

# The Titan Times Newsletter

brought to you by TITAN Business Development Group, LLC

business coaching | advisory | exit planning

January, 2025

TITAN Business Development Group, LLC is a results-driven, professional, innovative and energetic business development firm located in Flanders, New Jersey, specializing in business coaching, advisory services and exit planning. From formation and startup, through all stages of the Business Growth and Maturity Cycles, Titan's business coaches and advisors work with sole-proprietors, partners, corporations, management, staff and teams to successfully create definitive, measurable and sustainable results.

Working together to improve operations, develop strong business systems, design robust strategies, increase profits, enhance knowledge and create plans in areas such as financial management, sales, marketing, leadership, productivity and more, Titan BDG's goal is to help its clients become titans in their industries.

The TITAN BDG way is much more than the right steps at the right times, it is also a highly collaborative, professional, respectful and effective approach to impacting our clients in a fashion that empowers them to turn ideas into clear visions and transform those visions into reality. The TITAN BDG way is about expanding one's definition of achievement and success – and surpassing the rest of the pack.

As Certified Exit Planning Advisors, we are also keenly skilled in helping you identify, protect, build, harvest, and manage the value in/from your Company. Our exit planning services apply the Value Acceleration Methodology of the Exit Planning Institute – the global authority on exit planning.



## *in this issue:*

Start the New Year Right: Strategies For Business Success	P.1
Masterful Quotes (Sidebar)	P.2
60 Useful Excel Keyboard Shortcuts	P.3
Terminating an Employee Effectively and Professionally	P.5

## Start the New Year Right: Strategies for Business Success

The start of a new year is the perfect time to hit refresh on your business strategy, set goals, and lay the foundation for a successful year. Ideally, you had an intimate year-end planning process that yielded a detailed plan, but absent that, with careful planning and a proactive mindset, you can still set your business up for growth and achievement. Here are actionable steps to help you start the new year right.

Reflect on the Past Year. Before you look ahead, take time to review the year that just ended. Analyze what went well and what could have been better. Ask yourself:

- What were the biggest wins for your business?
- Where did you face challenges, and what lessons did you learn?
- Are there strategies or processes that need refinement or replacement?

Gather insights from your team, clients, and financial reports to understand the areas requiring attention. A clear assessment of the past will guide your decisions moving forward.

Set SMART Goals. Goals give your business direction and purpose. Use the SMART framework—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound—to create objectives that are clear and actionable. For example: Instead of saying, "Increase sales," set a goal like, "Increase sales revenue by 20% by the end of Q2 through new marketing campaigns and lead-generation strategies." Break larger goals into smaller milestones and assign timelines to track progress effectively.



## Masterful Quotes

“The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious. It is the fundamental emotion that stands at the cradle of true art and true science.”

*-Albert Einstein*

“Most people have no idea of the giant capacity we can immediately command when we focus all our resources on mastering a single area of our lives.”

*-Tony Robbins*

“In a busy marketplace, not standing out is the same as being invisible.”

*-Seth Godin*

[www.TitanBDG.com](http://www.TitanBDG.com)  
(973) 601-3275  
[information@titanbdg.com](mailto:information@titanbdg.com)

**Revisit Your Business Plan.** Your business plan isn't static—it should evolve with your company. Use the new year to revisit and update it:

- Align your mission and vision statements with current market realities.
- Incorporate new trends or technologies relevant to your industry.
- Evaluate your competition to identify opportunities for differentiation.

A well-maintained business plan helps ensure you're steering your business in the right direction.

**Focus on Financial Health.** A healthy cash flow is the lifeblood of any business. Start the year with a financial checkup:

- Review your budget and adjust it based on last year's performance.
- Evaluate recurring expenses and identify areas to cut costs.
- Update your pricing structure if necessary to reflect market trends or increased costs.

Plan for tax obligations early, and if applicable, seek advice from a financial advisor or accountant to optimize your financial strategies.

**Embrace Technology and Automation.** The right tools can streamline operations and save time. Evaluate your current tech stack and look for opportunities to improve:

- Invest in customer relationship management (CRM) software to enhance client engagement.
- Use automation tools for invoicing, social media, or email marketing.
- Explore data analytics tools to track performance metrics and make informed decisions.

Incorporating technology can boost efficiency and free up resources for strategic initiatives.

**Engage and Empower Your Team.** Your team is your most valuable asset. Starting the year with clear communication and team-building activities can improve morale and productivity:

- Share your business goals and vision for the year.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and training.
- Encourage feedback to foster a culture of collaboration.

Happy and engaged employees are more likely to contribute to your business's success.

(continued)



Enhance Customer Relationships. Loyal customers are critical to long-term success. Use the new year to deepen these relationships:

- Reach out to thank them for their support and ask for feedback.
- Introduce loyalty programs or personalized offers to show appreciation.
- Focus on improving customer service by training staff or implementing better communication tools.

Customer satisfaction can be a significant driver of growth through repeat business and referrals.

Plan for Marketing and Brand Growth. Your marketing strategy should evolve with your business goals and industry trends:

- Audit your marketing channels to determine what's working and what isn't.
- Set a clear marketing calendar for the year, incorporating social media, email campaigns, and events.
- Consider investing in content marketing to establish thought leadership in your industry.

A cohesive and dynamic marketing plan will help you reach your target audience effectively.

Prioritize Personal Growth. As a business leader, your growth directly impacts your business's trajectory.

Dedicate time to:

- Develop new skills relevant to your industry or leadership role.
- Network with other entrepreneurs and industry leaders.
- Set personal health and wellness goals to maintain your energy and focus.

Balancing personal and professional growth will help you lead your business more effectively.

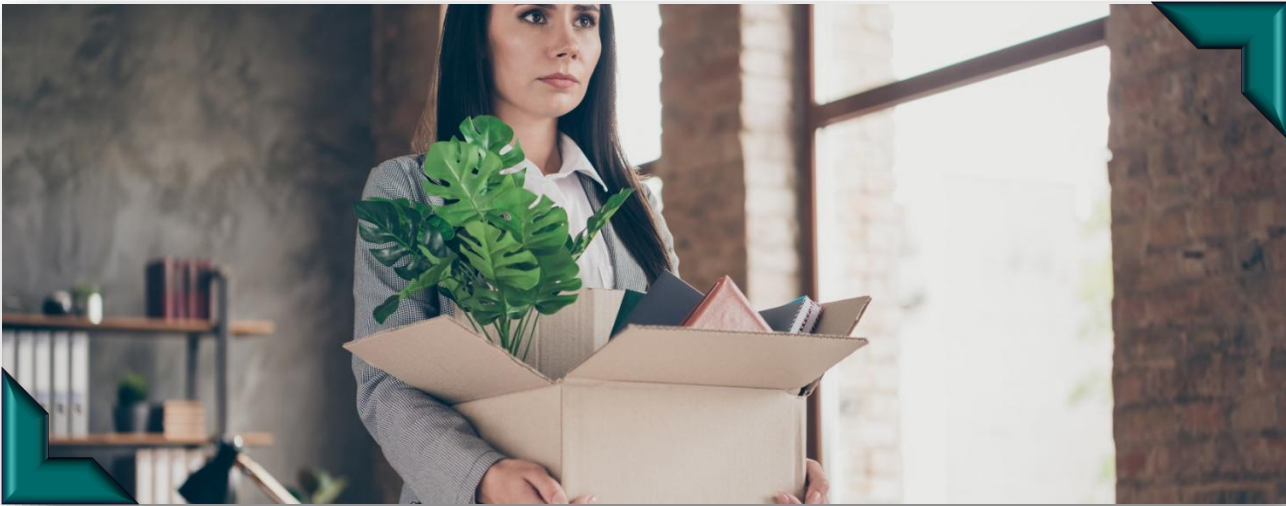
Monitor Progress Regularly. A successful year requires consistent evaluation. Establish regular check-ins to assess your goals and adjust strategies as needed. Whether it's monthly financial reviews or quarterly strategy sessions, staying proactive will keep your business on track.

Starting the new year right in business is about preparation, focus, and adaptability. By reflecting on the past, setting clear goals, empowering your team, and staying open to innovation, you can navigate challenges and seize opportunities with confidence. Use this fresh start to position your business for a prosperous and fulfilling year ahead.

\*\*\*

## 60 Useful Excel Keyboard Shortcuts

Shortcut	Action	Shortcut	Action
Ctrl + N	Create a new workbook	Shift + Tab	Move to the previous cell
Ctrl + O	Open an existing workbook	F2	Edit the selected cell
Ctrl + S	Save the current workbook	Ctrl + D	Fill down
Ctrl + P	Print the workbook	Alt + Enter	Start a new line in the same cell
Ctrl + Z	Undo the last action	Ctrl + Shift + :	Insert current time
Ctrl + Y	Redo the last action	Ctrl + ;	Insert current date
Ctrl + X	Cut the selected content	Ctrl + K	Insert a hyperlink
Ctrl + C	Copy the selected content	Ctrl + Shift + K	Open the Insert Hyperlink dialog
Ctrl + V	Paste the copied content	Ctrl + Shift + L	Apply or remove filters
Ctrl + F	Find content within the workbook	Ctrl + Space	Select the entire column
Ctrl + H	Find and replace content	Shift + Space	Select the entire row
Ctrl + A	Select the entire worksheet	Ctrl + Shift + Arrow Keys	Extend selection by one cell
Ctrl + B	Bold the selected text	Ctrl + Shift + Home	Extend selection to the beginning of the worksheet
Ctrl + I	Italicize the selected text	Ctrl + Shift + End	Extend selection to the last cell used
Ctrl + U	Underline the selected text	Ctrl + T	Create a table
Ctrl + 1	Open the Format Cells dialog	Alt + =	Insert a sum function
Ctrl + Shift + \$	Apply currency format	Ctrl + +	Insert a new cell, row, or column
Ctrl + Shift + %	Apply percentage format	Ctrl + -	Delete selected cells, rows, or columns
Ctrl + Shift + #	Apply date format	Shift + Alt + Right Arrow	Group rows or columns
Ctrl + Shift + @	Apply time format	Shift + Alt + Left Arrow	Ungroup rows or columns
Ctrl + Shift + ^	Apply scientific format	Ctrl + 9	Hide rows
Ctrl + Shift + &	Apply outline border	Ctrl + Shift + 9	Unhide rows
Ctrl + Shift + _	Remove outline border	Ctrl + 0	Hide columns
Ctrl + Arrow Keys	Move quickly across cells in the direction of the arrow	Ctrl + Shift + 0	Unhide columns
Ctrl + Home	Go to the beginning of the worksheet	Alt + F1	Create a chart from selected data
Ctrl + End	Go to the end of the worksheet	Alt + F8	Open the Macros dialog
Ctrl + Page Up	Move to the previous sheet	Alt + F11	Open the VBA editor
Ctrl + Page Down	Move to the next sheet	Ctrl + Alt + F9	Force a full recalculation of all formulas
Alt + Page Up	Move one screen up	Ctrl + Shift + U	Expand or collapse the formula bar
Alt + Page Down	Move one screen down	Ctrl + Shift + F	Open the Font dialog
Ctrl + R	Fill to the right	Ctrl + Shift + P	Open the Font Size dialog



## **Terminating an Employee Effectively and Professionally**

At some point, most business owners face the difficult task of terminating an employee. It's one of the hardest responsibilities you may encounter as an employer, as it directly impacts someone's livelihood and can create significant personal challenges for them. However, when an employee is detrimental to your team or organization, termination may be necessary to preserve the well-being and performance of your business. This article discusses key considerations and best practices for terminating an "at-will" employee—someone who does not have a contract guaranteeing employment for a specified period.

### **Before You Terminate: Provide Feedback and Set Clear Expectations**

**Evaluate Prior Feedback:** Reflect on any prior discussions with the employee. If previous feedback was primarily positive, ensure you have clearly communicated your concerns about their performance or behavior.

**Provide an Opportunity for Improvement:** Consider sitting down with the employee to discuss specific issues and set measurable goals for improvement. Give them a reasonable timeframe to address the concerns while making it clear that failure to improve will lead to termination.

**Document the Conversation:** Immediately after discussing performance issues, create a memo detailing the conversation, including expectations and potential consequences.

### **Assess the Impact of Their Behavior**

If an employee's behavior is toxic or disruptive to your workplace culture, swift action may be necessary. "Cancerous" attitudes or actions can spread negativity among your team and harm overall morale. In such cases, it's often best to address the situation promptly.

### **During the Termination Meeting**

When it's time to terminate an employee, handle the meeting professionally and with empathy. Here are practical steps to follow:

**State the Decision Clearly:** Inform the employee of their termination and specify the last day of employment.

**Explain the Cause:** If the termination is due to performance issues, refer to prior discussions or reviews that outlined the need for improvement. Be factual and avoid personal criticisms.

**Discuss Severance and Benefits:** Outline any severance pay or post-employment benefits they will receive, if applicable.

**Provide a Release Form:** For employees in protected classes (e.g., age, gender, race), consider asking them to sign a release of liability. Have this document drafted by a legal professional to ensure compliance with applicable laws. Offer additional severance or benefits as an incentive for signing.

**Collect Company Property:** Present a checklist of items to be returned, such as keys, access cards, and electronic devices.

### **Consider Additional Steps**

**Exit Interview:** Use a formal questionnaire to gain insights into potential improvements in your organization.

**Secure Company Assets:** Change access credentials and passwords immediately, preferably during the termination meeting.

**Escort Them Out:** Unless there's a compelling reason for the employee to stay longer, escort them out of the office after they've returned company property and collected personal items.

### **After the Termination**

**Communicate with Your Team:** Inform your remaining employees that the individual is no longer with the company. Keep details confidential but reassign duties and address any concerns to prevent misinformation or speculation.

**Protect Workplace Morale:** Address the team in a way that reinforces your commitment to maintaining a productive and positive environment.

### **Why Delaying Termination is Harmful**

Delaying the decision to terminate an underperforming or toxic employee can have a ripple effect on your business. It allows harmful behavior to persist and sends a message to other employees that similar behavior might be tolerated. Acting decisively demonstrates strong leadership and a commitment to your team's success.

Firing an employee is never easy, and it should always be approached with careful thought and consideration. Following the steps outlined above can help you navigate this challenging process professionally and with integrity. While it may be a tough decision, addressing the issue promptly is often the best course of action for your business and team.