How's Your Game Plan?

Its 2006 and an exciting new year full of promise awaits us. We're all determined it's going to be better than last year. This year it's going to be different. We'll be better, faster more efficient, more organized and less stressed.

If you're like most people you've come back from holidays with a head full of ideas and if you're like most people that's where they'll stay. It's the calm, rested mind that fills with great ideas but it's the hectic schedule, the reality of being a broker that robs us of the capacity to bring these great ideas to fruition. Or so it seems.

I came back from my short break with a head full of ideas like I do every year. Every year is the same. I come back to work and the first thing I do is develop a plan from the ideas I've written down from my break. Every year I incorporate that plan into my business plan and every year I fail to implement the majority of the ideas. I have heaps of excuses as to why I can't do it. There all valid or at least they are in my head. But this year is different. This year I've finally admitted defeat. I've come to realise that I can't change the world in a day, in fact I can't change anything in a day. The only thing I can change is myself, my work habits, my approach to things, my mind set.

So I'll tell you why this year is different for me. I've still come back to work with a head full of ideas I want to implement into the business but rather than develop a plan that I integrate into my business plan, I've created a 10 week game plan that complements my bigger business objectives rather than being absorbed into it.

I then spent a bit of time thinking about what resources I would need to make the changes I wanted to make in the time frame I'd set myself. Initially time was the big one. To ensure I have the time I need, I allocated an hour per day in which I would work on nothing else but putting these ideas to work. But my day is already chock full of things that need to be done so where do I fit another hour in? Well that was the easy bit. Think of it this way. If you have ever played or watched a team sport, Rugby, Aussie Rules, Soccer etc you'll know that each game has a time limit and is broken down into parts, halves or quarters. The reasons for this are self evident, but let's imagine for a moment that we are playing the game and there is no half time or final whistle. Let's imagine we simply keep playing until there was only one player standing. You'd be a little hesitant to go back next week to play again, to say the least.

Given that I need time to do what I want to do I need to extend my working day to allow for that time. So rather than start at 7.30am I start at 6.30am and work on my business ideas until 7.30. I have a little break and then start on the day's tasks. But I'm not going to do this for ever. Just like a game of Rugby I will work like this for five weeks (the first half) have a two week break (half time) and then go for another five weeks (the second half) by which time I will have finished my extra work. That's my game plan.

After I devised my game plan I went back to my ideas and gave them a thorough going over. I looked at each one and asked myself these questions; Will the implementation of this idea deliver a significant improvement to either income or efficiency in my business? and; Am I the best person to do the work? Based on my answers I either decided to do it, delegate it or ditch it. I now have a manageable list of business ideas that will significantly improve the operation of the business. I have prioritised them and created a game plan that will allow me to implement them. I have set aside time every day to work on them. I have in fact I created a system.

So this year will be different, I won't change the world but I will change myself and the way I work and by changing myself I will change my business.

Remember success is not a mystery, it's a system.