



# THE END GAME

## What's Your End Game?

### **The End Game**

#### **Where do you want your business to end up?**

It may seem a little unusual to start a discussion about the end of your business at the beginning of the year, but there is a lot to be said for swimming against the tide, especially if you want to avoid common mistakes and all-too-familiar reasons for underperformance.

### **Who needs an End Game?**

Having a clear objective is as essential for people running their own business as for anyone who shares responsibility with others or contributes to the execution of their employer's business strategy, so please share with anyone that will find this article useful.

If you're an employee and want to have greater influence or understanding of the direction and decisions that your business takes, then try asking about the end game. After all, your work should be actively contributing towards it.

## Why Should a Business Have an End Game?

For owner-operated businesses, the need is very personal and very clear, but many of these questions are also relevant to heads of department, practice partners and board directors.

- How many years do you want to work?
- How well do you want to retire?
- What kind of lifestyle do you want in exchange for the burden of business leadership?
- What happens when you want to stop working?
- What happens to your employees when you want to retire?
- How far can your business really be developed?
- What level of impact do you want to make to the industry / problem / demographic that you serve?
- What happens when the business is fully matured?
- How do you keep your business running if you want to spend more time on other activities?
- What do you need to have in place to successfully lead more than one business at a time?
- How do you get your business to the next stage of development?
- How do you exit your business without closing it down?
- What does it take to take a business to flotation?

None of these results can be achieved instantly or at the last minute. They are the End Game that can take years of focussed cumulative actions and decisions to achieve and there is **everything** to play for.



## How Do You Start to Achieve Your End Game Result?

*One of the most repeated quotes from the great Stephen Covey is also one of the most useful for achieving your goals.*

***“Start with the end in mind”.***

Why is this quote so useful?

Here are some of the reasons:

- It helps you to think about your intended result before you commit yourself to action.
- Defining the ‘end’ before anything else will help you to be clear on what you really want to achieve.
- It reminds you to plan properly to ensure that you reach your goal.
- Working backwards from your intended result helps you to make better decisions about how to get there.
- Predictable problems and barriers are easier to identify before you encounter them.
- By focussing on your destination, you’re less likely to deviate or get lost before you can get there.
- Having a destination does not mean that you shouldn’t enjoy the journey. But what is a journey without a destination?



## What is the End Game for your business?

- Sale as a going concern?
- To Facilitate a comfortable retirement?
- Flotation?
- Expansion?
- Merger with a complimentary organisation?
- Employee Buyout?
- Succession?
- World domination?
- To create real change?

I've enjoyed working with businesses that have clearly defined goals such as these, mainly because it's much easier to rally everyone involved when there is a shared goal to focus on. When everyone wants to achieve the same goal, and focuses on doing their part to accomplish it day by day, then it will inevitably happen.

Every individual involved can then be guided according to what they can contribute to achieving the goal, making self-management, team management, leadership and motivation much easier.

## What if your business doesn't have a clearly defined goal?

It's never too late to think about what you want your business to achieve.

Think about what do you want your business to do for you. Why was the business created in the first place?

As an employee, can you take an active role in defining your employer's direction? Many of the issues involved with having a lack of a defined direction can be solved with a clear set of goals.

## What difference does a goal really make?

Well, to put it in simple terms, a goal can act as a useful guide to help you to make clear decisions that get you closer to achieving your business ambitions.

You wouldn't set off on a journey without a destination. The result would be chaotic, unpredictable and without any guarantee of success.

Deciding on the destination beforehand leads to all of the decisions required to get there (mode of transport, route, resources, companions, support and whether it is all worthwhile).

Example:

Two identical businesses with identical services or products serving the same demographics, but with different End Games would be operated very differently. These differences can be used to differentiate them and provide a real commercial edge.

The financial management of a business that it intended to be sold will be very different from one that is expected to be handed down through generations. The organisational structure and decision-making behind each of these businesses will similarly be driven by the intended destination. In fact, almost everything about the entity should be focussed on the outcome, giving every aspect of the business a defined purpose.

**To put it another way, what would a game of football look like if you took away the goals?** If everything else stayed exactly the same, but you took away the goal posts and nets, but didn't tell the players.

Spend a minute just imagining how confusing a game would look if you just made that small difference...

**Pointless!** That is what a business without an End Game looks like.

## End Games Solve Real Problems

I have met business owners who had worked into their early 60s without securing their retirement. We fixed that together.

I have worked with business leaders who had no shared direction, resulting in competing interests paralysing their decision-making. By uniting the company's leadership, we were able to help to formulate a vision and clear direction for the entire company.

I have worked with many business founders who wanted to keep their business going while starting to work on new ventures and challenges. I have helped them to achieve this without leaving their existing business without leadership and guidance. Growing family commitments and changing personal circumstances often mean re-evaluating how much time you can devote to a business, but how will the business survive without you? I have helped to solve this type of problem many times over the last 10 years.

Many business owners that I have met have had an outcome in the back of their mind that they 'hoped might happen', but had never shared this idea or actively managed the company towards this goal. The result was an organisation, business and workforce without any real drive or direction who were just about getting through each day.

Sharing and believing in the End Game was the first step to actively working with new energy, focus and confidence in the destination.

Many business owners struggle to make the transition from working within the business to leading a growing organisation that is less dependent on their hard work and sweat rather than their vision and leadership. An end game can help you see which of your employees and colleagues can step up and lead the business with you.



**The Big Question.**

With January almost over, can you proudly say that you have spent this month actively working towards the goal for your business?

If the answer is No, then do not wait another day before you take yourself and your business a step closer.

Get in touch and declare your End Game.



**Call us today to talk about achieving about your business goals.**

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