

**Business Bullet ~**  
**Get Organized With Lists**

Includes Top Ten List Ideas From Richard Branson

Making lists is natural. We do it all the time. Lists help us get organized. Making lists can be creative. Here are a couple of ideas of list-making processes: With one you can dig deeper into issues, the other allows you to get rid of things. Both are handy, especially in business.

As kids we felt inspired and aroused when we wrote sentences, turning half of the writing on the backside, handed the paper to the next kid who had to finish the sentence, and so on. Lists are handy reminders for things to do and not to forget.

I make lists all the time:

- To help me organize my thoughts.
- To have something to do in my day that is an achievement.
- To have a record of my life.
- To relieve the stress of my mind.
- To keep me from procrastinating!
- To bring order to the chaos of my life.
- To bring focus to randomness of my mind.
- To look back at it and take some ideas and inspiration.

Lists are wonderful storehouses for ideas and inspiration or even better: greenhouses making ideas grow. Lists are guiding, lists are framing. Here are a couple of ideas I have found especially innovative and helpful:



**One for Creativity: List Making as a Tool of Thought Leadership**

All idea creation starts with a list. Next time you need new ideas, first consider your topic by making a list. I make several lists, starting with a first list exploring a question or idea; from where I develop more focused lists on items of the first list. Then I spread out the different lists for a discovery tour: What emerges? What's clear? What's surprising? And I dig deeper and deeper. New ways of seeing things, connecting ideas and thoughts might bring smaller or bigger breakthroughs.

**One for Satisfaction: Two Lists Every Morning**

Too much on your plate? Make your planning with two different lists—the "to-do" list and the NO-list. These two lists will guide you safely through overfilled days. Here is how it works:

**List 1—Your Focus List**

What are you trying to achieve? What makes you happy? What's important to you? Design your time around those things. Well, of course, you need to keep in mind deadlines if you are making a list for work to do's. Your time is your one limited resource and no matter how hard you try, you can't work 25/8.

**List 2—Your Ignore List**

To succeed in using your time wisely, you have to ask the equally important but often avoided complementary question: What are you willing not to achieve today? What doesn't make you happy? What's not important to you? What gets in the way? Catching up with all that is coming in is impossible sometimes. I always make lists to get focused. To have a 'no-list' is definitely a relief.

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Here are **Richard Branson's Top Ten Tips For Making Lists**. This is a very successful man, someone from whom we can learn a great deal. This is in his words.

I have always lived my life by making lists. These vary from lists of people to call, lists of ideas, lists of companies to set up, lists of people who can make things happen. I also have lists of topics to blog about, lists of tweets to send, and lists of upcoming plans.

Each day I work through these lists, and it is by ticking off each task that my ideas take shape and plans move forward. As each new year gets started, lots of you get busy making resolutions. If you want to stick to them, I suggest making them into lists. The same applies at the start of each week...make some resolutions and transform these into lists. Here are my top ten tips for making lists:

- 1—Write down every single idea you have, no matter how big or small.
- 2—Always carry a notebook.
- 3—Find a list method that works for you. Doodles, bullet-points, charts, what suits you best?
- 4—Make a list of small, manageable tasks to complete every day.
- 5—Mark off every completed task, you'll find making each tick very satisfying.
- 6—Make your goals measurable so you know if your plans are working.
- 7—Set far off, outlandish goals. What do you want to have achieved by 2015? How about 2020?
- 8—Include personal goals in your lists, not just business.
- 9—Share your goals with others. You can help motivate each other further.
- 10—Celebrate your successes then make new lists of new goals.



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