

12 Steps for Your Q1 Planning by Forbes Employees

1

Set An Agenda

Preparation for the beginning of next year's Q1 includes inventory planning, developing new sourcing strategies to maintain or reduce current costs and planning the marketing budget.

2

Draft Multiple Plans

Draft multiple one-year plans for each department that support your company's general roadmap. Doing so may help you discover new ideas and strategies you had not considered before and align your business goals and budget better.

3

Measure Your Team's Capabilities And Needs

You need an objective inventory of capabilities. Do our teams have what they need to succeed? Are they equipped, informed and motivated?

4

Work For Future Impact

Look for new hires now so they may start on January 1. A new sales pipeline added today will likely close in 2026. Try not to see a solid line in the sand and connect the now with what is always coming!

5

Reflect On The Previous Year

Reflections on the year that has passed and projections for the year to come have longitudinal potential and are meaningful when they are tied to consistent annual rituals of gathering.

6

Collect Data And Review Achievements

Take a good look at Q4 from last year. Collect your data and review actions and achievements. Set up your goals and the roadmap that will guide you and your team throughout the year, breaking it down as you go through the quarters of the year.

7

Gather Thorough Feedback

Gather qualitative and quantitative feedback from junior staff, other departments, peers, senior leadership as well as external stakeholders. Do not rely solely on lateral reviews and feedback.

8

Consider Team Training

Humans are incentivized by a mission and want to know how they can grow and contribute. Is your team growth part of your plan? If not, now is the time to include them.

9

Set Clear Objectives

Clear objectives help to ensure that everyone on the team is working towards the same goal. Without clear objectives, it's difficult to measure progress and identify areas for improvement.

10

Be Honest

Be honest with yourself. To do that, you need to first ask yourself difficult questions and then provide answers to those questions. Don't avoid difficult questions, by being honest you will save time, energy and resources

11

Build in Retrospectives

This provides the opportunity to honestly assess the successes and failures of the year and learn where you can improve. Building retrospectives into your culture, perhaps even on a quarterly or project basis, can increase the speed of learning and move the company forward.

12

Identify the Bottlenecks

Analyze your current performance, identify your bottlenecks and propose solutions for improvements. Align your team on the objectives and goals to focus on for Q1, providing detailed steps on the role of each member for smooth implementation.