Planning Notebook

by Kenneth John Odle v. 0.3.0 4 July 2021

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Introduction

I don't like long introductions generally, so if this is to long for you, just read "An Important Note" below and get on with life.

1.1 Origins

I created this for one main reason: I have a hard time getting and staying organized, especially with regard to financial matters. Part of this is no doubt due to my background (I did not grow up in an environment where people moved money around to benefit themselves) and undiagnosed ADHD (which is something I'm also looking into).

Also, I had a hard time making this and making it look nice with the tools I had available to me. (I like to do a lot of design things in my spare time and have spent countless hours questioning whether to go with a 10pt font size or a 10.5pt font size. The struggle is real.) Because I like learning new things, I decided to finally learn how to use Lagarance it is basically a text file, I can compile it to a pdf file to share, but I can also share it via Git for those who want to create their own version.

1.2 An Important Note

You don't have to wait until the beginning of a new year to start this. In fact, I suggest that you avoid New Year's Day to make any major changes in your life. There is already so much going on, what with it being the height of the holiday season for most western religions. As well, people *expect* you to commit to changes. (And take delight in when you fail.)

Rather, start where you are, and make changes as gradually or as quickly as you feel comfortable with. As the cliché goes, there's no time like the present.

1.3 A Minor Note

Like I mentioned above, I've generated this document using LaTeX. As a result, this document is subject to all the limitations of LaTeX, and more specifically, my limited (though growing) abilities with LaTeX. If you want to correct any markup errors I've made (and I'm sure there are plenty), please contact me.

1.4 Why Do People Have Trouble Keeping Track of Things?

Goals

Let's talk about goals.

Presumably you want to make a plan because you have some end in mind—something in your life that you want to change, see more of, or see less of. We're going to work on a year-long plan to get you at least partway to those goals.

There are six parts to setting and achieving a goal, and if you studied journalism in high school or college, you'll recognize them. Those six parts are what, who, when, where, why, and how. Let's look at each one in a little bit more detailed.

What

This is the easy part. "What" means what you actually want to achieve. This can be anything from "lose ten pounds" to "save \$2,000 for a down payment on a new car". Whatever you choose, it must be *specific* and *measurable*. In other words, it has to be something you can see. This is why most people who fail to achieve a goal: it's not specific. You can easily tell if you've gained ten pounds just by getting on a scale. You can easily tell whether you've saved money by looking at your bank balance.

But if your goal is "get more organized" there's no way to measure "organized". The way out of this dilemma is to stop and think about what that's going to look like.

Annual Goals

Okay, let's make some goals for the next 365 days.

Monthly and Weekly Goals

Weekly Task List

I find it helpful to keep track of what household chores need to be done. That way, I don't spend an entire day each weekend just cleaning house and catching up on laundry, and I can plan ahead for needed supplies. If you have a busy household, you may find it handy to print out the following page, fill in the chores and assignments, and then laminate it and stick it on the front of your refrigerator. Everyone can then use a whiteboard marker to cross off their chore when it is done. You can then have a celebration on Sunday night when everything is done and you can wipe the entire sheet clean again, ready for the next week.

Weekly Tasks

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The Year

The rest of this planner consists of 52 weeks of planning pages.

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