

Four Entrepreneurs Share Their Tips On Holding Yourself Accountable For Your Yearly Goals

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As an entrepreneur and business owner, you are undoubtedly familiar with the importance of goal setting. Goal setting is what moves the dial and allows you to go from a dreamer to a planner to a doer.

Goal setting is imperative not only for you as the business owner, but also for every member of your team. One of the hallmarks of a good leader is the ability to motivate people to stretch themselves a little further than they're used to, encourage their growth and development, and hold them accountable for their

goals and the companies' goals.

But, while you're busy holding your team accountable, who is holding you accountable? Are you checking in with yourself along the way to measure your progress? One of the greatest challenges—and accomplishments—is discovering the best ways to hold yourself accountable for your goals.

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I wanted to learn more about the goals that entrepreneurs set for themselves and their companies at the beginning of the year and how they're holding themselves accountable for those goals halfway through 2022. Here's what four industry leaders had to say:

1. Take control of your calendar: Odaro Aisueni, senior financial planner at Plancorp

[Odaro Aisueni's](#) goal for this year is seemingly straightforward: Say no and control his calendar. He aims to be more selective when saying yes and more liberal when saying no. However, that's easier said than done. There's a constant push and pull between wanting to do something that will produce immediate results and biding your time and waiting to reap what you sow. Aisueni says that when deciding what's worth your time, both personally and professionally, you should always ask yourself one question: Will this help me get closer to my long-term goals?

Aisueni's 2022 goal was born from a larger, long-term goal. Controlling his calendar helps him stay accountable to his 15-year plan, which he breaks down into 10-, five-, three-, and one-year goals. If something doesn't help him get closer to his 15-year goals, he doesn't add it to his calendar. In the same way, he encourages his clients to stick with investment plans rather than deviate to attain short-term gains that will have no quantifiable impact on their investment return.

According to Aisueni, the first rule in holding yourself accountable when controlling your calendar is to be honest with yourself. He recommends being honest about how much you can take on, how you can spend your time, and what tasks you can prioritize to create a balance between short- and long-term goals.



2. Create feedback channels: Allison Esenkova, managing vice president at Pariveda

Creating channels for feedback is the key to holding yourself and your company accountable for your goals, according to [Allison Esenkova](#), who leads Pariveda's Houston office. She believes it is critical to include the whole leadership team when creating goals for the company. In Pariveda's case, this leads to goals that are deeply connected to the company's purpose of growing employees toward

their fullest potential. In turn, this establishes more value with and for the company's clients.

Her company operates a robust mentoring program, conducts quality assurance on reviews, monitors the growth and promotability of its people, and more. These factors create frequent and safe channels for upward feedback such that leadership can measure goal progress not only by the numbers, but also by how employees perceive their progress and success.

Esenkova believes you should approach goal achievement with a coaching mindset. She treats everything as a learning opportunity—whether or not her team reaches the goal. She also holds herself accountable for modeling the behavior she expects from her employees. That way, Esenkova's team feels comfortable communicating feedback, and she can measure goal progress and success through employees' eyes.

3. Measure your results: Dr. Kim Villeneuve, cofounder of bluSPARC

The most important thing [Dr. Kim Villeneuve](#) has learned from her clients is that if you can't measure it, it's not worth doing. Although that might sound rigid, it keeps her team focused on goal achievement. She believes it means the difference between simply treading water and making it across the finish line.

At the beginning of 2022, bluSPARC's goals focused on its five pillars of business: product development, business operations, technology, investor relations, and business development. Dr. Villeneuve and her team used the responsibility assignment matrix (known as RACI) to reach alignment, created SMART goals to establish specific performance expectations, and utilized KPIs to measure goal progress. The company uses this same system in its talent management practices, so feedback and performance reviews reflect its goals.

In addition, Dr. Villeneuve recommends reviewing your yearly calendar once a month to ensure your operations are still focused on the big picture and to help you stay accountable. As an international executive L&D and coaching company, Dr. Villeneuve asserts that bluSPARC practices what it preaches. All team members have access to coaches that can meet them at whatever stage they are to help employees develop into leaders who achieve their goals.

4. Reflect on what worked and model it: Dr. Simone Ahuja, author,

keynote speaker, Fortune 500 innovation strategist, and founder of Blood Orange

[Dr. Simone Ahuja](#) says that the most important thing you can do when setting goals as an entrepreneur is reflect on what worked well in the past. This keeps you accountable and helps you fine-tune processes. As a keynote speaker, author, and entrepreneur running an innovation strategy advisory, Dr. Ahuja finds it relatively easy to establish growth and impact goals.

However, reflecting on the past two years made it clear how important it is to keep her creative juices flowing. Fun and genuine connection have worked well for her in the past, so she's reimplemented it into her day to day. Accordingly, she focuses less on traditional business goals and instead aims to have fun and only work closely with people she would have dinner with.

Establishing these goals and communicating them to others has empowered her to show up in her work more genuinely and hold herself accountable for reaching them. To further stay accountable, Dr. Ahuja recommends defining milestones and microactions, working with an accountability partner, and creating visual reminders of your goals.

As an entrepreneur, you're responsible for reaching your own goals, as well as those of your company. Accountability is the motor that keeps those goals afloat. Without it, you're simply a dreamer or a planner—not an achiever.

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