

Top 10 Fiscal Year 2019 Resolutions

1. **Review growth goals to align them with capabilities and resource constraints**
2. **Maintain a living, breathing, adaptive strategic plan**
3. **Assess your pipeline – Is it large enough to achieve growth goals? Is it the right shape?**
4. **Build out a smart vehicle portfolio, with a three-tiered approach to providing easier customer access**
5. **Turn relationships into business or create relationships around business**
6. **Work the capture process early and often by staying close to the customer, vetting solutions early, and iterating them as needed**
7. **(SB) Act bigger than your size – Prepare now to compete against the large businesses you will eventually face**
8. **Plan for M&A integration success from the initial meeting with a potential target**
9. **Devote more effort in M&A transactions to revenue synergies than to cost savings**
10. **Use it or lose it – Take advantage of current high valuations or have a plan to out-grow inevitable valuation compression**

Fiscal New Year Resolutions

- 🐾 As we ring in fiscal year 2019, it is important to look back, evaluate where you stand, and make resolutions to accelerate future growth
- 🐾 Start by reviewing your company’s strategic plan and verify that it remains applicable in 2019 – which we expect to be much like 2018
- 🐾 Augment this with a regimented market research approach that triangulates open source, primary, and secondary sources
- 🐾 Avoid hasty New Year hookups by ensuring that merger partners are a growth catalyst and strong cultural match early in the relationship
- 🐾 Execute on goals through a strict capture and proposal regimen, with a strong ground game, disciplined approaches, and tailored content
- 🐾 We should continue to enjoy a cornucopia of opportunities in fiscal year 2019, so follow this guidance to get more than your fair share

Reset the Year

Appeasing the fates with promises to make good on life’s fortune is a long-held tradition. Beginning with the early Babylonians, and carried forward by the Romans, we too make resolutions each year to aim higher, do better, be greater. In government contracting, at the start of the government fiscal year we pledge to adopt new behaviors that will pay out in growth. Start by taking a step back to reflect on a new market landscape. The competitive universe is bifurcating into very large services companies at one end of the market and thousands of small businesses at the other end. Similarly, the procurement environment is shifting to fewer, best-in-class contract vehicles, leaving many out in the cold. This is happening against a backdrop of record M&A valuations, raising the stakes for resolutions this year more than ever.

Resist Fad Diets

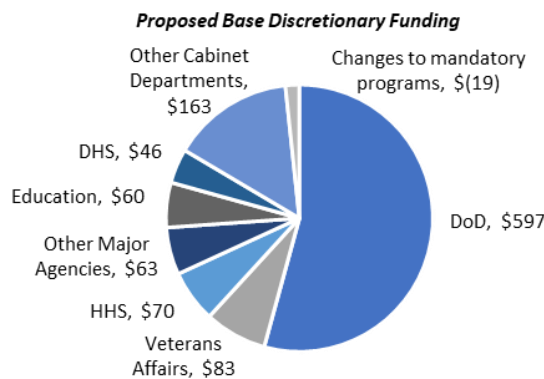
Just as understanding the fundamentals of diet and exercise is critical to effective weight loss, understanding the market context through effective market research is critical to achieving growth goals. At its core, losing weight comes down to the simple ratio of calories in versus calories out and any cleanses, keto crazes, or periodic fasting diets are no substitute for hard work and discipline. Market research is no different. Subscription databases that claim to be a “cure-all” are often utilized ineffectively. Like TV infomercials, they promise a one-stop shop for all your federal market research needs. Their subscriptions slice, dice, chop, and purée – and if you act now they will throw in state and local for free – but they all have limitations. There is no substitute for understanding the underlying dynamics of key federal spending databases, open source queries, and primary research. In the new year, resolve not to be tempted by overstated market research promises.

Midnight Kiss

The old superstition holds that to avoid a year of loneliness, kiss someone at the stroke of midnight on New Year’s Eve. As a result, many enter the new year with the intention of finding love and, desperate, make poor relationship choices. Similarly, when companies strive to grow, they can make impulsive M&A decisions. Successful companies will resolve to make smart, informed partnership decisions for long-term, fruitful relationships. Before approaching a potential partner, companies should map out cultural and organizational compatibility and begin working these integration issues early. While a partnership may seem financially promising at first, misaligned companies will inevitably clash. Healthy relationships grow together, so devote at least as much effort to exploring possible revenue synergies as to cost savings.

Don’t Skip Leg Day

Just as the core and legs are key to a higher metabolism, organic growth is the “core” of successful companies. To gain a larger share of the addressable market or sustainably boost corporate revenue, you cannot neglect this core. It takes dedication to apply known capture and proposal best practices to see results. At a base level, putting in the miles by walking the halls of potential customers is a good way to shed the weight of preconceptions and gain true technical insight and organizational perspective on upcoming procurements. In addition, work out delivery approaches by doing the reps with end customers to hone and tone solutions to feature the innovations that will advance the IT enterprise or achieve operational efficiencies. Lastly, “shock” your muscles by mixing up your routine and varying workouts. Proposals, like muscles, are subject to repetitive use injuries when authors take the easy way out and rehash the same tired content from past bids.



FY19 Proposed Base Discretionary Funding leans heavily toward DoD, with VA, HHS, Education, and DHS also receiving significant spend.

Source: White House FY19 Budget; Dollars in billions