Keeping your business resolutions

The first month of the new year is in the books. How are you doing on your 2017 resolutions? I'm not talking about that 20 pounds that has you dreading the summer months, or the savings account that still sits empty. I'm talking about your business goals, and the direction you want for your law practice in the coming months. Have you put any of the tactics we discussed in December to work in your law firm? If the answer is no, don't worry. There's still time and I'm here with some tips on how to kick those resolutions into full gear.

Forgive yourself

First of all, don't be too hard on yourself. So, the first month didn't go as planned. Don't use that as an excuse to not to move forward. Look back at what you planned to do and evaluate why it didn't happen. Maybe you planned to bring on more staff or upgrade your website. Whatever didn't happen, recognize that one month is already gone and commit to moving forward now.

Get those bad habits in check

When analyzing why January didn't go as planned, it's helpful to identify any bad habits that may be holding back your practice. Look at yourself, as well as your staff. Are there areas of consistent inefficiency? Are you wasting precious time in the morning checking emails? Is your administrative assistant constantly late for work? These bad habits will stifle your practice if you don't get them in check. Identify what they are and address them immediately.

Break it down and strategize

A plan is just a dream without a concrete strategy. Take your goals and break them down into bite-sized pieces. If you have an extensive marketing plan, itemize it into steps and take the time to strategize how to bring each of those steps into fruition. With a detailed strategy, you will find that your goals feel more attainable.

Be specific

Effective resolutions require specificity. For example, more clients is a valid goal shared by most law firms. But it is not specific enough to promote a real, achievable objective. Instead, make this lofty goal more specific by working towards a set number of clients each month. You can get even more specific by breaking down the number of desired clients by each attorney in your firm. If you want to bring in 12 new matters each month, divide that goal into three new matters for each of your firm's four attorneys.

Remember, it's only February. There's still time to kick your business resolutions into high gear. Reevaluate and make a commitment to start moving forward now.

About Erika Winston:

Erika Winston is a Virginia based writer with a passion for all things legal. As a former domestic relations attorney, she understands the challenge of determining the best fee structure for your practice. Erika is a regular contributor to TimeSolv and a variety of other publications.