

# Watch Your Traffic Lights

By Lynnelle Bianco

**It never ceases to amaze me how fast things change;** how fast time goes by; how fast and uncertain our world is. I'm writing this article on September 12, 2006. This is a time of reflection for me and for many of you as well, I would imagine. Everything changed this week five years ago. Where were you? What was your life like then? What was your business like then?

**In a little over 2 weeks we will enter the 4th** and final quarter of 2006. There are **2568** hours left in 2006. Take 1 of those hours before the end of September for reflection. Look back 9 months to January and to the goals you set for your business and yourself and let's do an exercise.

**Get 2 pieces of paper** and on one, draw two lines down the length of the page creating 3 columns. Title the left column 'Green', the center column 'Yellow' and the right column 'Red'. Now consider your top 10 objectives, or goals, for 2006 and categorize each according to the status completion according to the following:

- **Green** Goal is on track to be achieved and is under control for 12/31/06.
- **Yellow** Goal needs focus and is at risk.
- **Red** = Goal is in real trouble and a strong likelihood that you will not accomplish this by the end of the year.

**This shouldn't take a great deal of time.** You know your goals. (If not, there's a different conversation we need to have!) You really know which ones are in trouble; which goals you've been passionate and energetic about and which ones have somehow fallen off the radar. Write down each goal in the appropriate column and when you've done this sit back and look at the paper. Think about the events of the last 9 months and how these events have shaped what you see on the page. Next look at what you've listed in the Yellow and Red columns and ask yourself:

- "What was my role in the current status of these goals?"
- "What have I done (or not done)?"
- "Were there any events, even beyond my control that I could have anticipated and taken positive or defensive action earlier? And if so, what kept me from seeing it?"

**Take the second sheet of paper** and draw a single line down the middle of the page so you have two columns. Right one of your top 10 goals on the right side of the page. Now ask yourself, "What needs to happen in the next 30 days to get this goal back on track and 30 days closer to being realized?" Right down these things on the left side of the page.

**Continue this process for all of your top 10 priorities** for the year; even the Red goals that are absolutely not going to be accomplished. Just because you don't make it to the finish line doesn't mean you can't continue as far around the track as you can get. On the other hand, sometimes the most effective action is no action so you'll have to be honest with yourself and make that determination on a goal by goal basis. Just make sure it's a smart decision and not an easy out.

**After you've completed this exercise** take a look at what you've noted in the left column. This is your 30-day plan; your 30-day roadmap to the destination, 12/31/06. Use this process every 30 days until the end of the year. Breaking the goals into smaller segments helps to see the goal in steps rather than a big effort. If you want to increase your chances of success even more, take your 30-day plan and create a weekly to-do list every 7 days working back to the things you need to accomplish that month. This breaks things down into day-to-day tasks.

**Let's face it; life is a journey.** It's like the internet; you'll never reach the end until the energy is gone. So where are you going? What is your passion; your vision? How do you want to live? Clarify your vision of that life; what it looks like, feels like, sounds and smells like. Your business is the vehicle that will enable you to realize that vision so make sure the business is on track to take you there.

**Life goes by fast; life IS fast.** Take one of these next 2568 hours left in 2006 and slow it down to make sure it's on the same track as your vision.

**If this traffic light process causes you to rethink** your direction, you might benefit from a talk with a life coach or career counselor. Working with a professional trained to help people sort through their hectic lives and uncover a true passion can be the best investment you'll ever make. Ask a friends for referrals. Three professional life coaches / career counselors I know and trust are below. They are all professionals in helping people clarify their personal vision. While they are physically located in Maine, all work via telephone also.

**Barbara Babkirk**

Heart at Work - [www.barbarababkirk.com](http://www.barbarababkirk.com)  
Yarmouth, Maine  
207.846.0644

**Rhoda Mitchell**

New Leaves - [www.grownleaves.com](http://www.grownleaves.com)  
Portland, Maine  
207.774.0816

**Kimberly Mowry**

Personna – [www.personnalifecoaching.com](http://www.personnalifecoaching.com)  
Saco, Maine  
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And remember ...Be **BOLD**. It all starts with a vision.



Lynnelle Bianco, President of [Bold Vision Consulting](http://www.BoldVisionConsulting.com) brings 25+ years of professional and corporate working experience to clients. Having held senior positions in marketing, new business development and client service for global institutions — as well as owning and operating her own small businesses — Lynnelle brings real-world experience and forward looking perspectives to helping today's professionals and business owners achieve breakthrough success. ...and remember; **Be Bold!** It all starts with a vision.