

## ***One Degree makes all the Difference: Set Priorities and Produce Better Outcomes***

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The difference between hot water and boiling water is one degree; 212° is when water boils at 211° the water is very hot. The difference between winning and losing a football game is one touch down or one field goal, the margin of victory for the gold medal in 2004 in the men's 800 meter race was less than one second. Setting your priorities can make all the difference in what you achieve at work or in business. Establishing priorities each day is that one degree of difference.

This time of year is perfect for setting priorities. I recently listened to Earl Nightingale's "The Strangest Secret" (He was a personal development guru) and he spoke about knowing what you want, having a goal/or destination in mind is the secret to success. We can view setting priorities at work quite the same way. If you prioritize your tasks you will be more successful at achieving your desired outcomes. There are two different approaches you can try. You can establish your priorities for the next day at the end of each day, or establish your priorities at the beginning of each day. The approach is a preference, so it doesn't matter which approach you try, the fact that you are setting priorities each day is what matters most.

One way of prioritizing your tasks each day is assigning a "letter value". For example using A, B and C. The A's are most important/critical (high priority tasks) to get done, the B's being less critical, and the C's being least important. Most people focus on the low priority items because typically they are easier to complete, or they have so many tasks to complete they end up overwhelmed and discouraged. There is a negative psychological impact when you don't complete your list of tasks. Conversely you get a positive psychological boost when you cross off the last item of your list of tasks. High priority tasks yield high productivity. Next establish how much time you need to complete each task. This will help you manage your time and get the most important tasks done first. Then apply the "Rule of 6". The "Rule of 6" is a concept that I learned from Chet Holmes, a national best selling author who wrote *The Ultimate Sales Machine*. He found in studying successful billionaires, that they are highly organized and set priorities to maximize productivity. What he discovered is the "Rule of 6": stay focused on getting the six most important tasks done every day, no matter what (a little known secret of the most successful billionaires). I practice this every day and have found I accomplish more and it has helped me stay focused on what's important.

Challenge your self this week to make that one degree of difference towards accomplishing more this year, set your priorities and apply "The Rule of 6".

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