

Seize the Summer for Team Planning



By Julie L. Genjac

For me, the perfect time to clean out my closets and drawers is summertime.

By doing it halfway through the year, I give myself a fresh start for the remainder of the year ahead, as well as peace of mind knowing that when the busy end of the year and holiday season approaches, I am clutter-free.

Have you considered what “cleaning, organizing and restructuring” to put into your practice for this summer? Whether the remainder of this year and the beginning of next year will bring about some serious change or will be more about maintaining momentum, the summer season is always a great time for a business and team refresh. Your clients are likely traveling and enjoying the sun, so what a perfect time to pull your team together for planning conversations.

Dust off your current business and strategy plan and take the time to assess what goals you are on track to achieve (or have already achieved), which ones need to be adjusted, and what items have fallen off the radar. Consider the following aspects of your business as you gather for a summer team planning meeting.





1. Your People

The summer is a perfect time to assess your team: what's working, if the communication is clear and open, and if there is the necessary trust and respect. Schedule a formal offsite team meeting, to review last year, consider this year's goals, and refresh your written plan to execute. It's also a great opportunity to remind your team what your value proposition is, clarify roles and responsibilities, and review team goals for the remainder of this year.



2. Your Process

When was the last time you took one of the various ideas you've wanted to implement to improve your practice and actually did it? As you strategize for the second half of this year, pick one or two of the ideas that have been in your 'good ideas folder' and plan how to execute them this year, and determine who on the team will own it. Is it enhancing your onboarding process? Is it seamless and consistent use of technology tools like the CRM? Is it creating a communication schedule that everyone actually adheres to? Accountability is key to implementation. It's not "we" – it's you or me. Midway through the year is the perfect time to weave in a fresh new process and then assess its effectiveness at the end of the year.



3. Your Principles

Do you have a written succession plan? Financial professionals usually help their clients with estate planning, but don't put as much thought and detail into their business succession plan. If you don't have one, start taking the steps to develop a plan, or if you already have one, take time to review it and make any necessary

changes or updates. What changes need to happen in order to bring this plan to life? Does the seasoned financial professional need to have the next gen professional take the lead in client contact? Do you need to start rotating proactive client calls throughout all team members, so clients understand the breadth and depth of support they have? We aren't the same people we were last year, and it's important to keep our succession plan up to date as our lives change.



4. Don't Forget to Celebrate

When you look at this year's plan, don't just focus on the things that you aren't on track to achieve, but take stock of what has been accomplished to date. Oftentimes, we don't push "pause" for even a few moments to consider the great accomplishments that we've had or the incredible work we've done for our clients (not to mention the personal achievements/milestones of our team members). The act of saying "we did it" can be incredibly energizing for the entire team and be sure to carry this attitude for the remainder of the year.

As we move into the summer season, make sure to celebrate your successes and take a moment for yourself. Spend time in the sun with your family, and, if you are so inclined, clean out your drawers and cupboards for a streamlined rest of the year.

Next Step

Schedule a planning session with your team this summer.



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Julie engages and educates financial professionals and their clients about emerging opportunities in financial services. These opportunities range from practice management and team dynamics to anticipating and preparing for long-term demographic and lifestyle changes. Julie is also the co-host of the Hartford Funds Human-centric Investing Podcast, which features conversations with thought leaders from inside and outside the financial services industry.