

Episode #35: Tips To Make 2021 Your Best Year Yet

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers will find tips and tools to deliver results through others.

Hello. Today I will share five tips to make 2021 your best year yet.

I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode I invited you to repurpose your Staff Meetings and rename them Tactical Meetings.

To increase the effectiveness of these tactical meetings, I suggested that you and your team work on three key areas:

1. Achieve clarity and alignment on what's most important right now for your team, on a collective Thematic Goal.
2. Pinpoint how this goal will be accomplished within a year or less, which we called the Defining Objectives.
3. Use these Thematic Goal and Defining Objectives, together with your regular performance KPIs, as the basis for what to discuss during your Tactical Meetings. Focus on those rated red and schedule separate meetings for strategic topics that will invariably come up during the sessions.

Remember, good meetings deliver good decisions. Bad meetings result in bad decisions. I suggested you pay special attention to the small number of indicators that are rated red and to protecting your tactical discussions from being deprioritized in favor of strategic matters. These strategic discussions should be addressed promptly in separate meetings.

Switching to today's topic, by the time you listen to this podcast, 2021 will have already arrived. You will have received dozens of "Happy New Year" wishes, and most likely you will have entered the new year with high expectations, especially after the several months of pandemic you and I had to endure. But how prepared are you to start making 2021 your best year yet, even though we are still experiencing the effects of Covid-19?

Let me share with you five suggestions:

1. **Choose between being a victim or assuming 100% accountability for your life**, for the rest of your life. There is a passage from Genesis that comes to my mind on this subject. In the early days of mankind, God questioned Adam why he had eaten the fruit from the Forbidden Tree. Adam replied blaming Eve for it. Eve, in turn, blamed the serpent for eating the forbidden fruit.
Blaming others for our bad choices is as old as humanity itself.

No one anticipated or planned for the pandemic and its implications at the beginning of 2020. However, how satisfied are you with the way you reacted to it? What did you learn during 2020 that will make 2021 a better year for you, your customers, your company, and your family? Do see an opportunity of reassessing or learning from any decisions you may have made playing, at least partially, the role of victim?

Start the year with a proactive mindset. Assume 100 percent accountability for the choices you make and not make from here onward.

2. If you haven't done so, **develop or update your personal mission statement**. I know this may sound a bit strange, but the best exercise I know to develop a personal mission statement is to visualize your funeral... Yes, fast-forward a few, or perhaps several, decades into the future and deploy your five senses to answer the following questions:
 1. Who do you see there?
 2. How will you be remembered?
 3. What are they thinking and talking about you and your life?
 4. Who will give your eulogy? What will that person say about you?

The answers to these questions should help you determine or update what your personal mission statement is. This should become the compass for your life, for the rest of your life.

3. **Know what you want to prioritize for 2021**. Schedule time *today* to develop or update your life roles and set goals for the year. You can be as detailed as you want, if you get the job done, in writing, *today*. If this is something new for you, pick one area within your professional role where you want to make the biggest difference in 2021. Do you want to develop a new skill? Is there a performance area you want to turn around? Do you have an unsatisfied customer whose relationship you want to improve? Set a goal and get started right away.

Likewise, choose an element of your personal life where want to focus on. Is there a relationship with a loved one that needs to be improved? Do you want to work on your nutrition, exercising or sleep to improve your physical health? As with your professional area of focus, set a goal and get started right away.

4. **Start a habit of scheduling 15 minutes for a weekly planning and review session**. Choose Sunday or Monday morning, then repeat this calendar entry in your personal agenda or preferred electronic device every week of 2021. This action alone could become the biggest game-changer in your life this year. In these 15 minutes, you can do two things:
 1. Review your previous week's performance: Did you move forward on your priority areas? Did you over-commit?
 2. Plan your next week's performance, then block time periods in your weekly agenda to work on the professional and personal goals you identified in the previous step. Yes, there will be weeks where you may be extremely busy with other urgent activities. This will become a test for becoming 100% accountable for the choices you make, despite other competing priorities.

5. **Make a habit of scheduling five minutes at the beginning of each day for your daily planning and review session.** Start your day with:

1. A review of the weekly priorities defined in the previous step.
2. A definition of the top three activities you will perform today, which will hopefully help you move ahead, in some shape or form, on the two goals you had chosen for the year.
3. Scheduling sufficient time in your calendar for these top three activities.

Summarizing, you have a choice to make 2021 your best year yet, despite the pandemic challenges still present around us. My five suggestions are:

1. Choose between being a victim or assuming 100% accountability for your life, for the rest of your life.
2. If you haven't done so, develop or update your personal mission statement.
3. Know what you want to prioritize for 2021.
4. Start a habit of scheduling 15 minutes for a weekly planning and review session.
5. Make a habit of scheduling five minutes at the beginning of each day for your daily planning and review session.

I hope these five suggestions not only get you started off right in 2021 but allow you to focus on what you have defined as important in your life throughout the year.

Count on my help as needed.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode. In the next one, I will share a model that will help you turn your organization into a competitive advantage in 2021.

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This is coach Percy Cannon, working to help you *make the rest of your life...the best of your life*®.

Percy's BIO

Percy has been helping hundreds of corporate executives and their teams boost their leadership and teamwork capabilities over the past ten years.

Before this, Percy spent close to three decades working for three multinational corporations, Procter & Gamble, IBM & Microsoft, in the United States and across several countries in Latin America.

Percy is a Certified Professional Coach from Wainwright Global, Authorized Partner for "The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team" and "Everything DiSC", a Certified Go-Giver Speaker & Coach, and a practitioner of several methodologies from best-seller author Patrick Lencioni (e.g., "The Ideal Team Player", "The 6 Types of Working Genius", "Organizational Health" and others).

He published his first book in 2012-13 in English (*The Business Apostolate: Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*) and in Spanish (*El Negocio Más Grande de su Vida*).

Percy is a Consulting Partner with Grupo Azimuth and the Chapter Director for the COO Forum in Southeast Florida.

He has lived in 9 different cities and 5 countries, and speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese fluently.

Percy is married, has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and is a passionate runner & reader.

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