

Personal development is easier than eating an elephant! No knives & forks required!

When was the last time you updated your business skills? What do you really want to improve? How can you do that? What stops you from enjoying work?

Well here we are, about to move into the sixth month of the year ... yes, half way through the year ...you mean you hadn't noticed? So take a moment to look out your business plan for the year 2006. Are you on track? Are you achieving those SMART objectives you set yourself earlier this year? You are - great! You're not – don't panic you've got another six months left to make it happen.

How much investment have you made in the business? How much investment have you made in you? You are after all one of the company's key resources, if not the key resource? Sometimes taking the time to invest in ourselves can be a big task to tackle - as big as - an elephant! As my friend used to say you couldn't eat an elephant all in one go – you have to break it down into digestible chunks, so let's start chunking down ...

1. **Sit down in a quiet place and list down all your strengths** – yes all of them, including strengths your colleagues and friends have mentioned to you over the course of time. How many?
2. **On a separate list, write down all your 'areas for development'** i.e. areas that you would like to improve upon. Some cynics may see these as 'weaknesses'. What does this say about attitude ... yours and theirs?
3. Look at the list and ask yourself the question, **'If I could only choose one area to work on over the next 6 months, what would it be** and what difference would it make to me and my work / business right now?' Write it down. Highlight it with your favourite highlighter pen – mine is pink!
4. **Commit to yourself** that you are going to work on that particular area of development over the next 6 months, (less if it is achievable in your timeframe).
5. **Plan how you are going to do it** – attend a short course, one to one coaching, speak to someone who has expertise in this area, join a local club that will help you acquire the necessary skill.
6. **Tell someone you are going to do it** ... feel free to contact me if you need someone to keep you on track ... you can be guaranteed that I will check on progress! E mail mary@fraserhr.co.uk
7. **DO IT!**

8. Make a note of all the **additional benefits you are acquiring** whilst developing this new skill – e.g. meeting new people, networking opportunities, access to information you didn't know was there, a great wee pub where you and fellow students meet up to exchange new information (emm...is the last one a benefit?)

9. **Review your progress at the end of the 6 months** – this date is best highlighted in your diary so that it is not overlooked.

10. **Reward yourself upon the successful completion of your newly acquired area of development.** Well done! Wasn't that much easier than eating an elephant?

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