

# MAKE THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TRANSPORTATION BUSINESS IN 2016

**H**appy New Year, everyone! The start of a New Year is a great time to write down your goals for your business and personal life. Someone once said, “A goal not written down is just a wish.” So actually sitting down with your computer or pen and paper and writing a list of your goals by category is an important place to start, because seeing it in writing makes it more real to the psyche. Successful people have written goals.

But where do you start? To bring an example to life I will address goal-setting and strategic planning in the context of being a freight agent.

## START WITH AN ANNUAL GOAL:

For example, an agent might want to increase annual revenue by \$500,000. The goal can be stated as “To achieve a \$500,000 increase in my annual revenue running rate.” Now, the money will not come in all at once, but gradually as the agent pursues various strategies and tactics. So the measure of achieving the goal would be that December’s monthly revenue if multiplied by 12 would equal \$500,000. That is the concept of running rate. So the person might not earn the additional \$500,000 in 2016, but he or she would know that on an annual basis, the business will have grown by \$500,000 going forward.

## BREAK THE DOLLAR GOAL INTO THE NUMBER OF SHIPPERS AND LOADS PER SHIPPER:

This will make it feel more manageable. For example, if your average load yields \$2,000 in revenue, you would need 250 additional loads per year, which is a little over 20 more per month or just five more per week. Now it is beginning to sound more manageable.

## BREAK THE ANNUAL GOAL INTO QUARTERLY GOALS:

This makes the annual goal more manageable and progress toward the goal is easier to track. You could measure an increase in loads per week in addition to increases in revenue.

## IDENTIFY STRATEGIES TOWARD ACHIEVING THE GOAL:

For example, strategies could include getting one new shipper with five loads per week or get two additional loads out of an existing shipper and get a new shipper with three loads per week. You would need to take a look at your existing portfolio of shippers to decide what makes sense for you.

## SELECT TACTICS, WHICH ARE ACTIONS OR METHODS TO GO WITH THE DIFFERENT STRATEGIES:

For getting more loads out of existing shippers, it could be a question of finding out where they are experiencing challenges, or making them aware of other lanes where you have a strong carrier base. For getting new shippers, networking through existing shippers up and down their supply chain to their suppliers or customers could work, because it would be an introduction/testimonial and a warm call. If you need to resort to cold-calling, selecting industries where you have expertise by calling competitors of current shippers or selecting lanes where you have a strong carrier base and calling companies in that geography could be good tactics.

I hope this example illustrates how you can get started with a lofty goal and make it more manageable and measurable. The more manageable and measurable the goal is, the easier it is to act to achieve the goal. Our goal is to grow One Horn Transportation’s sales by a certain dollar amount without losing the feeling of One Horn Hospitality that our current agents love so much. So we want fewer more sizable agents vs. many smaller agents, so we can continue to give the personalized attention to help our agents grow their businesses. Here’s to a great 2016! ■



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