
How to reset and refocus for the final quarter of 2020

The Covid-19 pandemic has meant 2020 has been a turbulent year for employees and businesses. Here's how you can refocus for the final months of the year.

September is a great time to reset and refocus after the summer months. With the holidays over and schools reopening, it is a chance to draw breath and set priorities for the last four months of the year.

This year we need to reset more than ever. 2020 has been a time of huge change and uncertainty due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Business plans created in January were suddenly paused in March. Day to day operations stopped for many businesses. And as companies pivoted to survive, a lot of the plans from January may be irrelevant in Q4.

Reasons to be optimistic

Even though we are still living with Covid-19, this September brings hope as we see the reopening of schools around the world. The virus is still here but we are all getting on with our lives and our business.

Now is the time to take some practical steps to boost productivity in the final months of the year. How great would it feel to achieve some important goals and finish your year on a high?

Reset your priorities

Start by looking at the goals you set in January and assess what has been completed and what needs to be added.

Identify the most important things you want to achieve by the end of 2020. Then ask the following questions:

1. What are the goals?
2. What work needs to be done to achieve those goals?
3. Is help or input required from anyone else?

Make a plan

Having a plan helps you achieve more as it provides structure, focus and motivation. To figure out the work to be done, it helps to break large goals into smaller sub-goals. Then brainstorm each sub-goal to identify the tasks or actions required.

Using a flipchart or whiteboard really helps the brainstorming process as the space frees up your mind. If you work with others, you can arrange an online session over Zoom and use the whiteboarding feature to help spark ideas.

Once you have a list of tasks, start looking at the following:

1. What needs to be done when?
2. Do some tasks depend on the completion of others?
3. What are the milestones to be achieved along the way?

Then transfer all the tasks into a planner. If you need a planner you can download the [beproductive.ie Q4 2020 planner template](#) from our website.

Be realistic

You are probably already busy so be realistic about how much time you have. It is better to under-plan than over-plan. Start small, complete some tasks to achieve a sub-goal. This will motivate you to keep going.

Build in some contingency time, some “slippage” for the unexpected. Because if 2020 has taught us anything, we know that we need to expect the unexpected!

Track your progress

As you work through your tasks, track your progress by capturing the date each one is completed. If you miss a target date, readjust any remaining dates that may be affected.

Rework the plan if you find you are not getting enough time to work on your goals. Extend your timeline if necessary.

Celebrate

If you achieve your goal, then you will want to celebrate. If you reach the end of Q4 without completing all the work, you still have a plan and you know exactly what needs to be done in 2021.

And by following this process, you have also gained some valuable project management skills. What an achievement in these uncertain times!

Find what works for you

Like all our productivity tips at [beproductive.ie](#) we recommend that you: 1) tweak this approach to find what works best for you and 2) stretch yourself so you can achieve more.

Written by productivity consultant Moira Dunne

Moira will be running a weekly productivity webinar every Monday at 8:30am throughout September. If you are interested in joining, [you can register here for the free Zoom session.](#)

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