



The SMMarT Guy

Four Tips for Success in 2007

By Kim Robinson

My waistline and credit cards are both stretched to the point of bursting, the prime rib leftovers are long gone, and my kids are complaining about homework—yep, the holidays are over and it's time to get back to work.

Here are four tips to help you hit the ground running in 2007.

Tip #1: Clean out your files. I am a business document pack rat—I hate to throw anything away for fear that someday I may need it. This Monk-like compulsion foolishly extends from the last-minute notes I wrote to myself before I spoke at a national sales convention last January, to every email I received or sent throughout the year. I would be buried in paper and my hard drive would shut down were it not for the fact that I clean house at the beginning of each year. Save what you want throughout the year, but come January 1, go through your accumulation and throw out everything that is not immediately relevant to your current and/or planned projects. If I can live with the fear of someone asking for year-old handwritten notes or email, then you can too.

Tip #2: Clarify your goals. What do you hope to achieve in both your professional and personal life this year? Do you see yourself at the end of this year with a new and better job, or maybe a new (and better) mate? Decide now where you want to be in 12 months, and then apply a specific timetable of activity to achieve your goals. Write down what you need to accomplish by June 30, by March 30, by next month, by next week, tomorrow, and even today to achieve your goals. Write it all down and be specific. Today: *Re-write resume . . . check. Dump loser*

boyfriend / girlfriend . . . check. This written document will be your guide—your map—for the year. It's important because without a map, how do you keep from getting lost?

Tip #3: Think and act big. My company motto is *Go big or go home*, and I mean it. The world is filled with people who want to just tread water and get along and that is fine, but if success to you means rising above the crowd and landing that big contract, gaining the big promotion, or launching a new product or service that will set the business world on fire, then treading water is not for you. You need to swim—hard. Don't sit around and wait for the perfect opportunity to come your way—that's treading water. Act. Create your own opportunity. Make a wake for others to follow and they will. Dreams come true for people who think big, act big, and go big, so do it.

Tip #4: Be positive. Positive people believe they will succeed. We may not (yes, I am a positive person), but we are not held back by the fear of failure that a negative attitude brings. People who commonly use expressions like *just my luck* when something bad may or may not happen to them, actually *anticipate* failure. So when things don't work out as planned, their failure becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Someone with a positive attitude, on the other hand, anticipates success. We expect things to go our way, and those times when they don't—and bad things happen to everybody—we deal with the issue and move on, comfortable in the belief that the next project will be a resounding success. In short, positive people

anticipate success. Negative people anticipate failure—it's as simple as that.

2007 will be a banner year for me, and I wish the same for you. Clear out the clutter, visualize clear goals, think and act big, and be positive. That's all it takes to have a successful year. ■

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