From Reactive to Proactive: Creating Your Strategic Administrative Career Plan

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SPECIAL REPORT
FOR SUCCESS-MINDED ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS

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Congratulations on downloading this free report from AllThingsAdmin.com. Just by the fact that you’re reading this right now, I can tell you’re an administrative professional who is positioning herself/himself for success. YOU are willing to take charge of your career, take ownership for your decisions, and implement real strategies that will skyrocket your career to the next level.

This report is going to show you how to create your own strategic administrative career plan. You’re about to discover the incredible benefits of taking this proactive approach to your career planning.

**First, why you should listen to me**

Before we get started, let me share a little bit about why I am such a strong advocate of strategic career planning for administrative professionals. I have worked in the administrative profession for over 18 years and have held every position from Receptionist to Executive Assistant to the President. Throughout much of my early career, I progressed up the ladder without a lot of hassle, **but my career was happening to me instead of me taking a proactive approach toward guiding it where I wanted it to go.** I’m not even sure I knew the opportunities or full potential that existed in this career field. I was still in reactive mode when I was approached about applying for an Executive Assistant position.

Ultimately taking that job started a complete shift in my thinking and overall approach to career planning. I ended up working for one of the best bosses of my career in one of the most toxic work environments I had ever worked in. **My previous strategies for working successfully in executive administrative environments were challenged daily.** While my boss was interested in and supportive of my goals at performance review time, I realized I needed a plan that was right for me and personal for me if I wanted to make this profession a career path instead of just a job. Managing through the day to day challenges of a job wasn’t worth much to me. **But shifting my thinking from job to career path allowed me to start thinking proactively vs. reactively about my situation** and what I was going to do about improving it. Having a career was much more valuable! I didn’t want to be a “job hopper,” but I was starting to see a trend on my resume -- I never stayed in one position more than three years.
Then it happened! I figured out my boss (my best boss ever) was going to be leaving the company. I knew there was no way I could stay and work in that environment long term. I also realized I had to create MY career plan, my boss couldn’t create it for me. He was retiring, so I couldn’t even follow him to his next company. So I had to take charge of my career and create my own strategic administrative career plan.

When I mapped out my plan, and put it into motion, my career leaped forward in ways I never imagined. I was making things happen instead of waiting for someone to tap me on the shoulder. It was one of the most satisfying and professionally rewarding feelings I’ve ever experienced. Now each year, I hold a “strategic planning session” with myself to evaluate where I’ve been, where I’m going, and how I’m going to get there. On a monthly basis, I revisit my plans and make sure I’m staying on track. I still can’t believe how much progress can be made in just one year! You’ll be amazed, too!

You don’t have to become self-employed like I did to reap the benefits of a strategic administrative career plan. Each one of us has a unique purpose and calling in this profession, and no two plans will look the same. But it should be perfectly suited to you, your personality, your strengths, your passions, your interests, and your career goals. It will be there to guide you in making the right decisions about how to pursue opportunities for training, skills development, new positions, setting performance review goals, and more.

So how do you get started?

Have you ever embarked on a landscaping project or maybe planted a garden in your yard? Before you went to the garden center to purchase plants, shrubbery, or seeds, you most likely diagramed out what you wanted the project to look like when you were finished. Whether you hired a professional to guide you through the process or started the planning on your own, you had a plan in hand when you went to purchase the materials necessary for your project. The diagram you started with guided you through the selection and purchase process as well as the planting when you returned home.

Running your administrative career without a strategic career plan is like going to the garden center without a landscaping plan or a list. You have no idea what you want the project to look
like when you’re finished. You have no idea which plants or seeds you need to purchase. You may choose things that are not the best option for the various areas of your yard. It may end up costing you more because you were buying on impulse instead of based on a plan. The overall look of your finished project lacks coherence and continuity.

Your administrative career should not be left to chance. Career-minded administrative professionals don’t put their career on autopilot and hope things work out. They create a proactive strategic plan that lays out the details, timelines, and desired outcomes not only to reach goals, but to propel their careers forward.

**Whether you’re in a position you love or feel like your career has stalled for the moment, a strategic career plan will help.** Your strategic career plan will help you be better prepared to make the transition to your next opportunity. This isn’t an activity you do once and put it on the shelf. Strategic career planning is an ongoing process that you will revisit frequently.

Don’t worry if you don’t have a strategic career plan yet – we’re here to help you get started!

**What is a strategic career plan?**

A strategic career plan is a combination of your personal vision, mission, and goals used to guide your professional growth and development. It’s for individuals who want to grow, remain competitive, or become more competitive in their fields. It puts you in the driver’s seat of your career. It becomes the mindset from which you make important decisions about how you allocate your time, money, and energy in pursuing your goals. It’s absolutely vital to your administrative success!

**Elements of a Strategic Career Plan**

Most strategic career plans address three key areas:

- Where are you now?
- Where are you going?
- How do you get there?
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Think about the past year.

- What goals did I achieve? What went well and why?

- What goals did I fail to achieve? What got in the way and why?

- What am I tolerating instead of overcoming?

One of my mentors, Helen Graves, once said, “Most of us stay where we’re at precisely because we’re good at fooling ourselves into thinking it’s not as bad as it seems. We prefer to live in a happy future in our minds, but tend not to really examine what we’re actually tolerating in the present. We become used to it.”

Here are some more questions that may help you:

- What do I like best about what I do?

- What are my biggest challenges (or career barriers)?

- How well do I understand the changes that are occurring in my work environment and/or my industry?

- What unique value do I provide in my professional life?
• How does the value I provide distinguish me from other administrative professionals?

• What are my passions?

• How would I describe my personality type?
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

- Why am I an administrative professional? Why did I choose this field…or did it choose me?

- Do I know what the critical success factors are for me? (Skills, Resources, Organizations, etc.)

- Have I looked at my Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (S.W.O.T. analysis) for the target job or position I want to attain?

- What is my specialty or niche?

Here’s a helpful visioning exercise I’ve found helpful in this process. Complete the following statements:

- Wouldn’t it be nice if…

- When my life/work is ideal, I have/am…

- Personal success for me means…

- Professional success for me means…

What is the overarching theme in your responses to these statements?
When I get to where I’m going, where will I be?

Let’s brainstorm for a minute. Consider the short term, mid-range, and long term options for your career.

Explore where you’d like to be over the next 1 – 5 – 10 years:

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There is one universal rule of planning: **You will never be greater than the vision that guides you.** In other words, if you don’t know what you want for yourself, you won’t ever achieve it. You’ll continue to stay stuck or stalled out right where you’re at. This is why having a personal vision and mission becomes so important. What’s my potential? Why do I get out of bed every day?
How will you get there?

This is where the plan becomes the true roadmap for your success. Begin by writing down all of the things you need to do to get where you want to be. Here are a few areas you may want to consider:

- Certifications
- Education
- Training
- Mentoring / Coaching
- Branded resume package
- Professional Portfolio
- Professional Association Memberships
- Networking – online and in person
- Publications/Books to Read

Turn these into SMART goals by making them specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, time specific.
Take Charge of Your Career

A strategic career plan helps you reconnect with why you chose the administrative profession in the first place. Successful, career-minded administrative professionals do not depend upon chance. They choose to plan. They choose to grow. They choose to succeed.

So what are you waiting for?

Take charge of your career by creating your own personalized strategic administrative career plan today!

Not sure where to start? Let us help.

Getting Started with

1. Sign up for our FREE Report to learn more about creating your own strategic career plan. (CONGRATULATIONS! You’ve just completed this step!)

2. Join our monthly Success Builder Series and gain access to additional resources and experts on a monthly basis who will sharpen you and give you a competitive advantage.

3. As your Administrative Mentor and Accountability Partner, our goal is to help you succeed. Invest in an Administrative Strategy Session to get started on creating your strategic career plan today.

4. Need more than just an Administrative Strategy Session to get your strategic career plan in place? One on one mentoring is available. To learn more, send your request to us via the contact us page at www.AllThingsAdmin.com/contact-us

Our mentoring program is custom designed for your specific professional needs and includes how to understand and work more effectively with any personality type in your workplace, how to apply basic principles of personal branding to increase your credibility and perceived level of professionalism, processes you can implement to be more effective in your support role, and much more! Plus we’ll keep you accountable for accomplishing what you lay out in your strategic career plan.

Help is here! What are you waiting for? Get started today!

For more information on any of these All Things Admin services, visit www.AllThingsAdmin.com
Connect with Julie Perrine online:

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**About Julie Perrine, CAP-OM, MBTI Certified**

Julie Perrine, CAP-OM, is a personality strategist, personal brand analyst, and administrative mentor who teaches administrative professionals and entrepreneurs how to increase their professional opportunities and achieve more productive and meaningful relationships by utilizing innovative technology, ideas, and people. With more than 18 years of experience providing value added leadership and support to executives and their teams, Julie Perrine is an administrative professional who thoroughly enjoys helping others achieve more than they thought possible.

Julie’s passion for helping individuals and organizations achieve more productive and meaningful work relationships inspired the launch of Julie Perrine International, LLC, an executive level administrative support, mentoring, and training company. Since 2005, she has offered her services as an independent virtual assistant, online business manager, and trainer, working on- and off-site in all levels of organizations.

In 2009, Julie founded All Things Admin to develop new programs and materials to help admins in their daily jobs and to provide specialized training and mentoring services to Administrative Professionals.

Julie has been an active member of the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP) for over 11 years. In addition, Julie teaches continuing education classes for Kirkwood Community College and is a member of the Kirkwood Community College Computer/Office Applications Advisory Committee.

For inquiries, interview requests, or how to work with Julie, contact us through our website at [www.AllThingsAdmin.com/contact-us](http://www.AllThingsAdmin.com/contact-us)