GRIT GUIDE
BY GRIT BLUEPRINT

GRIT GUIDE
NO. 10

ON PAPER ON PAPER
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ON PAPER ON PAPER

YOUR WINS ON PAPER BEFORE REVIEW TIME

How to Keep a Wins List and Use It at Review Time

A few lines every Friday, so you never again try to remember a whole year the night before your review.

Featuring Marion Pulse, Tina Breen and Sarah Krey

gritguide.com/how-to-keep-a-wins-list/

7 steps 8 min read Checklist to print

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YOU'LL FINISH WITH

A wins list with an entry for every week, each win next to its result, a short monthly note to your manager, and a one-page summary you bring to your review.

THE STEPS

01 PICK ONE PLACE AND ONE TIME

02 WRITE FOUR LINES EVERY WEEK

03 COUNT THE SMALL WINS

04 PUT THE RESULT NEXT TO THE WORK

05 TELL YOUR MANAGER ONCE A MONTH

06 READ IT EVERY QUARTER FOR A PATTERN

07 BRING A ONE-PAGE SUMMARY TO YOUR REVIEW

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From the episode: Marion Pulse on Confidence, Patience and Finding Your Place in Fenestration. Watch it at gritguide.com/grit-guide/videos/marion-pulse-on-confidence-patience-and-finding-your-place-in-fenestration

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Marion Pulse had already won President's Club, an award for the top performers in a sales organization, when a director came out for a ride-along in her second year selling windows. He told her she was showing a lot of success and asked what she was doing differently from everyone else.

Her answer, as she told it on the Grit Blueprint Podcast: "I do my job. That's literally what I told him" (31:12). She could not say what she did differently, because she had never looked. Her awards, she said, were in a box.

When we recorded in 2024, Pulse was Member Services and Engagement Manager at the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC). This guide is the fix for her "I do my job" moment: a short list you add to every week, so the record exists before anyone asks for it. It is for anyone early in a building industry career, at a dealer, a distributor, a manufacturer or an association. Managers can hand it to their teams.

WORDS TO KNOW

Wins list
A running record of what you did at work and what came of it, written as it happens.

Annual review
The yearly meeting where a manager rates your work, often tied to raises and promotions.

Ride-along
A day when a manager or trainer travels with a salesperson to see the work firsthand.

ROI
Return on investment: what the company got back for what it spent, including the time it paid you for.

BEFORE YOU START

- One place you will really use: a note on your phone, a document or a repeating calendar event
- A fixed time each week, such as Friday before you leave
- Your job description or your goals for the year, if you have them
- Your company's rules on sharing customer names and numbers

01 PICK ONE PLACE AND ONE TIME

Choose where the list will live and when you will add to it. One place, one time, every week. A phone note works. So does a document with the year in its name.

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Tina Breen, vice president of sales and marketing at Manufacturers Reserve Supply, uses her calendar. She keeps a repeating event on her work anniversary and types each win into next year's event as it happens. Grit Guide tells that story in How to Get Credit for Your Work Before Review Time. Use whatever you will open without being reminded.

02 WRITE FOUR LINES EVERY WEEK

Stefanie Couch, who hosted the conversation with Pulse, described the weekly note she keeps. It has four parts. Copy the shape:

- The major projects I am working on
- Where each one stands
- How it is going
- What I need to work on that I am not doing well yet

Do not skip the fourth line. A list of only wins reads like a sales pitch. A list that also says what you are fixing reads like someone who knows the job.

03 COUNT THE SMALL WINS

Most people skip a week because nothing big happened. Write it anyway. The examples in the episode were small on purpose: more phone calls than the week before, a customer who now buys from you, a shipping mistake you fixed. A year of small entries is the record a manager can use.

Sarah Krey, a merchandise manager at Do it Best with 25 years in home improvement, learned this from an early boss whose motto was "make yourself big" (13:08). She is careful about what that means. In her words, the point is "hey, how did you help that store manager?" (13:08). Write your wins that way: who you helped and what changed for them.

04 PUT THE RESULT NEXT TO THE WORK

A task is what you did. A result is what it changed. Next to each entry, write the result in numbers if you have them: dollars, days saved, orders, callbacks avoided, customers added.

Breen explains why from the side of someone asking for a raise. You list what you have done, "and then you have to turn it into an ROI for the company" (40:25). If you do not know the number, write down who would. Ask them well before review time.

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05 TELL YOUR MANAGER ONCE A MONTH

Do not save it all for the review. Once a month, send your manager three lines from the list: what you finished, what you are proudest of and where you are stuck. Couch's warning in the episode is blunt: "Don't assume they know or care if you don't tell them" (36:49).

A monthly note helps your manager too. When their own boss asks what the team did this quarter, your part is already written.

06 READ IT EVERY QUARTER FOR A PATTERN

Every three months, read the whole list in one sitting. Look for the kind of work that keeps showing up: the times someone relied on you, the times you noticed something others missed, the times your part made the difference.

That pattern is your edge: a strength your experience has shaped, put to work where it matters. Pulse found hers only when the podcast asked her what she had done differently. Her answer, once she thought about it, was friendship. She got to know the salespeople she worked with, answered her phone and came to help when they were in a pinch. Write your pattern in one sentence at the top of the list.

07 BRING A ONE-PAGE SUMMARY TO YOUR REVIEW

Before the review, pull the list onto one page: your three to five biggest results with their numbers, the pattern you found and one thing you want to do more of next year.

Pulse described what made reviews hard for her: "And I struggle so bad with those because I'm reflecting back on the year and I'm going, well, did I really do anything that was above and beyond in my opinion?" (29:30). With a list, you are not reflecting on a year from memory. You are reading.

Then ask what you missed. Breen's boss asks it at her review, and she answers from her calendar: "he'll say to me, you know, are there any that I miss, Tina?" (45:02).

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> “And I struggle so bad with those because I’m reflecting back on the year and I’m going, well, did I really do anything that was above and beyond in my opinion?”

Marion Pulse (29:30)

FINISH LINE

You should now have: A wins list with an entry for every week, each win next to its result, a short monthly note to your manager, and a one-page summary you bring to your review.

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SHOW YOUR WORK, LIKE IN MATH CLASS

Stefanie Couch explains it with math class. The teacher did not take your word for the answer. You showed the steps. A wins list is the steps. It lets the people who decide your raise see what you did, why it mattered and what your part was.

It does something for you too. Her Unmistakable method starts with finding your edge: your strength, the perspective your experience gave you and the value it creates for someone else. Most people cannot name theirs, because it comes naturally to them. A year of weekly entries is the evidence. Read it, and you can start to see it.

TWO SCRIPTS

Use it when: you send your monthly note to your manager.

SCRIPT

“Quick update for **[month]**. Finished: **[one line]**. Proudest of: **[win]**, because **[result]**. Stuck on: **[problem]**. Is there anything you want me to spend more or less time on next month?”

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Use it when: your annual review starts.

SCRIPT

"Before we start, I brought my list for the year. The three results I want to make sure we cover are **[result 1]**, **[result 2]** and **[result 3]**. Is there anything you saw this year that I left off?"

REAL STORY

Marion Pulse told this one in the episode. In her earlier job selling windows, one of the salespeople she supported was a top seller of exterior projects at a home center. On Friday afternoons he entered his sales for the week, and she would sit in his office while he did it. She says she did nothing. She just sat there and chatted. He sold nothing but her company's windows, unless it did not make the product.

That is the kind of win that never reaches a review. There is no project name on it and no dollar figure, so nobody thinks to write it down. One line on a wins list would have covered it: "Friday sessions with [salesperson]: sells only our windows unless we do not make the product." That line answers the director's question.

Whose story **Marion Pulse**, Client Success Director, Grit Blueprint

Pulse tells it between 32:56 and 33:54 in the episode transcript.

CHECKLIST: WINS LIST, EVERY WEEK

- [ ] My list lives in one place I open every week
- [ ] This week has four lines: projects, where they stand, how it is going, what I am working on
- [ ] I wrote down at least one small win, with who I helped
- [ ] Each win has its result next to it, or the name of the person who knows the number
- [ ] I sent my manager a note this month
- [ ] This quarter, I read the whole list and wrote my pattern at the top
- [ ] Before my review, I made a one-page summary and asked what I missed

YOU'RE DONE WHEN

- The list has an entry for every week since you started it.
- Every win has a result, or the name of the person who has the number.
- Your manager has had a note from you every month.
- You walk into your review with one page in your hand.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

For raises and the calendar trick in full, read How to Get Credit for Your Work Before Review Time. If you want to grow inside your company, read how Sarah Lee went from receptionist to VP. New in the job? Read Your First 30 Days at a Building Materials Dealer, then start your list in week one.

Disclosure: Marion Pulse is now Client Success Director at Grit Blueprint, which publishes Grit Guide. Her words here come from her 2024 Grit Blueprint Podcast interview, recorded while she was at NFRC.

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QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK

What should go on a wins list?

Each week: the projects you are working on, where they stand, how they are going and what you still need to improve. Add every win, small ones included, with who you helped and the result in numbers when you have them.

How often should I update a wins list?

Every week, at a set time such as Friday afternoon. Once a month, send your manager a short note from it. Once a quarter, read the whole list in one sitting and look for the work that keeps showing up.

How do I talk about my wins without bragging?

Say them in terms of who you helped and what changed for them. Sarah Krey of Do it Best describes an early boss's motto, make yourself big, as a question about how you helped the store manager, which keeps the focus on the work.

What if I do not have numbers for my results?

Write the result in words and the name of the person who would know the number, then ask them before review time. Tina Breen of Manufacturers Reserve Supply says the work you list has to be turned into a return for the company.

Should I write down mistakes too?

Yes, on the line for what you are working on. A list that shows what you are fixing reads as honest, and it gives you something specific to say when your manager asks what you want to get better at.

EPISODES IN THIS PIECE

Marion Pulse on Confidence, Patience and Finding Your Place in Fenestration
With Marion Pulse · The Grit Blueprint Podcast · Nov 2026

The Relationship Rule That Changes Everything in Sales: Sarah Krey, Merchandise Manager, Do it Best
With Sarah Krey · The Grit Blueprint Podcast · Jul 2026

Crafting High-Performing Sales Teams: Tina Breen, Manufacturers Reserve Supply
With Tina Breen · The Grit Blueprint Podcast · May 2024

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SOURCES

1. Marion Pulse on Confidence, Patience and Finding Your Place in Fenestration (Grit Blueprint Podcast, with host Stefanie Couch) (December 2024) Grit Guide
2. Crafting High-Performing Sales Teams (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Tina Breen with host Stefanie Couch) (May 2024) Grit Guide
3. The Relationship Rule That Changes Everything in Sales (Grit Blueprint Podcast, Sarah Krey with host Stefanie Couch) Grit Guide
4. How to Get Credit for Your Work Before Review Time Grit Guide

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READ IT
ONLINE
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