

The 12 Week Year Summary



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1-Sentence-Summary: *[The 12 Week Year](#) will teach you how to revitalize your ability to achieve goals by planning according to a 12-week cycle instead of the typical 12-month one.*

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:

“The number-one thing that you will have to sacrifice to be great, to achieve what you are capable of, and to execute your plans, is your comfort.”

The quote is overlaid on a dark, high-contrast image of a person's back, showing their shoulder blades and the texture of their skin. The person appears to be wearing a dark tank top.

– Brian P. Moran & Michael Lennington



A few months ago I started asking a question on every day. People caught on and loved it. Each time I would get a few comments and enjoyed interacting more with my friends online instead of just scrolling endlessly.

One day, I asked everyone what their greatest struggle was when setting goals. I was surprised to get over 50 responses, most of them expressing difficulty with following-through toward reaching their dreams. Many had a hard time sticking with their goals when it became difficult to continue.

After pondering why this is for the last few months, I believe this book answers that question. We think too big with annual goals. We overwhelm ourselves and get caught up in putting off the work because we think we’ve got plenty of time. [The 12 Week Year: Get More Done in 12 Weeks than Others Do in 12 Months](#) solves this problem that so many, including myself, have.

Authors Brian Moran and Michael Lennington are coaches with experience in entrepreneurship, consulting, and public speaking. Growing businesses and individuals are passions of Moran and Lennington. Their expertise in [productivity](#) and planning makes them well-qualified to help others succeed.

Here are the 3 most helpful lessons I got from the book:

1. Complacency comes from setting annual goals, while the 12-week year method helps you become more consistent.
2. Checking where you are at toward reaching your goal requires meticulous measurement.
3. Managing your time wisely is critical for reaching your 12-week goals.

Grab a pen and calendar; let's get ready to become more efficient at planning and reaching our goals!

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Lesson 1: The 12-week year approach shatters the shackles of yearly goal-setting.

How are your New Year's resolutions going right now? I've asked this question to people multiple times throughout the years, and it usually falls flat. People struggle with planning annually, but we all do it year after year, only to fail every time. This happens because when we think to achieve something so far in advance, we grow complacent in the middle, thinking we have plenty of time to finish.

Because of this, December is often the best performing month for most businesses. After a year of non-urgency, the last month becomes the catch-up where we push to finish strong. But having that intense drive only once a year isn't enough.

[Peak performers](#) know that smaller planning seasons grant deeper focus and a greater sense of urgency. Athletes were early adopters of what's known as *periodization*, or pinpointing a specific skill to improve and working on it in a smaller stretch of time. The 12-week cycle takes this principle, and the advantages that come with it, and applies it to business and personal goals.

With a 12-week pattern, you can get that motivation to sprint to the finish four times a year. You are also setting yourself up to work harder in the intermediate points within the 12-week cycle. The first step is to create a vision of where you want to be. Use that vision to make specific and measurable goals for your 12-week period. Then it's time to set up a tracking system so you can stay accountable to yourself and others, which we'll learn about next.

Lesson 2: Rigorous review of how you've done each week is essential to accurately knowing where you're at with your goals.

Major businesses track their progression with numbers. Following this same pattern yourself or for your company can give you a massive advantage in [making your vision reality](#). But what do you track and how?

The authors suggest measuring two indicators. *Lag indicators* measure an end result, like how many pounds you've lost each week. *Lead indicators* are the specific actions you take to reach your lag indicator. For losing weight, a lead indicator could be running a mile every weekday.

Lag indicators are important, but remember that you have less control over some parts of these results. This is why it's vital to focus your efforts on lead indicators. **According to the authors, accomplishing 85 percent or more of your lead indicator actions each week improves the likelihood of reaching your 12-week goal.**

Lesson 3: To achieve what you set out to accomplish each every 12 weeks you must carefully manage your time.

The advantage of the 12-week idea is that it's a lot easier to [stay motivated](#) for 12 weeks than 12 months. The hard part, then, is managing your time wisely each week and day to make your goals happen. You can't reach your potential by deferring the important but not urgent tasks on your list.

Unfortunately, according to [a Basex study](#), interruptions *and* recovering from them ate up 28 percent of the typical working professionals day. Instead of losing productivity by taking intrusions as they come, plan for and around them. **Protect your time with blocks: strategic, buffer, and breakout.**

- **Strategic Blocks** are three-hours long, and should be reserved for [Deep Work](#). Do not accept interruptions during this time, and move to a location that is conducive to this if necessary.
- A **Buffer Block** is time dedicated to dealing with all interruptions in one sitting. You can do this a couple of times each day if necessary for an hour or so.
- And finally, the **Breakout Block** is simply a [break from all work](#). Take three hours from normal working hours to be away from it. Breakout blocks improve productivity by helping us stay focused and energetic.

The 12 Week Year Review

[The 12 Week Year](#) is a brilliant idea. After over a decade of setting goals on an annual basis, I can clearly see how ineffective it is in comparison. I'm really excited to put these principles into practice, and my first 12-week year starts now! This is going to be a game-changer for so many people that struggle to follow through with their goals!

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Who would I recommend The 12 Week Year summary to?

The 53-year-old consultant who wants to find a more efficient way to do their work, the 35-year-old with a great business idea who has a hard time making it happen, and anyone that wants to get better at reaching their goals.