

## Do You Have A 2010 Game Plan?

**At the first of every New Year there is always a lot of chatter about stepping back and taking stock. If you are not already in such an annual routine, this may be the year you really need to do it. Here's a powerfully quick method that includes the two critical ingredients for any successful 2010 game plan. (Reading time 180 seconds).**

The football coaches who direct this month's successful bowl bound teams approach their planning BOTH rationally and emotionally. They know both of these ingredients are required for success. They lay out a logical game plan based on the strengths and weakness of their own team and their opposition. They then motivate the best implementation of that plan with emotion: confidence, high expectations, a positive attitude.

The logical side of a coach's game plan starts by breaking down their overall team into sub-teams: Offensive team, defensive team, kicking team and a kick return team. This not only results in a better plan for the specific needs of each area, but it also makes their game planning much easier. They are not trying to think through multiple and different aspects of their plan at the same time.

You can use the same approach to simplify and improve the logical side of your life planning results. And you can get a good start in five minutes. Take out a sheet of paper and separate your plan into these 4 areas, which we refer to as life quadrants:

<b>Friends / Community</b>	<b>Self</b>
<b>Family</b>	<b>Work</b>

Now list two or three major things you will focus on doing better or differently in each of your life quadrants this year. It could be specific actions; it could more attention to certain people, or a different attitude on your part.

For example, many individuals are committing to more and different efforts in the work quadrant than they have in many years. Maybe they need to work more hours or later in life than they had planned. They have adjusted their work plan and have included starting earlier, planning out their work day better, and executing

with more urgency and focus. Or they've modified their game plan to become much more proficient in the use of available job efficiency software; or completing valuable work/career projects that they've procrastinated on; or developing an additional career skill set to add to their income potential.

Like many of us, you may want to really take note and connect more fully with the relationships you have in your family and friends quadrants...and more often express your appreciation and love to them. Maybe it's the year to put forth a strong conscientious effort to make a few new friends. The right new friend can positively change your life.

Here's a sample of what an initial game plan might look like.

<p><b>Friends/Community</b></p> <p>I will invite friends over once/month. I will volunteer to help someone I know that needs a pick up. Have over. Call. Helps me too!</p>	<p><b>Self</b></p> <p>I will get the surgery I've been putting off. I will exercise every day- something. I will be more frugal. It's okay. I will be upbeat and enjoy more every day.</p>
<p><b>Family</b></p> <p>I will SMILE and appreciate them more. I will focus on Claire's development. Make the time!</p>	<p><b>Work</b></p> <p>I will start earlier. 15 minute prioritization of top items for day. I will Complete new delivery system. I will Champion its launch &amp; success. I will commit to being more positive. Emphasize what can go right.</p>

Just spending 5 or so minutes on this can be eye opening. Get down in writing your initial thoughts on the most important things you want to emphasize, change or get done in 2010, in each area.

As you write down your top items for 2010, think about what you want to change from 2009. Worldwide it was the year of the economic morass that cast a funk over almost everyone. You don't have to be a top coach to know you don't win games by being in a funk. That's why the emotional side of the game is so important.

Whereas negative feelings result in lackluster actions or no actions, upbeat feelings trigger positive actions and a strong execution of your plan. Because of that one of the most important things we can do to improve our individual game plan & circumstances, and our organization's is to shake off the funk.

To do that, be optimistic in the implementation of your plan. Focus on what can go right, versus dwelling on what might go wrong.

Coaches have a way of doing that and harnessing positive emotions and attitude. They know that actions can trigger feelings. That's why you see the team hurrah or high fives before and during a game, combining physical action with confident emotion and optimism.

## Work-Life Balance Lessons

By Brandon Gaeke

You can and should trigger your own emotions with actions as well. Focus on catching yourself doing something right and then literally pat yourself on the back. Do it right now: Reach over your head and pat yourself on the back and say “You did good.” Makes you feel better – right? Do the same for your co-workers, your family and friends – catch them doing the right things and then celebrate that first down, that good catch, their moving forward.

And SMILE more. Smiling is one of the best actions to trigger positive emotions. Remember the smile method. Just think of something that makes you happy – chocolate, pizza pie, your favorite play activity – and focus on it. Now carry that smile out to the world today.

After you’ve jotted down your initial 4 quadrant plan, leave it where you can see it. Add or change items over the next few days as they come to you. You will end up with your most important work and life strategies for the year clearly identified in advance.

Post these 2010 plan priorities in your office or on your computer. Maintain a daily focus on these overriding strategies by **READING THEM** (ideally out loud) at the beginning and end of each day. Doing so will serve as your guide and motivator on the specific actions you will take and plays you need to improvise everyday to make those priorities a reality.

It’s simple. It’s quick. Why not take a few minutes now to jot down your four quadrant game plan for 2010? Then smile about it and about how Happy the New Year can be as you accomplish each one.

Here’s to making it your best ever.

*Jim Bird, Publisher*

### Quotes

*“If you are prepared, you will be confident, and will do the job.”*

*“Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding how you will go about achieving it and staying with that plan.”*

*“When you want to win a game, you have to teach. When you lose a game, you have to learn.”*

*“A winner never stops trying.”*

**Thomas Wade “Tom” Landry** (September 11, 1924 – February 12, 2000) was an American football player and coach ranked as one of the greatest coaches in NFL history. He is legendary for his successes as the coach of the Dallas Cowboys.

### e-tip

**Self Game Plan** – To most successfully implement your life plan and enjoy your dreams becoming reality, you need to keep your Self in shape. Make sure part of your self game plan is to eat healthy, sleep well and exercise often. It will make for a very happy New Year.

Work-life balance took on a whole new meaning almost a year ago when our daughter was born. I now have an even more compelling reason to avoid working into the evening: I want to get home each night in time to play with the baby before she goes to bed. In addition, my wife also works full-time, so we always need to be mindful of each other’s schedules and job situations as we discuss who will stay home when the baby is sick or who will be responsible for daycare drop-offs and pickups.

Here are some of the things I’ve learned to do to help make sure I get the work-life balance that my family needs at this stage:

**Know your job’s needs and manage your time accordingly.** I need to be very client and operations oriented during most of my work day. This involves being available to meet with people in person or by telephone. That doesn’t give me a lot of time to do paperwork or respond to e-mails, so I do those tasks at the office early in the morning – anywhere from 6 to 7:30 a.m. – before the job site has opened up and projects need my attention and when my cell phone’s not ringing yet.

**Understand the need for flexibility.** My managers offer me flexibility and I appreciate that, so I’m flexible with the people who work for me, too. If they’re getting their work done and I’m not getting complaints from their clients and colleagues, I don’t see any point in doing a roll call at 8 a.m. to see who is and isn’t on the job yet. We all still need to work the hours we’re being paid, but it’s not always necessary for all of us to maintain the same schedule to get the job done.

**Be realistic.** Because of the nature of my job, I need to be available to solve problems at all hours of the day. I try to minimize the impact this has on my personal life, though, by being realistic about when I’m likely to receive an urgent call in the middle of the night and when I’m not – and turning off my Blackberry accordingly. For example, if there’s a concrete pour scheduled for 3 a.m., I leave the phone on, but if the work involves just the finishes, I’m more inclined to turn the phone off.

**Find time to play.** I used to play more golf than I do now, but that’s okay, because I’d honestly rather be hanging out with my daughter on Sunday morning. I still watch Thursday night football with friends after the baby goes to bed, and at this stage, that’s enough for me to feel recharged.

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