

Nine Steps to Greater Focus, Profit and Productivity

Your team is used to saying “yes” to any project it’s handed and now you have less resources. How do you focus on the most important? How do you decide which is least important? Follow these 9 steps and you find out what you can’t afford to drop the ball on and what to let go of so you can focus on productivity and profitability

1) Determine your target and approach

- Determine if you are looking at a single job category, a department, or a team.
- What made you decide to do this?
 - Suspected waste
 - Downsize of a department
 - Change in regulations

2) Create the appropriate environment to conduct the meeting

- Minimize distractions
- Include as many from the work group as you can
- Find a neutral Facilitator to guide the group if you can.
- Set Ground Rules

3) Define your department/positions Mission

- What value do I/We bring to the organization?
- Why do we exist?
- What is our organization asking of us at this time?

NOTE: you will need to discuss this part with your supervisor to be sure you get it right.

4) Catalogue the results of your mission discussion

- Keep it in front of you as you decide what to **start/stop/keep** doing
- Refer to it when the group starts to get off track.

5) What are the tasks/process/services we perform to execute our mission?

- **Brainstorm** a list of tasks, goods, and services that you perform
- Nothing is too small or trivial
- Don't get tied up in discussions of each task, just list them at this point.
- Flipchart or list everything, even to the smallest detail

6) Group your output into like or similar functions.

- Affinity exercise works well here.
- You may also want to task this out to a subgroup if the list is too extensive for one meeting.

7) Validate what you need to keep doing, what you need to stop doing and what you need to start doing to advance your mission?

- Ask the question, “which of these can I/we absolutely not afford to drop the ball on?”
- Delete the obsolete, identify your core priorities, create new processes if you need to.

8) Develop and implement a plan

- Decide the who, what, when why and where of your new plan and direction

9) Communicate

Discuss with supervisor and peers who may be affected by the changes.

NOTE: depending on your needs you may add a step between Step 6 and Step 7. “what are our highest and lowest profit centers”



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