personal goals outside of the office. As a [business coach](#) working with companies across the nation, I've seen firsthand how taking advantage of an organized, ongoing plan can help people set and achieve goals.

Like many other leaders, however, it seems like I rarely have a reserved bit of time to sit down and plan out my next move. That's why it's important for me to consistently keep a journal. And I don't necessarily mean one that has all your thoughts and feelings about everything going on in your world, though that's a good thing too. I'm referring to a life-planning journal – one that helps me track those planned goals, supporting tasks, achievements and more. It's a priority for me, and frankly, I'd be lost without it. So it's no wonder that "start a life-planning journal" is one of the top recommendations I give to those looking to boost their productivity and organization.

I get it, though. For most people, starting this kind of journal can be daunting. But it is worth the time and energy you invest. You don't have to live your life based on the way the wind is blowing, or in reaction to what your friends, family or colleagues think you should be doing. A journal can help you reach the goals that you set for yourself, track your progress and put you on the path to a more fruitful and productive life. Here are four tips on keeping a life-planning journal that puts you in control of your life journey:

1. Start big.

Don't put restrictions on goals or desires – or anything – just write down everything that comes to mind, including what you define as successes or wins. Your journal is private, and can include all your wants regarding wealth, family relationships, health, your career, travel and more. What do you want to accomplish in your lifetime? Where do you want to end up before you retire? These "[bucket list](#)" types of questions are ones that motivate and inspire. And they help you maintain a bird's eye view on your life path, which will influence other goals.



2. Go small.

A useful life-planning journal also includes more short-term projects. Take for example [Bullet Journaling](#), which is more than just a recent fad. It's a great system that uses an organized list management system and customizable check-off task lists. But here's the deal: Try different methods and settle on one that you will actually use to complete the smaller tasks. Bullet Journaling may not be the go-to method for you, and that's A-OK. Just like your journal is personal, so is the method you use to maintain it.

3. Be consistent.

This is a no-brainer, but if you aren't consistent in your journaling, it's as useful as a rock in your shoe. If you don't stick to an active regimen of entering and tracking your tasks, it will be hard to see the value in journaling. I keep my journal with me so I can add quick random entries whenever I have a free minute, but if it helps you to stay consistent (and it's possible for your schedule), create a time window on a specific day of the week and stick to it. Also, don't skip a note or event because you think it'll mess up the "overview" – nothing is too unimportant to put down.

4. Stay motivated.

I realize that's easier to say than do. And this may sound crazy, but keeping the journal will help you stay motivated to keep the journal. Trust me; it's a cycle. By keeping all your goals and priorities in one place and by regularly entering each step and checking off each completed task, you'll be able to see your progress and realize how far you've come. That drives you to want to do even more, which will boost your productivity and, most likely, your results.

Once you've been journaling consistently for six months, do yourself a favor and flip back to the first page in your book. You might be surprised how far you've come. Take time to compare your current organizational skills and work ethic with where you were when you first started. Are you more refined in your approach toward tasks? Are you more organized in progressing toward goals? I bet you the answer will be yes, and more than that – you'll be hooked.

This article originally appeared on [Huffington Post](#).

THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

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