

Opportunity Looks A Lot Like Hard Work

Do you have a busy season at work? If you do, do you realize how mission critical it is for the progression of your career and your financial success?

For me the busy time of year is the 4th quarter. Especially in the [new role](#). However, I also recognize that this is the time of year that it makes the most sense for me to go above and beyond to put the hard work in.

For the past 6 weeks I have progressively gone from working about 50 hours a week to 90+ hours a week. This past week alone I have worked from 4am to 9pm almost every day (the week before Thanksgiving). Now let me point out that I have no interest in working those kinds of hours all year round. But I can handle it for a short period of time, especially if I can see the reward that is waiting for me on the other end.

You know what also happens at the end of the 4th quarter and my busy season?

That's right it is review, promotion, and bonus time. My favorite time of the year.

Are you starting to see where I am going with this?

If you've been reading this blog for any length of time, then you have probably already read the post I wrote on my recent promotion to director and the [\\$60K compensation increase](#) that came as a result.

That promotion was a mid-year deal that just happened over the summer. Because that promotion is so fresh, I don't expect to get another promotion or increase in my base salary come January of 2016, but there are other changes to compensation that I do expect.

Strategic Over Achievement

You should always do a great job. But there are certain times of the year that I think

it makes sense to **Over Achieve**. And you can guess based on the intro above what time a year I think this strategy makes most sense.

People and Management have short term memories and from my experience tend to base raises and promotions on the things you have done most recently.

I have essentially made myself available 24/7 since the middle of October:

- Starting early at 4am in order to accommodate phone calls and strategic discussions with our East Coast CEO. Working weekends.
- Getting my normal job done.
- Helping others with their jobs.
- Getting involved with strategic 5 year planning.
- Inserting myself into a global role by helping our International operations.
- And finally managing the 2016 annual planning process, while running black ops financial modeling with the CEO to guide our operations team to a plan that is data driven.

To say I have learned a lot, would be an understatement. The exposure I have gotten since the promotion has been game changing. And right now I am everyone's best friend and favorite resource.

We are currently a month ahead of schedule on our planning vs. this time last year. I appear to have unlimited amounts of bandwidth at the moment, and this continues to allow me to be included in many aspects of the business...creating a sort of internal and offline virality for my career.

So, Whats it all for?

This is the time of year to remind management that you're a **ROCK STAR**. This year in particular I wanted to give management validation that elevating me to Director was a great decision. This would also ensure that I got my full bonus in January (which is 6X larger than my 2014 bonus). Lastly, this sets me up for another great year in 2016.

Typically, I would have to wait until January OF 2016 to find out what my rewards were going to be for the value I delivered in 2015. However, in this new role, these types of conversations happen very differently.

I found out yesterday how all my hard work was going to be rewarded. Somehow the CEO and I migrated from a conversation about making sure our key operational leaders were taken care of in 2016 to my own financial compensation.

The Details

Since my base had just jumped \$30K this past summer, I didn't expect to get an increase again in 2016 (at least not in January of 2016). However, my bonus previously increased from \$7K/year to \$40K/year, and my hope and goal would be to get a chance to tie my bonus to the bottom line performance of the company. That way as we continue to grow and the company does better, so will I, win/win.

Here is what will change for me in 2016:

1. **My bonus will be based on a % of Bottom Line Performance.** It was confirmed that for 2015 I will get my full \$40K bonus in January. And going forward my bonus will grow with the bottom line. Since I am running the 2016 planning process, I already have an idea of what that increase will look like. If our bottom line increases 50% then my bonus will increase to \$60K. Also I know based on the 5 year strategic planning that this has the potential to grow to \$130K. Although I expect that over the course of the next 5 years, a lot can change, including my current deal (for the better).
2. **Additional Opportunity for EXTRA Bonus Money.** I have been tasked with proposing some initiatives in 2016 that could create operational efficiency in 2016 and beyond. With that proposal I am also to come up with my proposed compensation for achieving the goals of any of the initiatives I take on. Still need to put some more thought into this one. But I do have some ideas. This would be in addition to my regular bonus.
3. **Options.** I will be getting options in the company in 2016. I don't yet know the quantity of these, but I do know we typically give them out in blocks of 500-1,000. Knowing that the eventual goal is a liquidity event, these could be very lucrative. Very exciting! **Next step is to try and get equity.**

Beyond this there is going to be lots of opportunity in 2016.

That said it will be critical that I am very strategic in transitioning back to a 50 hour work week after the 4th quarter. Still delivering incredible value, but finding balance again. Working those kinds of hours is not sustainable or healthy all year round.

This would allow me to take a bit of a breather until the 2nd quarter when I ramp back up again ahead of mid-year bonus time...**STRATEGIC OVER ACHIEVING AT IT'S FINEST!**

Fortunately, some of the ideas for initiatives in 2016 will allow me to manage my time.

-Gen Y Finance Guy



Gen Y Finance Guy

Hey, I'm Dom - the man behind the cartoon. You'll notice that I sign off as "Gen Y Finance Guy" on all my posts, due to the fact that I write this blog anonymously (at least for now). I like to think of myself as the *Chief Freedom Officer* here of my little corner of the internet. In the real world, I'm a 30-something former C-Suite executive turned entrepreneur turned capital allocator. I am trying to humanize finance by sharing my own journey to Financial Freedom. I believe in total *honesty* and *transparency*. That is why before I ever started blogging, I decided that I would share all of my own [financial stats](#). I do this not to brag, but instead to inspire motivate, and also to hold myself accountable. My goal is to be a beacon of hope, motivation, and inspiration for *you*, the reader, by living life by example and sharing it **all** here on the blog. My sincere hope is that you will be able to learn from me - both from my successes and my failures! [Read More](#)