

When you are pressured to deliver quickly, resist the temptation to execute immediately. Take a little time to plan.

Remember the tortoise beat the hare to the finish line. A quick start does not guarantee checkered flags and a win.

The Plans of the Diligent

How do we achieve success? One of my favorite proverbs says, "The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty." Let's consider why planning and diligence are critical success factors and how haste can lead to failure.

Why Planning Matters

Whether it is financial planning, risk management planning, or any other type of planning, a good plan improves the chance for success, improves performance, and saves time.

Improves Our Chance For Success

Alan Lakein said, "Planning is bringing the future into the present so you can do something about it now." Rather than walking blindly down a path, we bring light to potential threats or problems. We proactively take steps to mitigate the threats and improve our chances for success.

Improves Performance

Do you know the 6 P's: Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance? Planning improves performance. Consider the example of defining a communication plan.

An individual determines who, what, when, where, and how of communication. Once these matters have been determined, the execution of the communication plan is smoother, particularly when activities reach a saturation point.

Saves Time

Not only does planning improve our chance for success and performance, it saves time. For every hour spent in planning, we save about ten hours in execution. Thinking before we act improves our efficiency.

The "P" Word

Unfortunately, planning has received a bad reputation. Some people don't use the "P" word. They know if they do, they will see raised eyebrows and perhaps receive a strong retort.

Why has planning received a bad reputation? Because some people plan and plan and plan. They never execute. They get stuck in analysis paralysis.

Another problem is individuals wrongly see planning as creating certainty. The best laid plans of mice and men often go astray. Be flexible. Things happen. We must adapt.

The Importance of Diligence

Another key to success is diligence. The dictionary defines diligence as “persevering application.” The diligent are steady and earnest. They never give up, even in the face of great opposition.

Haste Makes Waste

Businesses need to get products and services to market quickly. We hastily complete the tasks. Poorly completed tasks can be costly.

Remember the adage: Haste makes waste. In our haste to write a requirements document or create a design or write source code, we make mistakes. These errors may not be discovered until later, costing much more to correct.

Whether utilizing more traditional methods or Agile methods, be committed to quality. This reduces costly rework.

When will you review the work products? How often will they be reviewed? What testing needs to be performed?

Final Thoughts

Remember the tortoise beat the hare to the finish line. A quick start does not guarantee checkered flags and a win.

When you are pressured to deliver quickly, resist the temptation to execute immediately. Take a little time to plan. Think about your approach. Work hard. Do not be too hasty. Success is right around the corner.

Source: *PM South, Imagine Successful Projects. Done | Harry Hall*