

Time Management

Coaching Questions

What is your business' strategy? What would be an example of a strategic activity within your business?

- Your business' strategy is something that will help you beat out the competition in the long run. This is called your competitive advantage, your core competency, your competitive edge, your differentiator, or what makes you unique. Activities that help support this competitive edge are strategic.
- Strategic activities often make non-strategic activities go away. For instance, if a baker created a strategic online ordering system, they would have less mistakes in the orders and schedule.
- The best run businesses ensure that they have time every week to spend on strategic tasks.

What is a task at your company that is important? What isn't important?

- Important tasks are what is urgent. An upset customer or a fire in the bakery are both urgent, so important tasks to prioritize.
- The challenge is making sure that strategic tasks are done first, as they end up reducing the problems. For example, a strategic task would be to train all new hires about fire safety. This would prevent a fire in a baker's kitchen.

In a typical day, how much time is spent on non-strategic activities? Or unimportant?

- Where are you spending the most amount of time? Schedule your normal day. Make sure that you understand how much time that you are normally spending on the day to day tasks. These are often important and unimportant, non-strategic tasks.
- Make sure that you include your strategic and important tasks first. Every day, keep working until these are completed or have moved forward.
- Try to schedule all extra time on strategic and unimportant tasks, as this will continue to help improve your time management in the future as well as your business.

How do you keep yourself on a schedule?

- Is there a specific way you could reduce how much time this task takes? Technology can help in many instances. Another tactic is to put mundane work that takes time into a pocket of time once a week, as it gets done quicker when lumped together.
- There are many different tools available to help keep you on track including to do lists, calendars, note pads, office assistants, or other new technologies that continue to be created.

Example:

If you are a baker who specializes in wedding cakes that are beautiful:

Strategic & Important

- Building relationships with wedding planners
- Weekly strategic planning

Strategic & Unimportant

- Online catalogue for wedding cakes with an ordering system
- Quarterly review of targets

Non-Strategic & Important

- Fix a wedding cake that has something wrong with it
- Investigate a new oven

Non-Strategic & Unimportant

- Changing the look of the existing business card

