

START To FINISH

From Getting Things Started
To Getting Things Done



START

START

START

**NICK
JAMES**

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eShowcase Inc.
10785 W Twain Avenue, Ste 229
Las Vegas, Nevada, 89135
+1 702 605 4149

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Introduction

From Getting Things Started... ... To Getting Things Done...

Welcome to '**Start To Finish**'.

Inside the pages of this home study course, you'll find 12 reports that are designed to:

- Help you set better goals.
- Plan your path to success.
- Execute your plan.
- Increase your focus.
- Optimize your time.
- Overcome obstacles.

And effectively get much more done...and get your project COMPLETED!

That's because you're about to read **204 ideas and insights** that will give you just what you need to be successful whether your objectives are **professional or personal**.

So...

Whether you want to run a marathon, lose weight, or build that business you've been dreaming about, these reports are just what you need to **unlock that achievement**.

So, without further buildup, let's jump right in and get to the good stuff so you can get stuff done...

The Goal-Setting Report

17 Keys For Setting And Achieving Your Goals

One thing that sets high-achieving individuals apart from everyone else is that they know how to set appropriate goals and then reach them.

Then, they set more goals and start the process of unlocking the next-level achievements.

That's why, in this report, you're going to **learn how to set effective goals**, plus you'll get some tips for **achieving these goals** (which we'll *unpack in the subsequent reports included in this training*).

Let's get started...

1. Set Measurable Goals

The first thing to understand about goal-setting is that you have to be able to know if you're reaching your objective. You should be able to start with a baseline measurement of some sort, track your progress, and end with a measurable result.

Measurable Example:

Let's suppose you're setting a goal based around how much traffic you want to bring to your site each month. That's a good goal, because you can pick a specific amount of traffic and then track your progress every day to see if you're on track.

Non-Measurable Example:

Let's suppose you're wanting to achieve a weight-loss related objective. "I'd like to look better in my clothes" isn't a measurable goal. Instead, you'd define exactly how many inches and pounds

you'd like to lose, which is measurable (and will make you look better in your clothes).

See the difference?

2. Be Very Specific

The second key to creating a good goal is that it needs to be very specific so you can know if you have reached it (*and would be satisfied in reaching it*).

Non-Specific Example:

Let's go back to the example of setting a goal for getting web traffic. A goal such as "I'd like more targeted visitors every month" is a measurable goal, but it's not specific enough. "More targeted visitors" could be two extra visitors. But chances are that's not really what you're looking for, right? Instead, you want to specifically state how many visitors you want per month.

Specific Example:

Let's go back to the weight loss example. "I'd like to lose 25 pounds" is a much better goal than "I'd like to lose weight." Both are measurable, but the first one defines exactly how much weight you'd like to lose (and would be satisfied in reaching the goal).

Don't settle for a generic goal that isn't really what you'd be happy with. Instead, set a specific goal that is exactly what you really want to achieve.

- If you want to improve your golf game, what specific score would you like to achieve (*break 100, bogey golf, one below par, etc.*)?
- If you want to build a bigger list, exactly how many new subscribers would you like to add to your list every week (*or every month*)?
- If you want to create a scholarship fund to give to underprivileged students, what amount of money do you want to collect?

On a related note...

3. Choose Realistic Goals

It's fun to dream big. But when it comes to actually setting goals, they need to be realistic. If you choose unrealistic goals, you're likely to get frustrated and discouraged when you don't achieve them, which in turn means you'll lose your motivation to continue moving forward.

Example #1: *If you're just starting out building an online business, then setting a goal of making \$20,000 per month right away isn't realistic. Depending on your experiences and background, you may start with a more realistic goal such as making \$2,000 within your first couple of months.*

Example #2: *Trying to lose 25 pounds in one month isn't realistic for most people (unless you're severely overweight, and your diet is monitored by a doctor). It's better to pick something more realistic such as a safe and steady 1-2 pounds per week loss.*

The point is this: When you set "reasonable, reachable" goals, you set yourself up to succeed.

Hot Tip: *You can always set new goals after reaching the initial ones!*

4. Pick Goals That Mean Something

If you're setting goals that don't really excite you, then you're going to have a hard time achieving them. That's why you'll want to pick goals **that you're passionate about** – goals that mean something to you.

For example, setting a goal to make \$X amount of money may feel pretty empty to some people. However, setting a goal to help X number of people per month – while making \$X amount of money – is much more meaningful. And people feel good when they achieve meaningful goals.

5. Works Backwards

The chances are, you have some pretty big goals.

But the question is, do you have the steps you need to achieve those goals?

If not, work backwards. Start with your overall goal and then figure out what other goals you need to set in order to achieve that goal.

Let's go back to the example of selecting an income goal. In order to achieve that, you're going to need to set several related goals. For example, you need to determine:

- *The amount of traffic you need per month.*
- *The number of mailing list subscribers you need per month.*
- *The conversion rates you need on your lead pages and sales pages.*
- *The conversion rates you need to achieve on ad campaigns.*
- *The conversion rates you need to achieve with your email campaigns.*
- *The number of sales of EACH of your products that you need to achieve each month.*

... And similar figures, depending on your goal.

Be sure each sub-goal you choose is measurable, specific and realistic, and that they serve to support your overall goal.

Next...

6. Create Milestone Goals

If you're working on some big goals, it may take many months or even years to achieve them.

That's why you'll want to set milestone goals, which are **stepping-stones on the way to your big goal.**

Example #1: *Let's suppose your goal is to build a list of 50,000 subscribers. If you're just getting started, it may take time for you to achieve that goal. That's why you'll want to set up milestones goals such as 1000 subscribers, 2000 subscribers, 5000 subscribers and so on. Then you can celebrate each goal as you achieve it which will keep you motivated and keep the momentum going.*

Example #2: Likewise, if you're looking to achieve a big personal goal – like training to run an ultramarathon – you'll want to select milestone goals (such as first running shorter, easier races). This will not only keep you motivated and pushing toward your big goal, but it will also actually make your ultimate outcome achievable because your fitness level will increase as your training progresses.

Which brings us to another important point...

7. Choose Hard Deadlines for Goals

A goal without a deadline is just a wish.

That's why you'll want to set hard deadlines for each of your goals and subgoals.

For example, don't just say you want to achieve a goal by sometime "next year" or even in the third quarter of next year. Instead, be specific by listing the exact date by which you'd like to achieve your goal. (e.g., I'd like to achieve this goal by December 31st...)

Having hard deadlines is the antidote to procrastination and complacency because in order to meet the deadlines, you must take action.

8. Write Down Your Goals

This is important...

Writing down your goals makes them more "real" – and for a lot of people, it makes them take their goals more seriously.

Some people even create "contracts" with themselves where they promise to achieve a goal by a certain date, and then they even sign this "contract" to make it binding.

NOTE: If you use this tip, be sure to write down the exact specifications of your goal. That includes exactly what it is you'd like to achieve (*something measurable*), the deadline, any milestone goals you're setting, and anything else of importance.

9. Tell Others About Your Goals

Another idea for helping you achieve your goal is to tell other people about them.

This creates some accountability, as most of us will only share goals with others if we are serious about those goals.

Our friends will ask us about our goals, and we'll feel mildly embarrassed if we have to admit that we haven't achieved our goal or have stopped working on it. As such, the way to alleviate this sort of discomfort is to work hard on one's goals, which is why telling others about them works so well.

NOTE: *The key here is to tell people who are positive people and cheerleaders in your life. Don't tell the "Debbie Downers" in your life who will mock you for your goals or seed doubt about your ability to achieve them.*

You want to share your goals with people who will support and encourage you (and maybe even join you) in your pursuit.

Next...

10. Create a Plan for Reaching Your Goals

The bridge between setting a goal and achieving it is your executable plan.

The key here is to create a **detailed, doable plan**. Don't be vague with plans like "build my social media account" or "start walking more to help with the weight loss." Just as with your goals, your plans for achieving your goals need to be specific.

- What EXACTLY will you do to achieve your goals?
- And what do you need to learn before you execute your plan?

NOTE: We'll talk more about this in ***The Planning Report*** in this course.

Which brings us to a related point...

11. Identify Potential Obstacles

As you're creating your plan for achieving your goals, you'll want to identify potential obstacles that could slow you down or even prevent you from achieving your goals.

You'll also want to create a plan for overcoming these obstacles.

For example, let's suppose part of your plan involves growing your blog, so you plan to publish 12 new blog posts per month. If you're not a strong writer, then that is a potential obstacle. You'll make a plan for overcoming this obstacle by:

- *Outsourcing some content.*
- *Co-writing content with others in your niche.*
- *Accepting some guest posts.*
- *Using PLR to create some posts.*

You need to understand this...

Every goal will have obstacles.

In order to reach your goal, you're going to have to determine what they are and how you will deal with them.

Some of this will happen in advance and some of will happen in real-time as you experience barriers you didn't see coming.

Here's another related point...

12. Define Your Strengths and Weaknesses

As you work on your plan and identify potential obstacles, you'll also want to identify your own strengths and weaknesses. As you saw in the last

example, a potential weakness (*such as not being a strong writer*) can lead to an obstacle.

Once you identify your strengths and weaknesses, then consider these two questions:

1. How can you improve upon or overcome your weaknesses?

For example, if you lack knowledge or skills in a particular area, is it better for you to hone your skills or outsource a particular task?

2. How can you maximize your strengths? What tasks do you want to focus on that will make the most of your strengths?

Identifying strengths and weaknesses is another way to help ward off potential problems.

Next...

13. Prioritize Your Goals

You're likely to have multiple goals. However, before you start working on them, you'll want to prioritize them.

You can do this based on two factors:

- 1. Which goals are most important to you?** Ideally, you want to focus 100% of your efforts on achieving one overall goal. Once you've completed that, then you can turn your attention to another goal.
- 2. Which goals do you need to do first?** If you have multiple goals, and some of your goals require you to achieve other goals first, then prioritize them appropriately.

Keeping a laser focus on one overall goal is one of the keys to your success, which is why you'll want to determine which goal to focus on first.

14. Take Consistent Steps

People typically don't achieve goals with grand gestures or all in one big step. Instead, achieving a goal is the result of taking **many small, consistent steps every day**.

For example, you don't overnight become a runner who can finish a 100-mile race. Instead, you complete a myriad of training workouts, figure out hydration and nutrition essentials, test out various pieces of gear and so forth. You do these things every day until you've met your goal to complete a 100-mile race. Do you know how you run 100 miles? Literally, one step at a time.

Set yourself a plan and patiently work it until you've completed it.

15. Reward Yourself

As mentioned before, you can set milestone goals (*stepping-stone goals*) on the way to achieving a big goal. Be sure to reward yourself proportionately for achieving these goals.

For example, you might go out to dinner when you reach a smaller milestone goal, you might go away for the weekend when you reach a bigger goal, and you might take a weeklong vacation when you achieve your overall goal.

Don't discount this idea.

When you attach desirable rewards to milestones, you will likely increase your motivation to get things done.

16. Stretch and Challenge Yourself

Earlier we talked about setting realistic goals. However, just because they're realistic **doesn't mean they need to be little goals**. You can challenge yourself by selecting goals that feel a tiny bit out of reach, meaning you're going to have to stretch out of your comfort zone to achieve it.

For example, maybe you have a goal to run a half-marathon three months from now, and you finished your last race in 2 hours and 4 minutes. Perhaps you set a goal of breaking 2 hours for this upcoming race. Does it feel like a challenge, yet still doable? If so, that's the kind of goal to set.

Hot Tip: When challenging yourself, you may need to add some specific action steps to your plan. Back to the previous example, adding a weekly “speed workout” to your training would help you shave the needed minutes off the finishing time so you can reach the goal.

17. Review Your Goals

As you work on any part of your goals, be sure to keep careful track of what you’re doing and what sort of results you’re getting.

That way, you can change strategies if what you’re currently doing isn’t going to get you to your goal by your deadline.

You may adjust the following...

- The plan.
- The deadline.
- The goal.

The key is to adjust (and not abandon) the particulars of what you’re aiming at in order to accomplish something meaningful to you or others.

Now, let’s wrap this up...

Conclusion

And there you have it – you just learned the 17 keys to selecting good goals and achieving them.

Of course, this is just the start.

Over the rest of these reports, you'll learn tips for becoming more productive, partnering with others, learning from your mistakes, and everything else you need to know to achieve all your goals.

And with that in mind, I'll see you in the next report...

The Productivity Report

17 Ways To Boost How Much You Get Done

Wouldn't it be great if you could clone yourself?

You'd be able to get an incredible amount of work done, maybe even 24/7! (*Unless your clone runs off and goes on vacation, leaving you to do all the work. ☺*)

All kidding aside, boosting your productivity IS one of the big keys to your success – and you can do it without cloning yourself.

It's the next best thing to there being two of you. All you need to do is put these 17 ideas to work for you...

1. Create an Effective To-Do List

Plenty of people make to-do lists, but very few people know how to create lists that help boost productivity. Here are the tips and best practices you need to know:

- **Let your goals drive your to-do lists.** If you prioritize your goals as mentioned in the last report, then you can create prioritized to-do lists as well. Every task on your to-do list should be a necessary step towards achieving your goals.
- **Create manageable steps.** Instead of putting a task on your list that could take all day, break it up into smaller steps. That way, you'll feel more accomplished as you check the various steps and tasks off your list.
- **Choose a list-making method.** You might like to go old school with pen and paper, or you might use a list-making app that syncs across your devices. Pick the one that you're most comfortable using.

Next...

2. Work at Your Best Times

If you know anything about yourself, then you know what times of the day you're alert and focused, versus those times of the day when you're feeling distracted and tired. Your goal should be to set up your schedule to work at your BEST times.

For example, if early morning is your best time, then set the alarm early and get up to work on your goals before the rest of your household gets up.

We all have rhythms. Be sure that you are getting the most out of your day by scheduling your tasks for this peak time.

Hot Tip: Try to schedule any "creative" work (*such as writing a blog post or planning out your homeschooling week*) for your best times and leave "non-creative" work (*such as running errands or uploading videos*) for secondary time periods.

Obviously, sometimes existing commitments (*such as a job*) dictate some of your scheduling. However...

- When you dictate your schedule, work at your best times.
- When other commitments dictate your schedule, do required activities within those commitments at your best times.

Next...

3. Avoid Multitasking

Plenty of people believe that if they're multitasking, then they're being as productive as they can be.

Turns out, researchers have found out that multitasking does NOT boost productivity – indeed, it tends to slow productivity.

Here's why: when you flip back and forth between tasks, it takes some time for your brain to readjust to the current task. That re-adjustment period may take a few seconds, or it may take several minutes. That means every time you're switching tasks, you're losing valuable time.

Bottom line...

It is easy to lose momentum and motivation when you're multi-tasking.

The solution? Focus on one task until you're done, and THEN switch to a new task. Focus, repeat.

4. Shut Down Distractions

Have you ever sat down to work on a task, but got distracted by virtually everything else? You can help avoid that problem by shutting down distractions before you begin working. Depending on what you're doing and what distracts you, this process may include:

- Shutting off the TV.
- Turning off your phone.
- Moving to a room (*or different location*) with fewer distractions.
- Being sure your physical needs are taken care of (*you've eaten, used the restroom, etc.*).
- Taking care of others' needs (*e.g., you've walked the dog or made lunch for your child*).
- Asking people in the household to not interrupt you.
- Putting on a fan or sound machine for white noise.
- Shutting down distracting websites (*such as social media*).

It's a good idea to pay attention to what normally distracts you, and then remove those distractions entirely.

5. Use Apps to Boost Productivity

There are a wide variety of apps you can use to boost productivity, depending on your needs.

For example, if you're working on your computer, and social media distracts you, then you might use a website-blocking app like <https://GetColdTurkey.com>.

Or let's suppose you really don't even know why you're not getting enough done in any given day. In that case, you might use an app that keeps track of how much time you spend working versus how much time you spend using social media and other sites and apps.

Taking a regular inventory of where / how you are using your time is a really good way to boost productivity.

We "waste" a lot more time than we think we do.

6. Recognize Busy Work

Sometimes you feel like you're working all day, but you really haven't accomplished much. If you look more closely, you may have just been doing "busy work" – this is a task that feels like work, but it doesn't help you effectively achieve your goals.

For example, let's suppose you're building your social media accounts. Part of your daily tasks may be to interact with your social media followers and commenters. Sure, this is important. But if you spend hours doing it, then it becomes busy work that's wasting time more than advancing your goals.

For example, let's suppose you're wanting to lose weight. One of your initial and ongoing tasks may be to read articles and books to help you understand how to lose weight and stay motivated to do it. But if you spend all your designated time reading books and articles instead of DOING the things necessary to losing weight (exercise, meal-planning/prep, etc.), then you're ultimately not making progress.

The solution?

Set a strict limit for how much time you'll devote to this task (e.g., 20 minutes per day, no more).

7. Do Dreaded Tasks First

When you're making your to-do list, be sure to put your dreaded (*most disliked*) tasks at the top of the list so that you can do them first.

This simple strategy helps decrease procrastination and boost productivity.

Instead of dragging your feet through your other tasks because you don't want to work on your dreaded task, you'll instead get through your dreaded task quickly so that you can then spend the rest of the day working on the tasks you enjoy.

Ever notice that you're more productive when you're doing tasks you enjoy?

Rather than letting those dreaded tasks drain you of your energy and eagerness to keep getting things done (*because the dread is always in the back of your mind and weighing you down*), get them done first.

8. Delegate and Outsource

If you really hate a task to the point where your productivity plummets, or if you simply don't know how to do it, then delegate and outsource rather than getting (*or staying*) stuck.

For example, let's suppose you need a custom graphic for a website, but you're not skilled in this department. You don't know what tools to use. You don't have the design eye to create what you want. You could attempt to do it, but reworking the graphic over and over may take hours or days.

Or you could just go to Fiverr.com and hire someone to do it for you.

For example, let's suppose you can't figure out how to set up a training program to run your first ultramarathon which fits your fitness level, experience, schedule and so forth. It would be better

for you to hire someone to custom-tailor a training program for you than to never get started (or to start and fail).

Here's the principle...

You don't have to do everything that you want to get done.

Does that make sense?

9. Challenge Yourself

One way to boost your productivity is to set mini productivity goals and then challenge yourself to meet or exceed them.

For example, you can set a timer for 20 minutes and see how much you can get done during that time.

Want to kick this strategy up a notch? Then challenge a friend or colleague to join you.

For example, if you're a blogger, then challenge another blogger (or a group of bloggers) to join you in a writing sprint.

Think of the possibilities...

- How many bags of leaves can you rake in 20 minutes?
- How many words can you write in 20 minutes?
- How many lessons can you grade in 20 minutes?
- How many social media comments can you make in 20 minutes?
- How many meals can you prepare in 20 minutes?

NOTE: Obviously, you want to maintain standards of excellence. Be sure you continue to do quality work when challenging yourself.

10. Take Breaks

Your productivity is going to plummet if you don't take breaks. This includes breaks all throughout the day, as well as taking larger breaks each week.

For example, be sure you take at least one or two full days off each week. In addition, schedule regular longer breaks (for a week or two) throughout the year.

The idea is to rest and recharge so that you can come back and be more productive than ever.

11. Touch Everything Once

When you're doing a task, your goal should be to look at or "touch" everything just once. In other words, don't look at the task and then set it aside for later, and then look at it again when you're ready to work on it.

Here's a common example...

Someone checks their email first thing in the morning. They read through all the emails to see if there is anything urgent, and then they set aside the task of replying to the emails for later.

When they come back to the task, they need to read through all the emails again before they can reply to them. As such, they "touched" each email twice.

Here's what to do instead...

Don't even look at your email until you're ready to reply. Then go through them one-by-one, read each one, and reply directly after reading it. That way you save time by reading the email only once.

Strive to make progress each time you "touch" anything on your to-do list in such a way that you don't have to do the SAME THING over again.

12. Find Meaning In What You Do

If you don't find your work and goals meaningful, then you're going to find yourself dragging your feet and being unproductive. That's why it's a good idea to create goals around things you're passionate about.

For example, let's suppose you're starting a business. Naturally, a big reason for starting the business is to financially support yourself. But in order to be really productive and happy, you need to find meaning in this work as well. For instance, you need to genuinely enjoy helping people in your audience.

*For example, let's suppose you're training for a marathon. You may enjoy running and the satisfaction of completing the race. But to really give you a boost, consider running for a charity or cause such as **The Make A Wish Foundation** or **Worldwide Cancer Support** to assist in the research and treatment for various types of cancer. This will give you a greater purpose and help you complete those training runs when you don't really want to.*

What happens if you don't feel like your work and goals are meaningful and worthwhile? You're likely to drift away from them. You can prevent this by tweaking your goals now to focus on what makes you happy and what feels meaningful to you.

13. Batch Similar Tasks Together

When your daily to-do list has a bunch of different types of tasks on it, you'll be more productive if you batch similar tasks together.

For example, let's stick with working on an online business. You can batch all writing tasks together, such as creating a blog post, creating content for social media, and working on a new information product.

Likewise, you can batch research-related tasks together, accounting-related tasks together, and so on. That way, your brain can stay in one mode (such as "writing mode") for the duration of one batch of tasks, and then you can switch gears when you start working on a different batch of tasks.

For example, let's suppose you're doing weekly housecleaning. It's easier to vacuum all of your rooms rather than starting and stopping to do other activities (dusting, stain removal, etc.).

Likewise with cleaning bathrooms (hey, someone's gotta do it). It's more productive to apply the toilet bowl cleaner to all bathrooms in the house at the same time rather than individually.

With a sort of "assembly line" approach to tasks, you'll get things done quicker.

14. Just Do It

We've all had those days where we drag our feet and just aren't sure why we can't get going. Other times, we may procrastinate because we don't want to do a task, or we may even procrastinate because of fear (*fear of success or fear of failure or fear of what others might think*).

The solution in all cases is to...

Take a step.

Just do it. Take a step, then another, and another. Once you get going on a task – even if you have to force yourself at first – momentum will take over, and soon you'll find your rhythm.

When you find yourself wanting to do nothing, the most important thing is to do something.

15. Create Streamlined Processes

There are certain processes you likely need to do every day or every week. You can boost your productivity by creating streamlined systems for completing these processes.

You can start by writing down your current process and then asking experts (*people who do the task all the time*) how you can do it more efficiently. You can also use Google to search for tips for speeding up a particular process.

For example, if you want to speed up your monthly accounting tasks, then talk to accountants and bookkeepers for tips on how to do it. E.G., what tools and apps do they use? How do they organize their receipts?

It doesn't matter what it is that you are doing, there are best practices, hacks and shortcuts for getting it done.

Next...

16. Hone Your Skills

No matter what your goals are – whether personal or professional – there are certain skills and bits of knowledge that will help you achieve your goals faster.

Your job is to identify these required skills and knowledge so you can spend time every week honing these skills and educating yourself.

For example, if you do a lot of typing, but you're a slow typist, then you may work on honing your typing skills. It's a simple thing, but the time you save could add up to hours every week.

For example, if you manage the family calendar, and it seems like a disorganized mess, then you may research and implement better scheduling skills. This could not only free up time each week, but reduce stress as well.

Skills are required in every area of your life.

Becoming more skilled can improve your productivity in every area of your life.

17. Take Care Of Yourself

In order to be as productive as possible, both your body and mind need to be healthy.

To that end, you need to take care of yourself by:

- Reducing stress whenever possible, such as by learning to say “no” when agreeing to something that would overburden you or interfere with your own goals.
- Getting enough sleep each night. This includes going to bed and waking up at about the same time each night/morning so that you’re not groggy.
- Eating healthy and drinking plenty of water. What and when and how much you eat really does make a big difference in your performance.
- Avoiding overworking, and instead being sure to do other things you love, such as spending time with your friends or working on your hobbies.

Now a few parting thoughts...

Conclusion

Cloning yourself is out of the question – but you can still get more done in less time by following the 17 methods for boosting productivity that you just learned.

Be sure to apply as many of these methods as possible rather than cherry-picking through them, as they’re all important steps to take to boost productivity.

The Time Management Report

17 Tactics For Making The Best Use Of Your Time

How much do you get done in any given day? Do you wish you had more hours to get more done?

Of course, we're all only given 24 hours in each day.

So, while you can't get more hours...

You CAN learn how to make the most of those hours.

And that's exactly what you're about to discover how to do.

Read on...

1. Audit Your Time

Most people aren't very good at estimating how much time it takes them to complete a task, or what they actually do with their time in any given day.

That's why your first step is to audit your time.

Spend at least a week or two writing down everything you do and how long it takes (*breaks included*).

You may be surprised that the task you think takes you 10 minutes actually takes 30 minutes, or that you spend longer on breaks than you think you do.

Once you know what you actually do with your time, then you can make better decisions about how to maximize your time.

2. Practice the Four Ds

The idea here is to categorize all your tasks in one of the following categories: (1) *Important and urgent*. (2) *Important, but not urgent*. (3) *Not important, but urgent*. (4) *Not important and not urgent*.

Once that's done, then you can practice the Four Ds:

1. DO the tasks that are important and urgent.
2. DEFER the tasks that are important, but not urgent.
3. DELEGATE tasks that are not important, but are urgent.
4. DELETE tasks that are not important and not urgent.

Next...

3. Plan Your Week

The idea here is to plan your week BEFORE Monday rolls around.

- You might plan next week as the last task of the day on Friday, or
- You can schedule time on Saturday or even Sunday night to create your to-do lists and get organized (*more on that in just a moment*).

But the key here is that when Monday morning rolls around, you'll want to already have your to-do list in hand so you can jump right in and get to work.

4. Prepare the Day Before

You can boost your productivity and make better use of your time by preparing for tomorrow's tasks as the last thing you do today.

For example, let's suppose you're working on a report that requires you to review some content before you do your writing. You can prepare by reviewing the content tonight, time permitting.

Otherwise, you can find the content and open it to the appropriate page, so that tomorrow morning it's the first thing you see when you get to your work desk.

The final task for today should be to set yourself up to immediately begin the first task for tomorrow.

5. Set Time Limits

Once you've audited your time, and you have a better idea of how long tasks take, then set strict limits on how long you'll take to do a task. If you don't set limits, or if you set overly generous limits, you'll often find that a task expands to fill any time slot.

For example, maybe you have an email to compose that will take you about 10 minutes, but you give yourself 30 minutes to do it.

Guess what? It probably will take 30 minutes, because there is no urgency to do it. Set a time limit for 10 minutes, and you'll get it done in 10 minutes... and you can move on to the next task on your list.

Again, set these limits based on an understanding of **how long it takes you to comfortably complete the task**. You don't want to paralyze yourself by adding pressure to finish in an unreasonable time.

6. Get Things Done Early

Sometimes people think that deadline pressure is motivating. But more often than not, **a really tight deadline is stressful**. You may get a boost when working under a tight deadline, but over the long term, your productivity will plummet as stress takes its toll.

Here's the solution: plan on getting things done early.

For example, maybe you run a membership site where you send new content to your members on the 15th of each month. Some people don't even start working on this content until a few days before it's due because they feel the intense pressure helps them avoid procrastination and other issues.

Here's what to do instead: get things done earlier than required.

In the example of the membership site, aim to be one month ahead on all content. That way, if something happens (such as you get sick), no problem – you're ahead of schedule so you won't disappoint your members.

You may need to find other ways to motivate yourself once you take the intense pressure away, but over time, you'll actually become more productive since you won't feel as stressed, overwhelmed and even burned out all the time.

7. Use Downtime to Do Short Tasks

When you have downtime or wait-time, you can use that time to do small tasks. For example:

- Listen to a podcast when driving, working out, or doing chores.
- Craft an email while waiting for a doctor's appointment.
- Write your to-do lists while waiting outside a school to pick up your child.

The possibilities are endless, as we all have small time slots all throughout the week where we can slip in a small task.

Hot Tip: Create two lists: The first is an inventory of periods of downtime or wait-time in your typical week. The second is a listing of activities you can complete during these time slots.

8. Get Organized

If you're not organized (either professionally or personally), then you've probably wasted time searching for something. You can start saving time by getting organized.

This means creating systems for filing emails, web pages, physical papers and other important items.

You may even get boxes or a filing cabinet that you clearly label so that you can store everything in a specifically designated place.

Hot Tip: You may also want to start a searchable file with a list of where you've put everything that's important. That way, if you've forgotten where you put something in your new organizing system, you can simply search for the item in your document, which will list where it is now stored.

Next...

9. Develop Systems

Are you completing tasks in the best and most efficient way possible? If you have other people working for you, are they completing tasks in a uniform, efficient way? If not, then it's time to develop systems.

Examples: When you research and write a blog post, do you do it efficiently? When you do some bookkeeping, are you using the best system for saving time? When you hire a freelancer, do you make the task unnecessarily time-consuming or complex? When you complete your housework, do you clutter up (pun intended) the process by not grouping common tasks?

Here's a mini checklist you can use for developing systems:

1. Write down all the steps of a process.
2. Review these steps with experts and get their feedback on how to refine the process.
3. Review this revised process with your team and other relevant people, where applicable.
4. Put the process to work to see if it's as efficient as possible.
5. Tweak as needed to improve it.

6. Create a file and/or video that shows you (*and team members, where applicable*) exactly how to perform the task in the most efficient and best way possible.

Be sure to revisit your process from time to time to refine it and further optimize it, as needed.

10. Utilize the 80-20 Rule

The 80-20 rule states that 80% of your results are going to come from 20% of your efforts.

Your job is to identify that 20%, and then focus 80% of your time and efforts on maximizing results.

Here's a couple of examples of how to apply this...

Example #1: *Perhaps you track your results and find that 80% of your affiliate sales come from a small number of top marketing partners. You'll want to invest more time in cultivating your relationships with these top marketers, as well as recruiting other super affiliates in your niche.*

End result? You're now working on high-value tasks in your business, improving ROI, improving sales and generally growing your business.

Example #2: *Perhaps you have a number of new habits and activities you'd like to incorporate into your personal life such as exercise, reading, sports card collecting, becoming a chess master, and educated yourself by reading at least 1 book a week.*

Which of the things you'd like to incorporate is most likely to have the biggest impact in your life for the longest amount of time? In this example, exercise and reading a new book each week would likely be more impactful to your life than sports card collecting.

What you want to do is spend your time on the things that will generate the greatest benefits and results (*for you personally and for those around you*).

11. Be Clear About Meeting Goals

Sometimes meetings are necessary, such as meeting with a freelancer, a business partner, a coaching student or someone else.

But we also know that even necessary meetings can go on too long and include unnecessary discussions.

The solution?

Create a clear plan and agenda before each meeting and share this agenda with the other participants.

Also, **set expectations that you will stick strictly to the agenda** – and then be sure to follow through, by redirecting participants whenever the meeting starts to veer from its intended purpose.

12. Focus On One Thing At a Time

If you spread yourself too thin, you'll dilute your efforts. It's better to focus on just one thing at a time, get it working for you, and then turn your attention to the next component.

For example, let's suppose you're working on getting traffic to a website. You'll want to pick just ONE traffic method, study it, and implement it. Once that first method is getting results, then and only then, should you add another traffic method.

For example, let's suppose you're trying to lose weight and get fit. You'll want to start by picking one new thing to introduce to your normal habits such as a change in your diet or an exercise to begin.

Rather than trying to do too many things (completely overhauling your diet, trying to do meal prep, balancing your macros, testing out intermittent fasting, training for a 5K, lifting weights, assembling a team of dietitians/trainers and so forth), pick one to start with.

Bottom line: Pick one, master one, add one.

13. Be Sure Tasks Align With Goals

Before you add a task to your to-do list, take a moment to check if that task aligns with your goals. If not, **you may not want to do it at all.**

Example #1: *Let's suppose you're running an information publishing business. Everyone you talk to says you need to do search engine optimization (SEO) in order to get traffic. But your goals don't include SEO because you're not interested in keeping constantly updated on changing SEO algorithms and methods.*

In that case, who cares what everyone else is doing – drop the SEO from your plans and focus on those tasks that align with your goals (not someone else's goals).

Example #2: *Let's suppose you're interested in losing weight, and many people you know are doing intermittent fasting with good results. But that kind of diet doesn't work well with your schedule.*

Don't force yourself to do something that isn't a good fit with your goals just because everyone else is doing it. Look for a solution that you can start and stick to with as little added resistance as possible.

NOTE: This doesn't mean you should always go with the easiest option; it means you should go with the best option for you and the goals you have set.

14. Think Ahead

The idea here is to anticipate problems that could knock you off track – and then make a plan for handling those potential problems. This will likely save you time, money and frustration in the long run.

For example, what if you get sick and end up in bed for an extended period of time? Maybe your plan is to have a trusted friend or family member help out with your business, in which case you better train them now (because you won't be in any shape to train them or even think straight if you get really sick).

For example, if you rely on a babysitter because you regularly travel or have engagements that require you to be away from your child, then you may consider using 2-3 babysitters on a regular basis so that you have a backup plan if one can't sit for some reason.

The important thing is to not simply act as if nothing will go wrong ... because sooner or later it probably will.

Take inventory of the things in your life that would create substantial problems for you if something does go wrong and have things in place ahead of time in case they do.

15. Learn to Say No

Learning to say "no" is a great way to start reclaiming your time.

Keep these tips in mind:

- "No" is a complete sentence. You don't owe anyone an explanation.
- Don't let anyone try to make you feel guilty for taking care of your own needs (*or more important needs*) first.
- Set and enforce boundaries with people who try to guilt you, manipulate you, or use other shady tactics.

Next...

16. Set Time-Management Goals

If you audited your time, then you now know where you waste your time. You'll want to start setting time-management goals to avoid that wasted time.

For example, maybe you know that social media is your weak spot – if you go on Twitter, you get carried away for hours. You might then make a new goal to not go on Twitter at all until you're done with your work. If you really enjoy the site, you might even make it a reward for getting through your daily to-do list.

Finally...

17. Seek Work-Life Balance

While this guide is all about maximizing your time, especially as it applies to your big business and life objectives, you'll also want to be sure you're developing a good work-life balance.

- There's no use in chasing goals and working yourself ragged only to get burned out or so overworked that you don't even enjoy any free time. And...
- There's no use in being so preoccupied with leisure activities that you neglect the essential things and the things that matter most to your life.

Make it a point to get more done in less time – and instead of using your newfound time to get more work done, use it to relax and do something enjoyable.

Just don't relax so much that you lazily ignore things you should be doing.

It's all about balance.

Conclusion

*Do you manage your time,
or does it seem to manage you?*

Use the tips you just learned to maximize the hours you're given.

This frees up your time to do the things that matter most, while simultaneously letting you achieve your goals faster than ever.

The Motivation And Mindset Report

17 Keys To Getting And Staying Motivated

On your mark. Get set. Go!

That's the way you get started whether it's a race, a project or a goal. But there's more to it than starting, right?

There's finishing.

That's the point entire point of this entire collection of reports. In other words...

Go! Keep going! Go until you've run the race, completed the project or accomplished your goal.

For this, you need to get yourself into the right mindset and stay motivated, so you tackle your to-do list and keep going all day, all week, all month and all year until...

Your things-to-do list becomes your things-done list.

Here is how to have that "something" that causes you to stick to it until you finish what you start...

1. Find a Good Reason

I mentioned this elsewhere in these reports, but I'm going to mention it again here and provide additional detail:

You need to have a good reason to chase a specific goal.

If you're just pursuing a goal in an emotionless way, eventually you're going to lose your motivation.

Why do you want to reach the goal?

What is the driving force behind it?

What is the fuel that keeps your engine revved up?

You need a compelling reason that makes your effort worth it to you.

Example #1: *Maybe you're a parent, and your heart aches when you think of your children growing up at a child care center while you go to work every day. That strong emotional reason is a good motivator to help you start your own business so you can be with them more.*

Example #2: *Perhaps you know the physical and emotional pain of being overweight, and you don't ever want anyone else to feel that way. That's a good emotional reason to start a business helping others lose weight.*

Every goal should have a strong "reason why" you want to reach it.

2. Surround Yourself With Positive People

Some people in your life are going to support you in all of your goals and choices. Other people in your life are going to be negative about everything you do.

What that means is this...

The people in your life are either going to be motivation-drainers or motivation-filers.

They are either going to discourage you or encourage you, but they will not be neutral. So, as much as possible, you want to surround yourself with positive people and distance yourself from negative people.

What if you can't avoid negative people?

Then at the very least, avoid talking to them about your goals and dreams.

This will eliminate the opportunity for them to derail you with their negativity. If they bring up the issue, simply say, "*I'd rather not discuss it,*" and change the subject. If they persist, then politely excuse yourself and physically remove yourself from the conversation.

NOTE: There is a difference between being negative and being sensible. People can be encouraging and supportive while offering sound advice that may not be what you want to hear.

The bottom line is this: are they trying to help you or harm you?

3. Learn About Successful People

The idea here is to read about successful people who are doing exactly what you want to do. You can read biographies and autobiographies, read speeches and other materials, and follow them on social media where applicable.

- Learn how they became successful.
- Learn what obstacles they overcame (*and how they did it*).
- Learn their positive habits.
- Learn how they deal with setbacks.
- Learn their processes and practices.

You get the idea.

*For example, if you really want to be a vlogger, then learn everything you can about **Casey Neistat** and his success and follow him on his channels to stay updated.*

4. Find a Mentor

Another way to get motivated and take a shortcut to your success is to find a mentor who's already doing what you want to do. In business circles, mentoring is a common practice.

Simply find someone local who's successfully doing what you want to do and invite them out to lunch to "pick their brain" about their business success. There you can see if the two of you get along well, and you may broach the topic of meeting regularly as a mentorship.

TIP: If you live in the United States, check out the Small Business Administration's mentorship programs at:

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting/contracting-assistance-programs/sba-mentor-protege-program>.

Alternatively, you can pick an online mentor that you connect with virtually in a similar manner as described above.

We have a limited number of Private Students we coach and mentor each year.

If you like the way we teach through our product and service and you'd be interested in hearing more about this opportunity, be sure to reach out to me via the contact form on the <https://Nick-James.com> website.

5. Gather Baseline Data

Sometimes people lose their motivation because they don't realize how far they've come. That's why, before you start on your goals, you want to write down all your baseline data.

Example #1: If your goal is to build your mailing list to 20,000 subscribers, then write down all applicable baseline data as of today. This includes how many subscribers you have now, your landing page conversion rates, how much traffic you send to these pages, and how much money you make from your mailing list.

Example #2: If your goal is to lose twenty pounds (and get fitter / healthier), then gather all your baseline data (current weight and all measurements). You can also take before and after pics.

Additionally, you may want to note how you feel – energy level, aches and pains, breathing, resting heart rate.

Whenever you feel your motivation fading, look at your baseline data... and then look at how much you've accomplished since that point. You might even create a real-time tracker where you update your numbers.

For example, think of how fundraisers like the JustGiving.com create a visual representation of their goals (such as a thermometer or rosette). You can do the same thing – create a poster that visually represents your progress and hang it up where you can see it and update it every day.

Bottom Line: Rather than focusing on how far you still have to go, sometimes it's a good idea to focus on how far you have come.

6. Know Yourself

The idea here is to understand how your mind works and then work within those limitations.

Example #1: *Most people work within society's 9-5 workday, five days per week. But maybe you've discovered that you aren't productive with that schedule. Perhaps you like to work three days on, two days off (rinse repeat). If you're more productive with that schedule, then scrap whatever society says you should do and work within your own preferred schedule.*

Example #2: *Many people eat a low-carb diet in order to lose weight. But perhaps you can't stay motivated long without having bread on your plate. Trying a different diet plan might work better for you over the long term because it's sustainable for you while a low-carb option might not be.*

Example #3: *Other people might be able to set aside time each day to work on a novel, but you find that you simply aren't disciplined enough to stay on track with a daily time slot. Instead, you might try working on your novel for a longer period of time one or two days per week. The only "right" way to accomplish a goal is the way that works for you.*

The point is this: Find out what schedule or process works best for you, so you remain positive and progressive in your work toward the goal.

7. Continue to Set New Goals

When you achieve a goal, you'll naturally want to celebrate and reward yourself.

But after that, you'll want to set new goals to work on.

Why is this important?

You can take advantage of the momentum and the motivation you already have going.

This gives you a jumpstart on a related goal or something entirely new altogether, providing some extra emotional/mental thrust from the very beginning.

Also, be sure to track your goals and adjust them midway as needed.

For example, if you set a goal, and you notice you're going to easily meet your goal, then adjust it upward to make it more challenging.

For example, if you set a goal, and you notice that while you're making good progress, it's going to take longer than expected, extend your deadline.

Both of these will provide some additional motivation:

In the first example, to do even more than you expected, and in the second example, to not give up because the pace is a bit slow.

8. Know the Signs of Burnout

While it's important to keep moving forward with your goals, it's also important to know when to **stop and rest**.

Keep these signs of burnout handy so you can avoid having a small burnout problem turn into a large one:

- Feeling stressed.
- Feeling fatigued.
- Feeling overwhelmed.
- Having negative thoughts frequently.
- Difficulty concentrating.
- Experiencing Headaches, stomachaches or other physical ailments.
- Changing sleep habits.
- Feeling irritable/quick to anger.
- Feeling impatient.
- Lacking motivation or even dreading a task.
- Self-medication with food, alcohol or drugs.

If you see these signs, understand that **you've likely taken on too much**—and you're going to need to rest and recover before you can get back on track.

9. Gamify Your Goals

Some people get a boost of motivation by gamifying their goals. If this appeals to you, you might want to try it too.

How does it work?

One example is to create “points” for doing different tasks on a daily basis, as well as awarding yourself a higher number of points when you accomplish a goal.

- **POINTS:** On a daily basis, you can challenge yourself to get more points. For example, if you award yourself five points for creating a blog post, and yesterday you earned 15 points, then today you'll want to see if you can earn 20 or 25 points.
- **Rewards:** This system works best when you tie these points to rewards. For example, you might set up levels for rewarding yourself after 100 points, 500 points, 1000 points, 2000 points and so on.

Give yourself frequent rewards in the beginning to gain momentum, and save your biggest rewards for bigger accomplishments.

This way, whether you are challenging yourself to “beat yesterday” or “beat your average”, or you are working towards a big reward, motivation will remain high.

10. Make It Easy to Take Action

The idea here is to remove all obstacles to taking action. You want to make it as effortless as possible to take action and remove any excuses for not taking action.

Example #1: *If you dread going to work in your home office because it's a drab room, then redecorate it so that it's a place you enjoy going to.*

Example #2: *If you feel uncomfortable going to the gym because you feel judged by others, then invest in some equipment to work out at your house.*

Example #3: *If you want to write a novel but find yourself getting distracted by social media, then write in full-screen mode or use a service like <https://GetColdTurkey.com> to block access to distractions.*

The important thing is to eliminate the things that get you out of the right mindset and motivation to get things done.

11. Shine a Light on Procrastination

When you engage in procrastination, the end result is that you waste a lot of time – entire days can go by without you getting anything productive accomplished.

*When you find yourself procrastinating,
you need to ask yourself why.*

Sometimes brainstorming can help you uncover the reasons.

Spend about 15-20 minutes writing down all the reasons you can think of that you may be procrastinating.

- Do I dislike it?
- Do I feel unqualified?
- Do I think it is boring?
- Do I find it overwhelming?

Simply shining a light on procrastination in this manner can often make it disappear. In other cases, you may find a reason that you'll need to fix or overcome.

For example, if you find the task overwhelming, you can break it down into smaller, manageable steps.

For example, if you feel unqualified to do a step toward your goal, you can outsource it to someone else.

Either way, you're on your way to putting procrastination behind you and becoming more productive.

12. Get an Accountability Partner

If you have trouble just getting started when it comes to tasks or goals, then you may consider enlisting a friend or colleague to be an accountability partner.

DEFINED: This is someone you talk to in the morning to tell them what you have planned for the day, and then you talk to them at the end of the day to let them know what you accomplished. (Or the period can be once per week, etc.)

You don't want to lie to your friend, nor do you want to admit you didn't get anything done. So, the way to avoid this sort of discomfort is to simply do the work – and that's why getting an accountability partner is so effective.

The key is to choose a partner who's truly going to hold you accountable.

- Don't choose one that will say "Oh, that's okay, there's always tomorrow" if you don't work on your tasks and goals.
- You want someone who'll instead say something like, "Why do you think you didn't get anything done? And how are you going to fix it so that tomorrow is a better day?"

As always, look for someone who is positive and supportive even when they give you some "tough love." You want someone who is for you.

13. Include A Reasonable Deadline

Sometimes we lose motivation because reaching our goal seems too far "out there" in the future. When we set a date for when we want to have the goal accomplished, we tend to make more progress because...

- With every day, our available time is disappearing.
- With every day, the end time is approaching.

The key is to make this deadline a reasonable one with a little bit of margin.

For example: Let's suppose you want to write a training course of 20 lessons related to a topic you know well. And you typically can write a lesson in one day. Set a deadline for about 25 days from the day you begin writing which gives you a firm end time to work toward with a few days of margin in case "life" interrupts your progress.

Of course, you can use natural "built-in" deadlines to help with setting your end date (when applicable).

For example: Let's suppose you want to train for a marathon, and you find that a 16-20 week training program is a typical workload to be adequately prepared.

The date for the marathon will be provided by the event organizer. You would then start your training at an appropriate time to be ready by the start of the race.

Of course, you can set **incremental milestone** deadlines too to help you stay on track.

Hot Tip: Whenever possible, use natural “built-in” deadlines such as spring break, a friend’s wedding, a race, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, the start of a school year, and so forth.

14. Create a Routine

Sometimes it’s hard to get into your groove when you start working on your to-do list. You can mentally prepare yourself by creating a “getting ready for work” routine.

This may include...

- Making yourself a cup of your favorite beverage,
- Changing into a specific set of clothes,
- Reviewing your to-do list,
- Turning on ambient music, and so forth.

You choose what to include in your routine, but once you do, follow it to the letter every day.

This will become your mental signal that it’s time to get into serious work mode.

15. Consider How You’ll Feel

If you ever feel your motivation fading, stop for a moment and think about how you’ll feel when you’re able to cross things off your list and/or when you achieve your goals.

For example, ever notice that you feel best when you have a good and productive day?

Think about how good it feels and how well you sleep at night after a good day. Then chase that feeling by promising yourself you’ll have a productive day – and then get to work to make it happen.

For example, imagine what it will be like to get that novel finished, complete that marathon, finish the first year of home education, create that first vlog episode, raise those funds for the underprivileged children or achieve whatever goal you have set.

Think about how you will feel and what a difference it will make to others (to help them, inspire them, etc.).

Hot Tip: To aid in this as you progress toward the end goal, make a checklist of all the steps (*minor and major*) that you will need to complete. This checklist will serve as an ongoing reminder of the progress you've made.

16. Get Back on Track

Sometimes you get derailed, and you're unproductive for hours. When this happens, don't have the all or nothing attitude.

Don't say to yourself, "As long as I've wasted most of the day, I might as well just quit."

A few unproductive hours can turn into an unproductive day. A day can turn into several days, which can turn into a week. That's why you want to get back on track ASAP.

Instead, take advantage of what **time you have left**.

If you only have time to write a blog post or compose an email or plan a homeschool lesson or complete a short run, do it.

It doesn't have to be an earth-shattering task.

The idea is to take a few small steps to salvage the day so that you get back your momentum and can move forward first thing tomorrow.

17. Serve Others

Sometimes we lose our motivation because we're all wrapped up in thinking about ourselves and what we're going to get out of our goals.

We're social creatures, so sometimes we can find motivation and a renewed outlook on life by serving others.

For example:

- Think about how your goals help others.
- Talk to people you've helped to get a good sense of how you've changed their lives for the better.
- Seek out ways to reach more people to help.
- Offer some free help with no strings attached.

Hot Tip: I keep a folder of emails, texts and screenshots of messages sent to me by people that I've helped. Sometimes when I lose motivation, I read several of these in order to encourage me to keep making a difference.

Let's wrap this up...

Conclusion

You just learned 17 ways to get into the right mindset and give yourself a motivation boost.

Remember this...

It's not how you start that matters; it's how you finish.

One key to success is to keep moving forward, so use these ideas and insights to keep you on track.

Go. Keep going. Go until you're finished.

The Focus Report

17 Tips For Keeping Things On Track

Are you a spotlight or a floodlight?

- A floodlight tries to light up a wider area, so the light's intensity in any given area tends to be diluted.
- A spotlight is focused and concentrated, lighting up a small area.

If you're a floodlight with regards to your goals, you're going to have trouble getting focused enough to see things clearly or do any one thing well.

That's why you're going to want to check out these 17 tips that help you focus in like a spotlight on everything from your big goals to your daily to-do list.

Take a look...

1. Get Rid of Clutter

Researchers have shown that people aren't as focused when they're surrounded by clutter. That's why you'll want to get organized.

This includes cleaning and organizing your office and home, as well as organizing your computer files.

In particular, be sure to clear out the clutter in your email inbox – and once you've achieved inbox zero, be sure to keep it that way.

Sometimes the clutter is simply trying to do too many things at once.

Eliminate as many non-essential things from your schedule as possible so you can focus on the things that matter most to your objectives. Speaking of schedules...

2. Create a Schedule

A lot of people create a to-do list, along with a loose idea of when they might tackle that to-do list.

For example, they know they'll attempt to get something done tomorrow, but they don't yet know the time period.

In order to focus, you need to create a tighter schedule. For starters, schedule in your goal tasks time just as you'd schedule any other appointments, events, work, and other important activities.

For example, block off 7:00-9:00 AM for a training run.

For example, set aside 8:00-9:30 PM for a period of study.

For example, set aside the noon hour for prayer.

Secondly, figure out EXACTLY what you're going to do during your scheduled work time. Write down each task – when you'll start it and when you'll finish it. The tighter your schedule, the more "positive pressure" you'll create to stay focused and stay on track.

Know this...

Some time is better than any time when it comes to getting things done.

3. Review Your "Why"

If you're feeling a little unfocused on a task, take a minute and reflect on why you're doing this particular task.

What role does it play in reaching your ultimate goal?

Then step back and look at the big picture to reflect on why you've set up your specific goals.

How does it benefit you? How does it benefit others?

This will help you remember that what you're doing is for a purpose. You're after something. You're going to accomplish something that is meaningful, and though it may seem tedious or tiresome at the moment, **it will be worth it in the end.**

If you spend some time reflecting on the "why," you'll give yourself a renewed sense of purpose and passion which, in turn, helps you focus.

4. Become Self-Aware

Here's a common problem: you're working on a task when your mind starts drifting to other things. Maybe you start thinking about something your spouse said the other day, or you wonder what you should have for dinner, or you wonder how old some celebrity is (*which can often result in running off to Google something*).

One way to reduce drifting thoughts is to become more self-aware. In other words, be mindful of when your thoughts start to drift away from the task at hand. When you're more aware of it happening, then it's easier to redirect your thoughts to the task in front of you.

Hot Tip: Keep paper and pen (or an app) nearby so you can quickly take a note about the distraction (which you will deal with later) and return immediately to the task at hand. More on this later in this report.

5. Take a Break

Some people think the key to productivity and success is to focus, in an unrelenting way, on the task until it's done.

But that's a quick way to actually lose your focus as the mind and body tire out.

Instead, take breaks.

- Take breaks while completing tasks (*such as a minutes-long break every half hour and longer breaks every hour or two*).
- Schedule complete breaks (*e.g., taking weekends off regularly, going on vacation, etc.*).

Your mind and body need a break whether your goal is starting a new church, running a marathon, restoring a classic car, building a tiny home, writing a novel or any other meaningful endeavor.

6. Look Away Regularly

While most of what we're talking about in this guide refers to mentally focusing on something, the literal physical focusing of your eyes for a long period of time can create tired eyes.

- Look away from your computer screen every 20 minutes or so.
- Take a break from driving at regular intervals.
- Put down the brush and let your painting sit for a bit.
- Stop reading for a while so your vision doesn't suffer.

Here's the reality...

You'll lose your mental focus when you can't physically focus (*e.g., things are blurry, or your eyes might even hurt*).

Take some time to get refreshed, and every area of your focus will improve.

7. Disconnect from Distractions

Elsewhere in this report, we've talked about avoiding distracting sites by closing them or even blocking them with an app. We've also talked about checking email at set times.

Now here's a tip if those methods don't work for you:

Completely disconnect from the internet.

You may even take your laptop someplace where you can't connect to your WiFi (*such as your yard or some entirely different location altogether*).

Let's take this principle and expand it to other areas where you need to stay focused on tasks that are not Internet-related...

- Disconnect from the people around you when you need to study.
- Disconnect from the night life when you need to get recovery sleep.
- Disconnect from social media when you need to avoid negativity.

Bottom line: Disconnect from anything that interrupts your focus on the task you need to complete.

8. Unplug Your Laptop

If you use a laptop, then here's a strategy to keep you focused: unplug the laptop and then race against your battery.

You're going to have to stay focused and work quickly in order to get your work done before the battery depletes. If you've ever found the challenge of a game stimulates your focus, then try this tip to see if it works for you.

Of course, it doesn't have to be your laptop battery that you're racing against. It can be anything that requires you to stay focused because time is running out.

For example, you might set a timer on your smartphone for 30 minutes and try to get as many bags of leaves raked as possible in that time period.

Racing against the clock is a good way to stay focused as you try to complete as many reps or tasks as possible during your allotted time period.

Alternatively, you might time yourself to see how fast you can complete the activity.

NOTE: If you are the type of person that feels pressured by this kind of challenge, then skip it. It might keep you focused but make you unproductive.

9. Set the Thermostat

Here's another physical issue that can affect your mental focus:

Temperature.

Whether it's too hot or too cold in the room, you'll be thinking about your discomfort rather than focusing on the task at hand. Indeed, researchers have found that most people do best when the temperature is right around 72 degrees Fahrenheit (*that's about 22 degrees Celsius for my European customers*)... give or take a few degrees.

Of course, not all progress towards your goal is made inside, and sometimes your activities are best served in certain climates. So, here's the principle...

As much as possible, create a comfortable environment to complete your tasks.

That's what you're after regardless of what is on your to-do list. A comfortable environment means one less thing that might rob you of your focus. In fact, it can actually aid in staying focused.

10. Turn on Music or White Noise

For this method, you need to know what works for you or be prepared to do some experimenting.

Researchers have found that some people are more productive when they're listening to music.

In most cases, two conditions need to be met:

1. You need to like the music you're listening to.
2. Ideally, the music shouldn't have any words (otherwise you pay too much attention to the music, and you might even end up singing along).

Of course, streaming music on an ad-free network is also preferable to listening to the radio as the advertisements can be distracting.

Hot Tip: If you find that listening to music is distracting – and especially if you have other distracting noises in your environment – then you might want to try white noise instead.

In such cases, you can use a fan, static on a radio station, a white-noise app, or even a white noise machine.

11. Find the Zone

In order to be focused, you need to be in the zone with regards to stimulation.

- If you have too much mental stimulation, you're going to feel stressed and overwhelmed which makes it exceedingly difficult to focus because your mind will be jumping all over the place.
- If you have too little mental stimulation, you'll get bored – which causes your mind to drift to other things that are more interesting to you.

What you need to do is adjust your stimulation levels so you can get in the zone.

- If your stimulation levels are high, then do something to calm yourself, like taking a brisk walk.
- If your stimulation levels are low to the point of you being bored, then do something to challenge yourself, such as setting a timer for 20 minutes and racing against the clock to see how much you can get done.

12. Set Goals Every Day

You already have a daily to-do list with each task a step towards or otherwise supporting your overall goals. In addition to that, you should also set specific goals each day.

Granted, some of the tasks on your to-do list are also your goals for the day. But look beyond your list.

For example, you might set a goal to be 10% more productive today than yesterday, or you might set a goal to get your work done 30-60 minutes ahead of schedule.

And the only way this is going to happen is to stay focused. Which is the point.

13. Acknowledge and Deal With Distractions Upfront

If your mind has a tendency to drift away from what you’re focusing on to something entirely different – especially if that thing is something else, you need to do or something that bothers you – then you’re going to like this tip.

The idea is that when an intruding thought enters your mind and competes for attention with the task at hand, you stop for a moment and acknowledge it – and **write it down if it's something you need to do or think about later.**

Some call this a dump list or a parking lot, where you “dump” everything that’s pulling at your attention so that you can refocus on the desired task.

For example, if you start thinking about how you’re low on milk, then pull out your dump list and make a note that you need to get milk at the store.

For example, if you start thinking about how you wanted to tell your spouse about an interesting phone call you received, then write it down on your dump list.

For example, if you start wondering, questioning, worrying or thinking about anything you need to do – write it down on your dump list.

The idea here is to take the power away from distractions by writing them down – then you don't need to be worried about forgetting them so you can release them and regain your focus on the task at hand.

14. Focus Before Willpower

Elsewhere in these reports, we've talked about the importance of willpower. However, you need to know that exerting a lot of willpower drains energy, and draining your energy drains your focus as well. As such, try not to engage in an intensive, focused task at the same time when you're exerting a lot of willpower.

For example, if you're running a speed workout in preparation for an upcoming race, it's not the best time to be planning your week. You're going to have a hard time focusing mentally with the physical exertion taking place.

15. Reduce Decision Making

Another thing that can drain your focus is having the need to make a lot of decisions. That's why it's a good idea to avoid heavy decision-making before you need to work on an intensive task.

The principle is this: Schedule your activities so that you can be refreshed and sharp at the beginning rather than starting those activities already drained.

Note that you can also arrange your life in a way to make decisions beforehand in both your professional and personal life.

For example, you can cook a week's worth of meals on Sunday night, so then you don't need to make decisions about dinner every night (just take something out of the freezer). In turn, this frees up some mental energy that you can use to focus on your professional goals.

16. Practice Healthy Habits

Lack of sleep, feeling hungry, and even feeling thirsty can all cut into your focus. Be sure to practice healthy habits so that your body is feeling good which, in turn, improves mental performance.

This includes:

- Getting enough sleep at night.
- Doing some gentle exercise daily (such as walking).
- Eating healthy foods so that you don't deal with the highs and lows of the fast-burning carb rollercoaster.
- Drinking plenty of water to stay hydrated.

And finally...

17. Seek Professional Advice

The tips for focusing that we've been talking about in this guide assume that you don't have any serious issues with focusing such as adult attention deficit disorder, depression, anxiety or similar.

If you think that you may suffer from these sorts of ailments, don't hesitate to seek professional advice from a qualified psychologist or other mental health professional.

In some cases, you may find out that you're not destined to have to suffer or learn to live with feeling unfocused all the time as certain therapies or medications may be able to help you.

Now a few parting thoughts...

Conclusion

Without focus, you're not going to get very much done on your daily to-do lists, much less achieve your goals. That's why you'll want to put these 17 tips to work for you to improve your focus and productivity.

The Planning Report

17 Keys To Planning Your Path To Success

You've selected your goals, so now you should jump in and start working on them, right?

Hold up, not so fast. As Abraham Lincoln (allegedly) said...

*"Give me six hours to chop down a tree,
and I will spend four hours sharpening my axe."*

That applies to you.

Instead of jumping in and taking action, you want to step back to plan and prepare what you're going to do.

And that's exactly what you'll be learning about in this guide, as we look at 17 keys for planning how to achieve your goals.

Let's get started sharpening your axe...

1. Be Sure You're Pursuing SMART Goals

Elsewhere in these reports, we talked about how to set your goals. Before you start pursuing them, you need to double check that you did indeed set SMART goals. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is your goal SPECIFIC?
- Is your goal MEASUREABLE?
- Is your goal ACHIEVABLE?
- Is your goal RELEVANT?
- Is your goal TIME-BOUND?

If you can say “yes” to all these questions, then move on to the next key...

2. Start With Brainstorming

No matter what your goal is, a good first step in planning is a brainstorming session.

For example, if you’re creating a business plan, brainstorm. If you’re setting up fitness goals for yourself, do some brainstorming. If you want to learn a new hobby or skill, again, start with some brainstorming.

Here are three tips...

- Be sure to set aside an uninterrupted chunk of time of at least 20-30 minutes.
- Take out a blank piece of paper, open a new document, use a brainstorming app – or whatever else makes you feel the most creative.
- Then write down every idea that comes to mind without judging, censoring or editing your ideas (*as you can judge your ideas later on – for now, just get them all down in writing*).

This step is all about thinking of as many ideas as possible that are potentially relevant to your goal, including: ways to accomplish it, steps to take, gear to use, potential barriers to overcome, people to involve, time to complete and so forth.

Next...

3. Research Your Ideas

Another thing you’ll want to do during the planning stage is to research your ideas. There’s no use chasing an idea if it’s not viable.

Example #1: If you're setting a personal goal such as running an ultramarathon, you'll need to do some research to determine what proper training would look like for you to adequately prepare for the race. Then, you can determine how long it will take you to complete the training and schedule your race accordingly.

Example #2: When I was coming up with the idea of The Licensing Vault, I did some research (and some brainstorming) to figure out what sort of offer I could create that would appeal to everyone in my specific audience.

My research showed that my audience had a limited amount of time to create products from scratch and would benefit from the opportunity to license a variety of professionally written information products. So, I created a membership site that helps people take a licensed product 'out of the box' and have it ready to sell online in 30 minutes or less. Here's the end result: <https://go.LicensingVault.com>

4. Validate Your Ideas

Still another important step during the planning stage is to confirm that your ideas are appropriate for reaching your goal.

Take note: Some of the research you do will help you validate your ideas.

In other cases, you may need to take an extra step or two to determine if your idea is valid.

Let's look at two examples...

Example #1: Let's suppose you have an idea for an information product. You've researched the idea, and it looks promising – but since your product is a little different than what's currently on the market, you want to be sure. You can validate your idea by:

- *Creating a “lite” version of the product and selling it for low cost. If that works, then you can create the full version, premium-priced product.*
- *Surveying your audience to gain further insight. But don’t use surveying as a standalone measure because what people answer on a survey doesn’t always align with their actions.*

Example #2: Let’s go back to this idea of training for an ultramarathon. In order to determine if it’s a viable idea, you may do the following:

- *Talk to an experienced person, such as a running coach, to see if they think you have enough time to be ready for a specific race date.*
- *Do a test run just to gauge your own level of fitness to see where you are at and if you have time to get to where you need to be by a specific race date.*

At this point, you will have ways, steps, gear, support and other validated ideas for what you will need to do in order to accomplish your goals. The plan is starting to take shape.

Now the next key...

5. Be Flexible

You may create a solid plan for achieving your goals, but something could happen to change the way you need to do things. That’s why you need to be flexible with your plans.

Example #1: Maybe you’re going to hire a freelancer to create a product. And maybe you’ve got a plan to get your product created in three months. But between finding a freelancer and discovering that your writer has a really full calendar, your product delivery date is going to be pushed out further than anticipated. Be flexible, and work on the rest of your business while you’re waiting for the product to be complete.

Example #2: Let's suppose your personal goal is to lose weight with a diet and exercise routine. And let's suppose you end up twisting your ankle while exercising. You'll need to be flexible such as further cutting calories or perhaps choosing an exercise that doesn't require the use of your feet and legs (or impact on them ... such as swimming).

This is a huge key...

Be willing to adjust the ways, steps, gear and support that are a part of your plan if necessary to continue making progress.

What you don't want to do is GET STUCK.

6. Create a One-Page Plan

You've got a lot of goals and a lot of planning to do, no doubt. And all that planning can become overwhelming to the point where you get paralyzed into inaction.

So, here's what to do:

Condense your plan down to one page.

Create an overview of what you need to do with only the **most important steps listed**. In other words, simplify the process and focus on the essential things you must do to move forward (*and worry about all the rest of the steps later*).

Sure, you'll have more extensive plans listed elsewhere. But keep this cheat-sheet on your desktop, so you can see, at a glance, what you need to do to advance your goals.

7. Use Tools to Help You Plan

If you're comfortable using platforms or apps to help you plan, then do some research to find a good planning tool for you. Be sure you can use the tool across your devices.

For example, some tools let you log in from any device, while certain apps will sync across your devices.

What sort of tools are we talking about?

A platform like <https://Trello.com> can help you do brainstorming and create to-do lists. Or you can use an app. For example, Evernote is a great way to capture ideas, plan and make lists.

8. Create a Unique Plan

When you're creating a plan to achieve your goals, you'll want to look at what others have done to achieve the same goal. While you can model your plan after other successful people, ultimately your plan needs to be unique to you to fit your specific needs.

Example #1: Let's go back to an example of creating an information product. If you find out that people who are doing exactly what you want to do are outsourcing information product creation, you may make that part of your plan too. But when it actually comes to implementation, maybe your budget is a sticking point. As such, you can't blindly follow someone else's plan – you need to tweak it, such as using PLR (private label rights) content to create the product.

Example #2: If you're looking to lose weight, you can start by looking at what sorts of diet and exercise plans others have used to accomplish the same thing. However, you'll need to tweak the diet plans to fit your unique needs such as a gluten-free diet.

Bottom line...

You want a custom-tailored plan that is well-suited for you as an individual.

There is not another person on planet Earth who is **EXACTLY LIKE YOU**, so be sure to make a plan that is FOR YOU and not for everyone. There is no one-size-fits-all plan for the important things of life.

9. Decide How You Like to Plan

Before you start planning, take a moment and think about your preferences.

What type of planning makes the most sense to you?

For example, some people love planning on paper. They list all the steps and substeps they need to take in a linear, chronological format (e.g., Step 1, do this... Step 2, do this...).

For example, some people don't think in a linear format, and they much prefer to create a mind-map to list all the steps and substeps. Here the plan isn't listed in order down the page, but rather it tends to look like a wheel and spoke format (often with many smaller wheels as offshoots of the main wheel).

Whatever you prefer is the way you should do it, even if others in your circle do it differently.

Know this...

You can't follow a plan that you don't create.

One of the biggest barriers is trying to create and implement a plan in a way that doesn't fit your preferences and wiring. It's also one of the easiest to overcome by simply doing it your way.

10. Create a Backup Plan

You're creating a solid plan with the full expectation that you will succeed. And yet, it's also a good idea to create backup plans. That way, if something doesn't work out exactly the way you expected, you have another plan you can implement immediately so you don't lose momentum or get stuck during execution.

11. Define Success

One necessary step during the planning stage is to define success upfront. What does it look like to you? Do your goals align with this vision of success?

Example #1: *Let's suppose your goal is to own your own home within one year. You'll need to ask, what does success look like to you? Just owning a home isn't success if it's not a home you like. As such, you'll want to define the details such as owning a home in a particular part of town, with a particular square footage, and a particular set of "must have" features.*

Example #2: *Let's return to the idea of starting an information product business. At what point will you feel like a success? E.G., when you're making \$5,000 per month... \$10,000 per month... more? How many people do you need to help before you feel successful? How many people do you need on your mailing list before you feel successful?*

Example #3: *Or maybe success is all about working fewer hours, being financially comfortable, and having the freedom to spend a lot of time with your family. Be sure to be specific about what you're envisioning. E.G., What is the maximum number of hours you want to work per week? How do you define "financially comfortable?" What, specifically, would you like to do with your family?*

And so on.

Take a moment and really think about what success means to you and then check that your goals and planning are aligned with your definition of success.

12. Choose Your Metrics Upfront

As you know, your goals need to be measurable. And that means the other decision you need to make upfront is which metrics you're going to track.

There are a lot of data points you can track, but trying to track them all can be overwhelming, and some of them aren't overly meaningful.

Example #1: Trying to build your social media platform doesn't mean much unless your followers translate directly into subscribers or sales. As such, you'd focus on your mailing list numbers, conversion rates, and sales (and not pay so much attention to the actual number of social media followers you have, as quality trumps quantity).

Example #2: Let's suppose you are planning run a marathon. You'll want to define your personal metrics such as what sort of average pace you'd like to run (how many minutes per mile). You may even choose health metrics such as target heart rate or respiration. Or if you are running to lose weight, then taking regular measurements such as how much you weigh and how much body fat you have would be appropriate.

Your plan has to be working towards something, and you'll only know that your plan is working if you are analyzing your metrics.

13. List Everything You Need to Execute Your Plan

Yes, you need to plan and list the steps needed to execute your plan. But as mentioned earlier, you'll also want to list everything else you'll need including skills, money, people, tools, resources and anything else you can think of.

Example #1: If you need to get a website up, then you either need tech skills to do it yourself or the money to outsource. If you don't have the skills, then you either need to make a plan for learning them, or you need to plan on outsourcing (which is recommended).

Example #2: If you'd like to learn how to restore cars, then you'll need the money to purchase the car, the tools needed to restore it, a good step-by-step source of information on how to restore it, and so forth. You may even need a good mechanic to help with certain parts of the restoration that you're unable or unwilling to do.

A plan is more than a system (steps); it's a blueprint for accomplishing an objective which is going to include more than simply a checklist of things to do.

14. Bounce Your Ideas Off Someone Else

As you're developing your plan, it's a good idea to bounce your ideas off someone else who's knowledgeable – preferably someone who's already found success doing what you want to do.

This person might be a colleague, friend, mentor or coach.

Choosing the right person – someone who'll tell you the truth rather than telling you what you want to hear – is the key to this strategy being useful to you.

In an earlier report, I mentioned that you don't want negative people to be involved in the pursuit of your goals. Don't confuse "*negativity*" with "*constructive criticism*."

It's a GOOD IDEA to have people in your life who will challenge you by pointing out flaws in your plan and making suggestions on how to improve your plan.

What you don't want are people who scoff at your plan.

15. Plan for Excellence

No matter what you're planning, plan for excellence rather than mediocrity.

Ask yourself, how can I do this BETTER than other people who are doing the same thing?

What can I do to stand out?

Example #1: *If you're creating an information product, don't just create a product that's a rehash of what others are creating.*

Design something unique – a fresh angle, never-before-seen tips, plus insert unique stories, examples, case studies and more.

This adds value to your product and makes it better than anything else currently on the market.

Example #2: *If your goal is to train your dog to run agility competitions, think about how you can really excel.*

For instance, you may practice the A-Frame obstacle repeatedly if you see that's where other dogs slow down, so that your dog can gain an edge.

This isn't about trying to proudly "one-up" other people; it's about striving to be the absolute best you can be at whatever endeavor you are undertaking.

People tend to settle for less than their potential.

You want to reach your potential instead of letting "close enough" be enough.

16. Start the Day Reviewing To Do Lists

Each day should begin with a plan of what you're going to do, how you're going to do it, what you'll need to do it, and who you will involve in doing it.

If you created to-do lists at the beginning of the week, then review your daily to-do list before you start working.

Does the list include the most critical steps you need to take, and do those steps align with your goals?

Know this...

A plan has many parts that should work together to accomplish your goal.

If something on your plan doesn't help you get closer to the end result, you're after, then it doesn't belong on your plan.

17. Let Others Know the Plan

If you have other people working for you or with you, let them know the plan – and let them know how their contribution fits into the plan.

For example, if you're training for a marathon and want to include training partners in your workouts, let them know why you're running such as losing weight / reducing the risk of diabetes, raising money for a charity, or some other worthy goal in which their involvement can make a real difference.

For example, if you're asking joint venture partners to contribute a chapter to a course that you're creating, let them know how their participation will prove helpful to the audience that you serve.

Or perhaps you'll be giving away copies to people who do not have the budget to purchase. Whatever the case, let others know what your plan is to make the world a better place through what you're doing.

People are much more motivated to give you their best work and their best ideas when they feel like they're doing something meaningful and helpful.

Conclusion

When you first set your goals, you may be so excited about them that you want to dive headfirst into the execution phase. However, the execution phase will go much more smoothly if you invest some time in the planning phase first.

Be sure to put these 17 keys to use as you start planning for your success.

The Implementation And Action Report

17 Tips For Executing Your Plan

You've set your goals. You've done your planning. Now it's time to take action and execute your plan.

Check out these 17 tips and ideas for doing exactly that...

1. Develop Systems and Checklists

As you start working on your plan, there are certain tasks you're going to need to do repeatedly, sometimes even on a daily basis.

It's worth developing streamlined systems for those tasks so that you can do them better, faster and easier.

Example #1: *Let's suppose you are going to start a Facebook ad campaign. You can streamline the process by developing a checklist of the crucial steps you need to take. Be sure to talk to others who run campaigns to find out their tips for streamlining, and then use what you know and what they know to create a system.*

Example #2: *Let's suppose you're trying to lose weight and get healthier, then you may develop a system for grocery shopping and cooking all your food for an entire week. This will save you time every week as you won't be scrounging around for meals when you're already hungry.*

Bottom line: If it's a repeatable task, create a checklist to work through to ensure that you do every essential thing and that you do everything efficiently.

2. Monitor Progress Closely

If you monitor progress sporadically (*or worse yet, not at all*), you'll have no idea if your plan is working.

As such...

Be sure to keep close tabs on your metrics on a weekly basis at a minimum.

In some cases, such as when running ad campaigns, you'll want to monitor progress on a daily basis. In other cases, you may monitor weekly such as checking your weight and measurements when trying to lose weight.

Give your plan enough time to work, but be prepared to do some tweaking or even implement "Plan B" if it's becoming clear that your original plan isn't delivering the results you wanted.

What you don't want to do is continue working a plan that provides no evidence it is actually working.

3. Manage Projects

If you're working with other people, then you need to manage the project. Your job is to decide exactly **WHAT** needs to be done and **WHEN**, and then keep everyone on track. In some cases, you may also need to train someone on **HOW** to do the task.

But...

Be sure not to micromanage people.

Let me give you a couple of examples...

Example #1: Let's suppose you're hiring freelancers who are already experts at what they do. You can tell them how you'd like the end result to look, but in most cases, you should leave it up to them as to how they get to the end result. (You hired them for their expertise, right? Then let them work their magic!)

Example #2: If you're running a relay marathon with friends, then you've likely selected a team of experienced runners. Don't micromanage the team and tell them what to eat and exactly how to train. Everyone can offer suggestions, but it will likely not be well received if you tell other runners of similar experience how they should be training.

Bottom line: Based on the experience / knowledge level of the team, give them the instructions they need to help them accomplish the objective.

4. Focus on "The One"

Every day when you sit down to execute your plan, identify "The One." This is the one thing that's most important to your overall goals. You'll want to make sure that one thing is completed each day, preferably first.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're creating an information product. On one particular day, "The One" most important item may be to pick a profitable topic. You know if you don't get that part right, then the rest of your efforts will be in vain. So, you arrange your schedule and your to-do list to prioritize that one thing and ensure you have enough time to complete it.

Example #2: If you're training for a bodybuilding competition, then every day "The One" thing is to be sure you eat a balanced diet – starting with breakfast – that promotes muscle growth.

This doesn't mean that "The One" is the ONLY one ... but it's the essential thing that you must get done for the day **because everything else depends upon it.**

Next...

5. Filter Out Whatever Doesn't Support Your Goals

There are going to be opportunities and requests crossing your desk on a regular basis as you work on your goals. Some of these opportunities are going to look really promising, and you might be tempted to pursue them.

But before you do, ask yourself:

Does this opportunity further my own goals?

If the answer is “no,” then say “no” to the request. This applies to requests from friends, colleagues, family members, coaches, marketing partners and more. Help others when you can, but only if it fits in with your overall plan.

Hot Tip: You can also do some “extra” things in such a way that they don’t interfere with your goals.

If you’re trying to lose weight and are invited to a birthday party, then go to the celebration. Just be intentional about avoiding the cake and ice cream.

The main thing is to make sure what you do (or don’t do) helps you accomplish the goals you’ve set.

Stick. To. The. Plan.

6. Check for Scalability

Before you execute your plan, you’ll want to check if your plans are scalable. And once you start taking action, then check again for scalability. Sometimes things look scalable until you actually start using them.

DEFINED: Scalability is the ability to adapt to changes over time, especially during periods of growth.

Let me give you a couple of examples...

Example #1: Maybe you’re using a piece of software that’s advertised to be scalable as your business grows. But once you

start using it, you may quickly realize it's not going to suit your needs. It's better to make the switch early on rather than waiting until you're virtually forced to switch. If it doesn't have features that can handle your growth, find an option that does.

Example #2: *Let's suppose you're training for a bodybuilding competition. Perhaps your current weight-lifting set works well for your current needs. But as you grow stronger, will your home gym be able to accommodate the lifts and exercises you'll need to be doing?*

Plan to grow and, as much as possible, be prepared in advance for that growth.

On a related note...

7. Think Ahead

As you start working on your goals, think ahead to what might happen. Anticipate both success and potential obstacles.

Example #1: *Let's suppose you're working on a big viral ad campaign. Think about what might happen if it truly takes off. Can your website handle the traffic load? Do you have the customer service staff in place to handle any extra inquiries?*

Example #2: *If your goal is to restore a custom car, ask yourself if you'll have the budget to finish the whole project. What if you discover a big problem that you didn't notice when you purchased the vehicle? Will you have the skills, knowledge and budget to deal with it?*

Obviously, you're not going to be able to foresee every potential obstacle. That's not the point. And you certainly don't need to give in to the fear of everything that might go wrong so you end up not doing anything at all. That's certainly not the point!

The point of thinking ahead is to anticipate things working well and identifying the things that might go wrong so you can adequately handle them (by either avoiding them, overcoming them or enduring them).

8. Don't Wait Until the "Perfect Time"

Are you waiting for the perfect time to start executing your plan?

Heads up:

The perfect time is today.

Right now. As the old proverb goes...

*"The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago.
The second best time is now."*

See, sometimes people put barriers between themselves and actually taking action on their plan.

For example, "I'll get to work on this just as soon as I save \$X amount of money," or "I'll work on this after the holidays – it's too hectic now to get started on something new."

If you are waiting for a convenient time, it will never come. Life stays busy. New things on the to-do list replace the old ones. You will never get caught up on everything that you have to do.

*You have to decide if the goal is important to you.
If it is, then you've got to decide to start working on it now.*

Let me repeat...

There will always be a reason why you think you shouldn't get started right now. If you're looking for the perfect time, you're very unlikely to find something that you deem acceptable. That's why you should start now.

On a related note...

9. Take the First Step

Sometimes people stay in a state of perpetual planning, and they don't actually start taking action steps towards their goals.

They still feel like they're working towards their goals because they're planning. But "planning" has simply become a method for procrastinating without taking real action.

The first step is often the hardest usually because we're so good at overthinking everything. So, what you need to do is commit to taking one small step – and ideally, take that step today.

Example #1: *Maybe you're starting a new business, and you still need to pick a niche. So, get started. Pick a place to start your research – such as by checking out what's selling well on Amazon – and get to it. Once you've taken that first small step, the rest of the steps will be a whole lot easier.*

Example #2: *Perhaps you've always had a dream of crafting the next great American novel. You've done a lot of plotting and planning but haven't actually started to write. What you'll want to do is set some time aside right away to write your first page. Once you've done that, you'll get some momentum to keep going.*

Learn this...

You can't take the final step until you take the first step.

Get. Started. Now.

10. Be Okay With Restarting

You get going. You're executing your plan. And then suddenly you realize something is not quite right. Maybe you made a mistake, or maybe you realize your plan isn't going to work.

What now?

Just this:

Get comfortable with the idea of restarting.

See, nowhere does it say that you only get one chance to pursue your goals, and if you make a mistake, it's "game over." And yet that's exactly what a lot of people do. They get attached to their plan, they get attached to their vision of how everything is going to unfold, and they're absolutely devastated if things don't go exactly the way they envisioned.

Guess what?

Thomas Edison didn't create the light bulb the first time he tried to do it. Billionaire Richard Branson (of Virgin Atlantic, among others) failed with his initial business endeavors.

Those are just two examples, but most successful people didn't find their success right away. They had to be persistent, and they had to be comfortable with restarting if needed. And you should be too if you want to succeed.

Do you know who accomplishes their goals?

The ones who keep going until the end.

Be among those who don't give up just because it wasn't as easy as you thought it would be.

Here's another related point...

11. View Mistakes as Learning Opportunities

I hate to be the one to break it to you, but you are going to make mistakes along the way. Some of them will be little "oopsies" that you can recover from immediately. Others will fall into the territory of being pretty serious mistakes that could permanently derail your plans.

But ALL of them will be learning opportunities.

The point is, you need to reframe how you see mistakes. A mistake is not necessarily a negative thing.

Rather, it's a learning process where you find out what doesn't work, so you can try something better – just like Edison and Branson.

Learn this:

*Every time you get it wrong,
you're one step closer to getting it right.*

With every bad step, bad idea, bad tool, bad freelancer that you identify, you narrow down the list until sooner or later you have the good ones.

Learn from your mistakes. Don't repeat your mistakes.

Next...

12. Avoid Analysis Paralysis

In order to pursue your goals, you're going to need to learn new strategies. This can lead to analysis paralysis especially if you follow a bunch of different experts who are all saying different things.

To avoid this sort of paralysis, pick ONE expert to follow.

Do your due diligence to make sure you're following the right person and then focus on implementing the strategies he or she suggests (*while tuning everyone else out*).

Once you've moved past this initial paralysis, you can revisit strategies and tips from other experts to see if they'd be helpful to you.

Hot Tip: When you are revisiting strategies from other experts, look for complementary ideas and not competing ideas. Add in things that support what you have already been doing.

13. Focus on One Piece

The next key to executing your plan is to focus on just one piece at a time. If you try to focus on multiple pieces, you'll dilute your efforts and water-down your results as well.

Example #1: *If you're starting an information publishing business, there are a lot of pieces to snap into place. You need to create*

products for your sales funnel, you need to create a platform so you can follow up with prospects and customers, and you need to start generating traffic.

Simplify this by picking one platform (such as a mailing list), one product, and one traffic source (such as paid advertising). Then pick one of those activities to focus on FIRST. Once you get one thing up and running, then you can focus on the second thing on your list... and so on.

Example #2: *If you're teaching your dog an agility course, you're going to overwhelm yourself and the dog by trying to teach the dog all the obstacles all at once. Pick one obstacle, train the dog to master that obstacle, and THEN start training on another obstacle.*

You are much more likely to do two things when approaching your activities in this manner...

1. First, you are much more likely to get everything done.
2. Second, you are much more likely to get everything done *well*.

Bottom line: Do one thing at a time until it is done with excellence. Then, move on to the next thing.

14. Reclaim Control

When you look at your to-do list, you might start thinking in terms of things you "should" do or you "need to do."

The problem with that framing is it makes it all feel like it's out of your control. You may even feel reluctant to work on those things.

Here's what to do instead:

Reframe and think about your list as things that you CHOOSE to do as a way to achieve success.

This reclaims control and puts you back in a position of power.

No one is forcing you to do it – you’re choosing. And oftentimes, this reframing makes it easier to take action.

You’ll be much more likely to stay motivated to check off the activities on your plan if it’s delight and not a duty.

15. Outsource and Delegate to Avoid Brick Walls

At times, you’re going to run headlong into what feels like a brick wall usually because you lack the skills or knowledge to move forward. Turn that brick wall into a little speed bump by outsourcing or delegating. Then you can start moving forward again more quickly.

There are three times you should outsource or delegate...

1. When you don’t have the TIME to do a task.
2. When you don’t have the ABILITY to do a task.
3. When you don’t have the INTEREST to do a task.

If any of these are sticking points for you, then outsource/delegate to others who are qualified to complete the tasks for you. This is how you get UN-stuck and stay moving toward your goals.

16. Create Written Processes

Earlier we talked about streamlining and creating systems. Once you have a good system, then you’re going to want to create a “mini manual” with the exact step-by-step process.

The goal is that you can hand this manual over to anyone and have them follow it, do the process in the same way as everyone else, and get the same results.

Example #1: *If you plan on growing prize-winning roses, you may develop a manual of exactly how to plant, grow and care for your roses.*

That way, even if you go on vacation, you can trust someone else to take care of them while you’re gone.

Example #2: You can create a manual for your customer service team, complete with copy and paste email responses.

This assures that your staff sends uniform responses to common inquiries which creates a good experience for your customers.

Having these mini-manuals is a good option for times when you cannot or choose not to do the work yourself while maintaining the high standards you'd expect if you did do the work yourself.

17. Don't Pressure Yourself

Yes, you want to get motivated to take action – but don't pressure yourself to the point where you're paralyzed and stressed out.

If it seems like you're unable to take action no matter what you do, then it's time to ask yourself why.

Typically, there's some underlying fear there – it may simply be a fear of change, a fear of failure, or even a fear of stepping outside your comfort zone.

Taking time to honestly assess what is going on in your head is often all the "cure" you need to take that first step.

Conclusion

This is the exciting part – you're about to execute your plan!

So, take a deep breath, pick a place to start, and jump in using the tips and strategies you just learned... because the very best time to get started is right now.

The Networking And Partnering Report

17 Insights For Working With Others

Very few people who enjoy significant success did it entirely on their own.

Sure, you can find a level of success as a lone wolf. But if you want to achieve great things, then you'll find one of the best and fastest ways to do it is by partnering with others. And that's why you're about to discover 17 ideas and insights for partnering for success.

Let's jump in...

1. Determine What You Need

Before you run out and start seeking partners, you'll want to first determine exactly what types of partnerships you'd like to form. That way, you can seek out specific partners who meet your requirements.

Example #1: If you're seeking out affiliates, then you'll look for proven super affiliates in your market (such as people who always win affiliate contests). Or if you're looking for guest blogging opportunities, then you'd look for the big, popular blogs in your niche.

Example #2: If you want to run a marathon relay, then you'll want to seek out team members with about the same level of fitness and the same overall running philosophy as you. Or if you're organizing a non-profit running group, you'll want to look for like-minded runners who are passionate about both running and the cause you'll be supporting.

There is no point in looking for people who are not a good fit for what you are wanting to accomplish. That's why it's important that you have some expectations established before you get started looking.

2. Use the Partnering Checklist

Here's an overview of how to partner with others:

1. Decide what types of partnerships you'd like to participate in.
2. Determine what requirements you seek in partners for these particular types of partnerships.
3. Find partners who meet your requirements.
4. Research potential partners to be sure they have a good reputation.
5. Start building relationships with these potential partners.
6. Plan a partnership that provides a lot of benefit for your partners.
7. Get your foot in the door with a small ask first.
8. Be sure this small project goes well.
9. Follow up with partners and continue nurturing the relationship.
10. Request a larger partnership.

Next...

3. Search For Partners

You probably already have a few ideas in mind about people you'd like to partner with for a project. You can find additional partners by doing some research.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're looking for business partners. If one of your requirements is that your partner needs a big, active blog, then you can search for blogs in the niche. Here you might run a Google search for "organic gardening blogs."

Example #2: Let's suppose you want to form an accountability group for weight loss. You can search social media for people who are interested, or you can even start a group on meetup.com to meet people locally who share the same goals as you.

Searching Google and social media are great places to begin identifying potential partners.

4. Ask Others for Recommendations

When you're looking for partners, one good method is to ask others. Perhaps you "know someone who knows someone."

Example #1: Maybe you need a partner to help you with a personal hobby such as a car restoration. You can send out a general inquiry on Facebook or other social media to see if your friends know someone with mechanical or car-body experience who can help you.

Example #2: Let's suppose you want to know more about where your business audience gets their information. You can ask them what products they purchase in the niche, which blogs they read, whom they follow on social media, which newsletters they're subscribed to, what podcasts they listen to, and so on.

You may not know someone who would be a good partner, but you may know someone who does.

5. Seek Out Introductions

If you actually know someone who has a friend who could be a potential partner – then ask for an introduction.

This is one of the quickest ways to get your foot in the door.

When a trusted friend recommends you, the potential partner is going to

listen and be open to engaging with you.

Here's a template email you can tweak and use to request introductions from mutual friends...

Subject line: Could you do a quick introduction, please?

Hey [First name of your friend],

I was browsing social media today, and I noticed that you're friends with [name of the person you'd like to be introduced to]. I'm so impressed – I've admired [name of this person] for a long time, and I'd love to meet [him/her] to discuss [your goal/topic].

Would you be able to introduce us?

I'd really appreciate it!

Looking forward to hearing from you...

[your name]

Next...

6. Look for Partners In Multiple Places

We've talked about some of the ways you can seek out potential partners. Here are five other ideas:

1. Check MeetUp.com to find potential partners.
2. Browse relevant Facebook groups (e.g., local groups, a group related to your goal such as a business group or a weight loss group, etc.).
3. Search for people with the same interests and goals on Twitter.
4. Look offline at relevant clubs and organizations.

5. Go to offline places where a potential partner might be (such as a gym if you're looking for a weight loss partner, or a Chamber of

Commerce meeting if you're looking for a business mentor).

Next tip...

7. Research Potential Partners

When you work with someone, you want it to be a good experience for everyone. That's why you'll want to research any potential partners to be sure you share the same vision and values.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're looking for a partner to help with accountability and weight loss. You'll want to browse this person's social media pages and talk to them in person to see if the two of you would be a good fit to work together towards your common health goal. If you're looking for a cheerleader, and they're more of a drill sergeant, then you might want to look elsewhere.

Example #2: If you're looking for a business partner, your name is going to be associated with their name for a long time to come. This is an awesome benefit when you work with the "big name" partners in your niche. And it's a nightmare if you don't do your due diligence and end up working with someone with a poor reputation. You can avoid the nightmare scenario by researching any potential partner with whom you're unfamiliar. Research their name, business name, website, and product names in Google. Look for any red flags such as serious complaints from customers or business associates.

The important thing is this: take the time to "get to know" anyone you may partner with to see if their temperament, philosophy, work ethic, reputation, experience/knowledge and so forth make them a good person to align yourself with.

8. Gain Familiarity First

People like to engage with those they know, like and trust, and your potential partners are no different. While you can and should build

relationships with partners, at the very least you should make yourself known and familiar to potential partners.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're looking for a partner to spot you in the gym and help with accountability with bodybuilding goals. You'll want to spend time talking to this person on social media as well as face to face first to build a friendship. Once you've done that, then you can propose a partnership.

Example #2: Building a successful presence in a specific niche is one of the best ways to make yourself known and get name recognition in the business world. But if you're still working on that in your niche, then you can use these other ideas:

- *Comment on the PP's (potential partner's) blog.*
- *Engage in discussion on the PP's social media platforms.*
- *Become an affiliate and generate sales for the PP.*
- *Find other ways to help the person (such as if they ask for help on their blog).*
- *Blog about the PP in a favorable way.*
- *Give a shout-out to the PP on social media.*
- *Open up a private dialogue via email or other methods.*

The point is, get the potential partner to start recognizing your name and associating it with something favorable.

Familiarity and friendship are two important factors for getting other people to partner with you, so start there.

9. Approach Partners Offline

If you attend offline events such as niche trade shows, expos, conferences, workshops, meetups and similar, then approach potential partners offline.

But...

Many of the people who attend live events such as these (especially industry leaders) get bombarded with partnership requests. They obviously cannot accept all of these offers (or even take a serious look at all of them).

So, how do YOU stand out so that you get taken seriously and your partnership offer is accepted?

Here's the key: If you want to stand out, then research the person to find common interests and talk about those interests rather than talking about business.

For example, maybe you visit the person's social media pages, and you see that he rescues dogs. If you do the same thing, then you have common ground on which to start a good relationship. You can be sure the person is going to remember you – the person who talked about his hobby or interest – rather than the two dozen other people who just talked to this person about what they wanted. That makes it easy for you to then pick up the conversation and build a good relationship when you get back home.

Know this...

Establishing a connection with someone is the first step toward building a relationship with him which is the first step to forming a partnership with him.

Again, we like to align ourselves with people we "know, like and trust."

10. Start a Professional or Personal Relationship Online

If you can't meet the person offline, then you can start building a relationship online instead.

- You can start by contributing thoughtful comments on their social media pages.
- You can continue the conversation privately (via email, through a social media messaging system or similar).

The best way for this to happen organically is if you post a comment, and the potential partner replies to it – preferably asking you a question. You can then say something like, “I just PM’ed you.”

If it doesn’t happen organically, then find another reason to contact the person privately.

For example, you can contact a potential bodybuilding accountability partner to congratulate them on a recent competition win. Or you can contact a potential business partner to let them know about a dead link on their site. This opens up the door to starting a conversation.

Here’s a big key: Add value to the person’s life before you ever ask them for anything.

11. Get Your Foot in the Door

Once you’ve started building a relationship or at least created some familiarity, then you can start talking partnerships. The key here is to get your foot in the door by proposing something small and easy – something that provides a lot of benefit for a very small investment of time from your partner.

Example #1: Maybe you’re dreaming about writing that novel, so you find someone who can help you sharpen your character development. You may start by asking them a simple question such as what they think of your cover graphic.

Example #2: You might approach a potential joint venture partner and say, “I’m compiling a book of tips on the topic of [topic] – can I count you in to contribute one or more tips? You’ll get a link and CTA in the report next to your contribution.”

You'll be much more likely to get a "yes" to a SMALL ask than a BIG one. There's a big difference between these two asks for someone you've just recently met...

- Would you like to go on a run together sometime?
- Would you be my training partner for the next 12 months?

The first ask might very well lead to the outcome of the second ask. But the big ask up front likely won't get a commitment simply because it's too early to ask it at all.

12. Focus on the Benefits

No matter what sort of partnership you're proposing, you want to focus on the benefits your partner will receive. And, whenever possible, stack the deck in their favor so that they get the better end of the bargain.

Example #1: If you really want to work with someone because they're a "big name," then you might propose doing all or most of the work (just for the chance to have your name associated with theirs, which gives you instant credibility). If you're proposing co-authoring a blog post, you can write the post and have them go through the draft to add in extra tips. While it may take you several hours to do your part, it will likely take just a few minutes for your partner to do their part.

Example #2: Let's suppose you're seeking out an accountability partner for weight loss. You might focus on your potential partner's goals and how YOU will help them achieve their goals. You can mention the reciprocal nature of helping each other but focus on the help they'll receive through your potential partnership.

This is a good time to make something clear:

Partnerships should always be mutually beneficial.

You are proposing the partnership because it will help you accomplish what you want to get done.

But it should also help your partner accomplish what he or she wants to get done as well.

13. Be Sure All Partnerships Go Smoothly

One of the keys to successful partnering is to make sure everything goes smoothly. If someone has a good experience with you, they're more likely to work with you again.

For example:

- Send reminders to your partner about what's needed from them (and when).

For example, if you're working with a training partner, when are the weekly running workouts scheduled? Or if you're working with an content contributor, what is the topic, word count and deadline for delivery?

- Provide extra and unexpected perks.

For example, if you're working with a weight loss partner, you might send them a low-calorie cookbook. Or if you're working with a business partner, you might give them a shout-out on your blog.

- Follow up any projects with a handwritten thank you dropped in the mail.

Next...

14. Seek Out Bigger, More Permanent Partnerships

If your small projects with partners go well, then seek out bigger partnerships and permanent or semi-permanent partnerships (versus one-off projects).

Example #1: In a business agreement, you can agree to co-promote each other in your email newsletters twice per month for

at least the next six months (and then revisit the partnership after that time to see if you'd like to continue).

Example #2: If you've got a running partner, you may agree to train with each other for at least six months (until your next big race).

The bottom line is this...

Good partnerships don't have an expiration date.

15. Nurture Relationships Between Projects

Don't go radio silent after you've completed a project or task with a partner. Instead, work on building the relationship. Keep your conversations going via email, messaging or phone and continue engaging in other ways.

Example #1: In business, you might comment on a partner's blog or share one of their promotions to your list in between projects.

Example #2: If you've found someone to help you restore a classic car during the summer months, then stay connected during the winter by talking over upcoming plans or events.

The real benefit from partnering is the relationship you have with your partner.

16. Be Unerringly Polite

Whether a person agrees to your partnership requests or not, be polite and professional. Treat those who say "no" to you exactly the same as those who say "yes." E.G., "If there's anything I can do to help you, just let me know..."

There are many reasons to do this, including...

1. The “no” you received may actually be a “not now,” and you don’t want to burn bridges when a potential future partnership may still be possible.
2. The way you treat the “no” responses says a lot about your character which will ultimately be made known to others who may base their decision to partner with you on your reaction.

17. Consider These Partnering Ideas

The sky is the limit when it comes to the type of partnerships you can create. Here are several business partnership ideas:

- Swap content on your blog or each other’s email newsletters.
- Share each other’s social media content (including YouTube videos).
- Co-create content (webinars, blog articles, emails, lead magnets, paid products, etc.).
- Run a contest together or create a giveaway bundle together.
- Co-promote each other across your respective platforms.
- Introduce each other to your other partners.
- Purchase paid online or offline ads together, or do an offline mailing together.
- Start a side business, blog, YouTube channel, podcast or other asset together.

Or let’s go back to the personal example of wanting to fulfill your dream of writing a novel. Think about how a partner might help you do that, such as:

- Brainstorming plot ideas together.
- Brainstorming character-development ideas.
- Having your partner critique excerpts.
- Having your partner do some light proofing or editing.
- Asking your partner for feedback on your title or cover.

... And similar.

***TIP:** To find out more ideas, search Google for "joint venture ideas" and "niche partnerships / niche partners" (such as "writing partners") and so forth.*

Now, let's wrap this up...

Conclusion

As mentioned at the top of the guide, partnering with others is a great way to reach your goals faster, easier and (even) better than going at it alone. That's why you'll want to put these 17 tips and ideas to work for you as soon as possible to find and land new partners.

The Learning Report

17 Ideas For Continually Improving Your Skills

Right at this moment, you may know a whole lot and have plenty of skills related to achieving your goals. Or you may be just starting out and know very little.

Whichever group you fall into, you can and should work to continually learn more and improve your skills – and yes, that's even if you consider yourself very experienced. ☺

The point is...

Successful people never stop learning.

And if you want to be successful too (regardless of what your goals are), then you ought to commit to your continued education (as it relates to your goals). With that in mind, check out these best practices...

1. Set Time Aside Every Week to Learn

Learning new skills and information to grow your business or achieve your personal objectives isn't something you should do sporadically. Instead, commit to reading and learning something new every week.

You can set aside a block of time over the weekend for reading, watching videos, listening to podcasts, taking courses and more. Or you might set aside some reading/watching time every night before bed.

The point is...

Schedule learning time into your calendar every single week for best results.

If you commit to this schedule, then over time, it will become a habit to study and learn something new every week as it applies to your personal and professional goals.

2. Commit to Learning the Basics

When it comes to achieving your goals, there is always plenty to learn.

Example #1: Maybe you want to learn more about weight loss. You might study:

- *Metabolism.*
- *Nutrition.*
- *Exercise.*
- *Rest and recovery.*
- *How sleep affects weight loss.*
- *Motivation.*

And similar topics. You can read everything from the newest scientific research articles to books and blogs on these topics.

Or let's take a professional example...

Example #2: Let's suppose you have the goal of starting, running and growing your business. Here are some important topics you'll want to learn more about:

- *Business licensing, regulations and other legalities.*
- *Accounting/bookkeeping basics, taxes, funding and other financial essentials.*
- *Marketing and advertising practices and principles.*
- *Customer service, copywriting, management, web development and other operational categories.*
- *Success strategies (like the set of reports you're reading now).*

As you can see, neither of these are exhaustive lists for these two examples.

Your job is to write down all the topics and skills you need to achieve success in your personal and professional objectives, and then commit to learning about each of those areas.

3. Use Blinkist

Blinkist is a microlearning app that provides you with the key ideas from over 5000 nonfiction books, many of which are on topics related to success, business, marketing and entrepreneurship. You can either read or listen to these key ideas. Learn more at <https://www.blinkist.com>.

TIP: If you have a personal or professional team, you can use Blinkist to share these key ideas from books with them. Helping your team develop new skills and learn about important topics will help your entire business.

NOTE: While many of these ideas are for professional life, a lot of the success oriented ideas curated there would apply to personal life objectives as well.

Next...

4. Stay on Top Of Relevant News and Trends

In addition to learning new skills, another thing you'll want to do on a regular basis is stay abreast of news and trends specific to your area of interest.

You can...

- Follow relevant blogs,
- Subscribe to offline publications,
- Follow industry leaders on social media, and
- Listen to relevant podcasts from industry leaders who regularly share this type of news.

Let me give you a couple of examples...

Example #1: If you're planning to take a once-in-a-lifetime family vacation to Disney World and want to make the best of it, you can follow the blogs, podcasts, feeds, and video channels of popular Disney influencers such as All Ears or Disney Food Blog. This will help you plan for what's working NOW (as things change frequently at Disney).

Example #2: If you're wanting to generate new traffic (visitors) to your website using Facebook advertising, then you'd follow industry leaders such as Ryan Deiss at DigitalMarketer.com who stays up to date on all of the current trends and guidelines of using the platform for best results.

The important thing is this:

*It's not important what HAS worked;
it's important what IS working.*

That's why you'll want to follow people who are actively involved in figuring out the difference between those two realities.

5. Consult With Experts

When learning a new skill, reach out to experts to see where to start, what to read, what to watch, and so on. You can reach out to colleagues with these questions, or you can even hire an expert to pick his brain.

Example #1: If you want to learn more about copywriting, you can find a copywriter who offers consulting and then hire them for an hour to get more information about how to improve your own skills.

Example #2: If you want to learn how to tune a carburetor in your classic Mustang, reach out to a mechanic with carb experience to see if they can help you learn. (And again, you can pay them for their time.)

This is known as M.A.W.L.

- Model. Someone shows someone else how to do something.
- Assist. Someone helps someone else do something.
- Watch. Someone watches someone else do something.
- Leave. Someone leaves someone else so he can do something alone.

Usually this is taught as a way for you to TRAIN someone else in a particular task, but it can just as easily be a way for you to LEARN from someone else.

6. Prepare to “Unlearn”

In order to learn new information and skills, you need to be open-minded.

In particular, you need to be prepared to “unlearn” some of what you know. You may find that the “way you’ve always done it” isn’t necessarily the best way to do something.

Don’t fall back into an old way of doing something just because it’s familiar, and you know how to do it. A new way may be slower and less

effective at first. But once you master it, then you'll see the benefits of learning a new way.

Take a golfer like Tiger Woods as an example. When he learned a new golf swing, his golf game actually got worse. But once he mastered the new swing, he improved his game significantly.

7. Prioritize Learning

As you saw in entry #2, there are many areas and skills you need to study in order to reach your goals. But you can't learn all of them at once, so you need to prioritize.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What do you need to know right now to get started with your goals?
- Can that particular skill be outsourced to someone else?
- In what areas do you need to improve your skills?
- What would you like to learn more about?

The idea here is to...

Prioritize learning that is essential but can't necessarily be outsourced or delegated.

In particular, prioritize the essentials that you need to know right now to move forward.

Example #1: In business, it's essential for you to get your website up, but you can outsource that. On the other hand, it's also essential for you to develop a marketing strategy. While you could outsource this planning, it's best if you do it yourself (and then you can outsource all or part of the implementation).

Example #2: When it comes to the personal goal of writing a novel, you can outsource the task or creating the cover graphic. However, you'll want to develop the plot yourself.

Do you see the difference? Do what only you can do, and do the foundational things first.

8. Set Aside Practice Time

As mentioned earlier, you need to set time aside every week to read, watch and learn. But that's not all – you also need to set aside time to practice what you've learned.

Example #1: You can read about copywriting all day long, but you need to practice it to get good at it.

Example #2: If you want to become a great piano player, you'll need to practice daily.

The only way to get better at something is to do it until you get better at it. Repetition gets results.

9. Check YouTube

If you need to learn a hard skill, then check YouTube for tutorials.

Example #1: If you want to learn how to install a piece of software and customize it, YouTube likely has plenty of instruction available.

Example #2: If you want to learn more about how to become a better travel vlogger, you'll find plenty of videos on the topic.

TIP: When searching for videos, look for ones that have the most views and most likes / favorable comments. These will usually yield the best results.

10. Talk to Your Associates

You've got a list of topics you'd like to learn more about, based on what you need now to achieve your goals. But what are you missing?

That's where talking to other people comes in. Find out what they're learning and doing.

You may uncover new topics you should be learning about too, or you may just discover new books, podcasts, videos, courses and more to help you with the topics you're already studying.

For example, you may be a hiker who wants to find new routes to try. When asking other hikers how to find and evaluate trails (to see if you have the ability to hike them), you will likely be pointed to AllTrails.com site and app which is a gold mine of information you might not have known about.

11. Check Udemy

Another place to look when you want to learn about a topic or learn a new skill is Udemy. For best results, stick with established teachers who have courses with great reviews.

TIP: *You can also find free courses on the site. Start here:*
<https://www.udemy.com/courses/free/>

12. Look Into Local Classes

Another place to look for classes is in your local area. Some communities offer "continuing education" courses through the local high school, community college, library or other setting for a relatively small charge.

Common skills you can learn include fiction writing, crafting, cooking, speed reading, faster typing, programming, web development, and many more. If you live in a large city, you may be able to find an even broader field of topics.

13. Seek Out College Classes

Still another way to continue your education is to seek out college classes.

TIP: *You can audit a class at a local college, meaning you're mainly observing/learning and not being graded.*

You'll also want to check out free online college courses. Some big universities (including Ivy league universities) put some of their classes online for free during the pandemic, and some of them remain free and online.

14. Break Down New Skills

When you're looking to learn something new, in many cases, it's not just one skill or topic you need to learn about. Some complex skills are actually composed of multiple subskills. It's a good idea to determine what these subskills are and then learn about each one separately.

Example #1: Let's go back to the goal of wanting to win a bodybuilding competition. You'll need to learn how to cook, how to balance your meals, how to train effective and safely, how to "peak" at the right time before a competition and more.

Example #2: Let me give you a more detailed example. Let's suppose you want to start outsourcing in your business. Let's break down this topic into its various subskills and subtopics:

- *Understanding what is involved in starting and running your business so that you understand what can be outsourced.*
- *Identifying your own strengths and weaknesses which will help you determine what to outsource.*
- *Finding potential freelancers (you'll want to look in multiple places in order to increase the chances of finding the best freelancer for your needs).*
- *Researching potential freelancers (doing your due diligence).*
- *Creating useful, detailed briefs that help your freelancer see what it is that you really want.*
- *Managing and motivating your freelancers, individually and as a team.*
- *Managing a project with all of its details and freelancers.*
- *Developing a good relationship with your freelancers.*

Bottom line: If you're looking at learning a complex skill or topic, break it down into its components first.

15. Get a Coach or Mentor

What do some of the world's most successful people have in common?
They have a coach or a mentor.

- Look at the world's greatest athletes, dancers, musicians, and more – they've all had coaches.
- Same goes for the world's most successful entrepreneurs and business people.

They've found themselves coaches or mentors.

Why? Simple: because we all have blind spots that can hinder our progress, and we all “don’t know what we don’t know.”

A good coach or mentor will show you your blind spots, introduce new areas of learning and skill to you, and even cheer you along and motivate you to take action and stretch outside your comfort zone.

NOTE: You don't have to aim to be the "world's greatest" in order to benefit from a coach or mentor. All of us need those who can teach and train us to be "our best" in any particular endeavor.

16. Become an Apprentice

If you’re looking to learn a big skill, then you may seek out someone who’s already mastered the skill and see if you can become his apprentice.

Example #1: Let's suppose you've developed some copywriting skills and want to ultimately open an agency. You can seek out an established freelance copywriter and see if they'll accept an apprenticeship. This is where you craft the base copy for the freelancer's clients, and the expert then goes through your copy and improves it. The client gets high-quality copy, the expert gets paid while doing less work, and you get paid too while learning how to craft better copy. Win-win-win!

Example #2: Let's suppose you have a goal to learn how to bake French bread, pastries and other desserts. You might apprentice with a local French pastry chef to learn the tricks of the trade.

Finally...

17. Teach Your New Skill to Others

You’ve been studying a new skill. You’ve been practicing it. Now, here’s the next step: teach it to others.

Researchers have repeatedly found that you can retain information better and improve your learning and skills by teaching them to others.

Obviously, you don't want to position yourself as an expert if you're not. But you can certainly teach what you know to your team members, colleagues, friends or family with the understanding that you're still learning too.

Bottom line...

You will become better at it yourself when you teach it to others.

Now, let's finish up...

Conclusion

One big key to your success is to commit to continually learning new skills and other information that are valuable to achieving your goals. Because there is so much to learn, it can be overwhelming. And you also don't want to fall into the trap of reading/studying a whole lot of information, but never really applying it.

That's why it's a good idea to learn something and then apply it or practice it. Once you're getting some results from this new skill, then you can start learning the next skill or topic on your list.

The Discipline Report

17 Keys To Sticking With It (No Matter What)

Elsewhere in these reports, we've talked about motivation and staying focused. When you're feeling really motivated, you can get a lot done.

But sometimes motivation isn't enough.

Wanting to do something isn't always going to lead to doing something, especially when things don't seem to be going well.

To get over those rough spots, you need discipline. And that's why inside this report, you're going to learn how to develop habits and rhythms so that you can stay on track – no matter what.

SIDE BAR: Let's define "discipline" before we move on. Discipline is learning and living out intentional standards with consistency in order to achieve desired outcomes.

Take a look...

1. Practice Discipline As It Relates To Your Goals

Discipline isn't something most people are born with. It doesn't come naturally to most folks. Instead, it's a learned behavior – and that means you need to practice it just like any other skill you're trying to develop.

What makes discipline different from some other skills is that it can be mentally taxing and draining. It's not like you jump out of bed in the morning because you're excited to work on developing consistency.

In some cases, it may feel like you're forcing yourself to work on something – even when you really don't want to.

- Every runner has struggled with this when it comes to doing workouts when tired, when weather is less than ideal, or when he would rather be doing something else.
- Every person establishing a “new year’s resolution” feels this when she finds the new wearing off and the hard work of sticking with it settles in for the first time.
- Every well-intentioned church-goer finds reading through the Bible in a year can be a bit of a task (no matter how much he loves it) when he gets to some of the books like Leviticus or Numbers.

However, with time, discipline gets easier when it comes to your area of focus. Indeed, discipline turns work into habits. You have to practice.

For example, maybe you’re writing a memoir, and you commit to writing 1000 words per day. In the beginning, it’s hard to get up every morning and write. But you keep going, and eventually it becomes easier. Your discipline turned a “chore” (writing) into a habit that you get used to doing each and every morning... no matter what.

2. Know Your Strengths and Weaknesses

In order to become more disciplined, you need to identify your weaknesses so that you can fix them or otherwise overcome them. Assessing your strengths will also help as you can use them to hone your discipline and stay focused.

For example, let’s suppose you want to write a book, and let’s suppose you are NOT a morning person. You’re grumpy. You’re unfocused. It’s like your brain doesn’t even start firing until noon.

And maybe you’ve read that morning is a great time to write. People have told you to get up before everyone else in the house and use that uninterrupted time to be productive.

Good advice for morning birds – but no good for you. You understand yourself, and you know that your discipline will suffer if you try to force yourself to write at your absolute worst time of the

day. So, you work late at night instead – and you find it's much easier for you to stay disciplined.

Here's the point: Find out what works best for you to establish the essential routines and rhythms for your goals.

It's never a good idea to add barriers by working against what naturally works for you.

On a related note...

3. Remove Temptations

When it comes to knowing yourself, you also want to identify temptations and negative triggers so that you can avoid them.

For example, maybe you're getting really good at being disciplined and taking specific steps every day towards your goals. But you also know yourself: if a friend calls during the time you've set aside to work on your goals, you'll end up blowing off your work and leaving the house to hang out.

The solution? Remove that temptation. Don't even give yourself a chance to make a mistake. Tell your friends when you are unavailable and then shut off your phone too just for good measure.

So...

Identify the things that could potentially disrupt your disciplined activities and eliminate them as much as possible.

NOTE: Some of these distractions you will anticipate in advance and can take appropriate steps upfront. Others will be unexpected and will likely interrupt you the first time they occur. That's okay ... just make adjustments so these do not become ongoing interruptions.

4. Break Big Tasks Into Small Steps

It's hard to be disciplined when you're feeling overwhelmed by the tasks in front of you. That's why you'll want to break up big tasks into small, manageable steps.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're creating a course with ten lessons. The idea of creating a course may seem like a big task – and you may have trouble summoning the discipline and motivation you need to even get started. But when you think of each lesson as an "article," then it becomes much easier. Your task for the day is to write one lesson – not "work on a course."

Example #2: Let's suppose you want to learn how to cook desserts. You can start by learning one skill or step at a time, such as learning how to make chocolate ganache. This will be much more doable than trying to take on too many new desserts at the same time.

Learn this...

Discipline is easier when the consistent steps you need to take are smaller.

You will be much more likely to establish healthy habits when they are things you feel can be sustained over the long term.

5. Be Clear About What You Need to Do

Part of being disciplined means that you follow a plan rather than just going wherever the day takes you.

Example #1: Maybe your goal is to train for a marathon. You know you need to eat well in order to fuel your body, so you'll want to create meal plans for yourself. That way, you know what you're going to eat every day... rather than grabbing fast food or other junk on the fly because you didn't do a good job of planning. You may also need to avoid stocking the refrigerator with tempting items that could derail your efforts (like ice cream).

Example #2: Maybe you're setting up a new business, so you have lots to do – set up the website, set up the mailing list, create the product, start advertising, and so on. You may be tempted to work on whatever you like doing the most, but that may mean important tasks or those that need to be done first get left undone. For instance, perhaps you like working on your product so you spend all your time focusing on that. But what you really need to do first is set up the website, lead magnet, and mailing list. That way, you can start building a list of prospects WHILE you're working on your product. Then when the product is done, you'll have a waiting audience who'll be eager to buy what you're selling.

So, the point is...

Create a plan that's the shortest distance between where you are now and where you want to be

Then commit to sticking to your plan... no matter how you feel on any given day.

6. Make A Statement Of Commitment

The idea here is to make a sort of “new year’s resolution” in which you clearly state the action steps you will take to reach your desired outcome.

Specifically...

“I will [take some specific action] at [some specific times], no matter what.”

The reason for doing this is to cement your commitment. Sometimes people get an idea about what they want to do, but they never really take any action towards their goal.

They engage in wishful thinking rather than meaningful action. Think through what you really want to do – if you like the idea after giving it some thought, then commit to it as described above.

There are two more reasons to create these kinds of statements...

1. They can be motivating when discipline becomes hard.

Just before the start of the Leadville 100, the race director leads runners in shouting, “*I commit, I will not quit!*” Throughout the race when it gets hard to keep going, runners will recite those words as self-motivation to continue.

2. They can help you remember why you are taking the steps.

Your statement of commitment can include the outcome you are working towards. For example, “*I will read the Bible for 15 minutes each morning at 6:15 AM because I want to do something I've never done ... read through it all in one year.*”

Next...

7. Start Small

As mentioned, discipline takes practice. It can be hard to be disciplined when you’re working on something really big as you don’t see much of a reward until months or years down the line.

That’s why you’ll want to practice discipline by starting with mini-goals, which take as little as a few days to a few weeks to achieve.

This helps you turn the act of discipline into a good habit, one that’s reinforced shortly when you meet your goal.

Which brings us to the next point...

8. Build Good Habits

Part of being disciplined is to break the bad habits that hold you back, while developing good habits that move you forward. See the related *The Habits Report* for more information on how to do this.

9. Know That Every Day Matters

For most people, there is no such thing as “overnight success.”

Rather, success is the result of you taking consistent steps towards your goals every single day. That's discipline.

You can help achieve this discipline by realizing that EVERY single day matters.

Every day you have a chance to take some specific action...

- Take a step towards your goals,
- Work on learning a new skill, or even
- Taking a pre-planned rest day so that you're ready to jump back in.

Just be sure you've planned each day ahead of time rather than going where the wind blows.

The point is: Discipline doesn't come in big chunks; it comes in small wins. Every day counts.

10. Stop Making Excuses

We humans are really good at making excuses and even rationalizing why we don't need to do something. Part of developing discipline is to recognize when you're making excuses and forge ahead. This is the "do it, no matter what" part of your commitment.

For example, maybe you get up to work on your goal, but you feel a little tired. And so maybe you start telling yourself that you'll rest today and just put everything off until tomorrow.

When you start making excuses and giving yourself "outs," it can become a habit. Instead, find a way to work around whatever is bothering you. If your excuse is you're a little tired, then drink some coffee, take a walk, take a shower, or even take a quick nap if that's what it takes – whatever you need to do to feel more awake so that you can get back to work.

Listen...

- Life is always going to be tiring.
- Life is always going to be busy.
- Life is always going to be uncertain.
- Life is always going to be distracting.
- Life is always going to be hard.

You can't let these things prevent you from doing the meaningful things you'd like to accomplish with your life. That's not to say that there are never occasions that legitimately do, and should, shift your focus. But the normal stuff of everyday life should not.

Bottom line: Make progress not excuses.

11. Avoid the Path of Least Resistance

Most people naturally want to take the path of least resistance. If you want to achieve great success, then you likely need to overcome this tendency.

Example #1: Let's suppose you're building an infoproduct business. You may find it easy to create reports to sell, but what your customers really want are videos. If you take the path of least resistance, you keep making reports and enjoy mediocre success. If you want to achieve greater things, you start creating videos (even though that's more difficult for you).

Example #2: If you're training for a marathon, the path of least resistance is to do easy runs on level ground. If you stretch a little and start doing some trail runs, especially with elevation gains, then running a marathon on level ground will be much easier when the time comes.

The easy way is not always the best way, and the best way is not always the easy way. Don't be afraid of doing the harder things for the better results.

12. Set a Schedule

Part of discipline means setting a work schedule and then sticking to it.

For example, treat the time you spend working on your goal as if you were going to a job. Set an alarm, get up at the same time every day, get dressed, and otherwise develop a routine that gets you in the right mindset to work on your goals.

Please pay special attention to this. It is one of THE most important things to do when establishing disciplined habits.

Let me say it again...

Schedule a time and set an alarm to remind you.

People do this for appointments of all shapes and sizes (doctor, hair stylist, etc.), all kinds of activities (son's soccer game, upcoming musical), and a multitude of other deadlines (tax filing day, DVR episodes of Yellowstone).

But they often DO NOT follow this practice for their most important goals.

That's a disconnect.

Listen...

*If the goal is important enough to pursue,
it's important enough to put on your schedule.*

13. Get Clear About Your Mission

Sometimes you can get so bogged down in the details that you forget what you're doing and why. That's why it's a good idea to start each day by reminding yourself of the following three things:

- Your goal.
- Why you want to achieve that particular goal.
- And what you're going to do today in support of that goal.

The consistent steps you take are leading somewhere, and you need to think about what lies ahead at the end of your journey.

Next...

14. Develop Focus

Discipline and focus are like muscles that you need to develop. When you first start "training," you may only have the discipline to focus on something for five minutes before something else bright and shiny catches your eye.

And that's okay.

Set a timer for five minutes and work through until the alarm sounds. Tomorrow, try for 10 minutes. Keep working your way up until you're able to focus intensely, practice, make progress, or train for at least 20-30 minutes at a time.

TIP: Read The Focus Report for more ideas.

15. Don't Let Outside Forces Derail You

Stick to your mission even if things are changing around you. Don't let outside forces become an excuse to stop working your goals.

Example #1: Maybe you're just starting a business, and suddenly a recession hits the economy. The sales that were just starting to trickle in nearly stop. What do you do now? Some people would say "it's not meant to be" and give up. But people who are bound for success employ their discipline and keep going – because they know the recession will end, and when it does their business will be in a strong position to take advantage of all the renewed consumer spending.

Example #2: Let's suppose you're training for a marathon, and you end up getting injured. Some people might give up at that point. If you want to achieve your goals, then you'll stay focused on what you CAN do such as eating right, getting enough sleep, and engaging in exercise that's still doable (such as swimming laps, for example). And, if it becomes necessary, find a different marathon to run that's a month or two later in the year.

The point is: You cannot control everything around you, but you do not have to let what is around you control you. Discipline means avoiding derailment.

16. Analyze Yourself

- When you have a really good and productive day, ask yourself why.
- When you have an unproductive day, ask yourself why.

If you get in the habit of analyzing what gets you going and what derails you, then you can make better decisions about what to do each day to achieve your goals.

For example: Maybe your feet keep getting blisters when you're on a run, and so you often end up running less miles than you needed. Ask yourself why. It could be that you need new or different shoes, better socks or to apply Body Glide to your feet before lacing up.

The important thing is to maximize what works and minimize (or eliminate) what doesn't.

17. Develop Discipline in Other Areas

As mentioned, discipline is like a muscle that can be trained. One benefit of this fact is that if you can develop and improve discipline in your personal life, then it will spill over to your professional life as well (and vice versa).

For example, if you start an exercise program, you're going to need some discipline to stick with it. For instance, if you're walking

outside for exercise, there are going to be some cold or even rainy days where you may be tempted to make excuses, but discipline will keep you on track.

Once you see what you can achieve with discipline in your exercise program, you'll be excited to see what you can achieve with discipline in your professional life. It changes your mindset – you realize that you CAN overcome obstacles and achieve your goals.

The point is, practice discipline in every corner of your life, and it will surely benefit other areas as well.

Know this...

When you establish a disciplined routine in any area of your life, you become a more disciplined person overall.

This can ripple into more discipline in more areas of your life.

Now, let's wrap this up...

Conclusion

Sometimes motivation fades, even temporarily. When that happens, you need something to keep you going, and discipline is usually the answer. That's why you'll want to start applying the 17 tips you just learned about for developing discipline because discipline is going to be a key to your success.

P.S. Congratulations! You were disciplined enough to read through this entire report. ☺

The Habits Report

17 Tips For Breaking Old Habits And Starting Better Ones

As mentioned throughout these reports, developing good habits while ridding yourself of bad habits is going to be an important part of your success.

Indeed, once a new behavior you're working on becomes a habit, it will start to feel like you're progressing on autopilot – because in a way, you are.

You don't need to think too much, and you'll no longer have the discomfort of doing something new. You'll just keep taking steps towards your goals, and it will, at times, feel almost effortless.

For example, when people need or want to start waking up earlier than they have been, they set an alarm. At first it is the alarm that awakens them. But, after a while, they adjust to the change and usually wake up on their own at the newly established time.

If you like the sound of that, then you're going to want to pay close attention to these 17 tips for breaking bad habits and developing better ones. Read on...

1. Make Big Changes in Small Increments

Starting a new habit can be difficult, especially if the habit is a big change from what you're currently doing. That's why you'll want to make big changes in small increments.

Example #1: Let's suppose you've decided to get in the habit of waking up earlier to work on your goals. Let's suppose typically you get up at 7:00am, but you'd like to start getting up at 5:00am. If you set your alarm tomorrow for 5:00am, you're going to be really tired all day – and that will make you lose your motivation to get up

early the next day. Here's what you do instead: start getting up a little earlier each day. For example, tomorrow get up at 6:45. The next day, get up at 6:30. Keep working back slowly until you hit your goal wakeup time.

Example #2: Let's suppose you want to start praying each morning and have never had this as a part of your daily routine. If you try to put large expectations upon yourself (such as praying for an hour or praying through a lengthy list), then it is quite possible you will get overwhelmed and end up dreading it instead of delighting in it. Here's what you do instead: pray for a shorter amount of time or fewer entries on your list, increasing this bit by bit over weeks and months to come.

On a related note...

2. Make One Change at a Time

If you sit down and really start thinking about the changes you need to make to start enjoying more success in reaching your goals, you may realize you have several bad habits to break and/or new habits to make.

You may feel motivated today to jump in with both feet and change everything at once – but it's not a good idea.

Making too many changes all at once will likely overwhelm you and make you long for the familiar, which will have you backsliding on your new habits faster than you can say, "What just happened?"

Instead, start by picking one habit. Change it in increments as described above and give it time to truly become a habit.

Once you are comfortable that it's truly a habit, then pick another habit you'd like to change and do it in the same manner with singular focus.

3. Identify Bad Habits

Of course, before you start all sorts of new habits, it's a good idea to first identify what bad habits are holding you back.

For example, maybe you (along with millions of other people) are in the habit of almost mindlessly checking and scrolling through your phone every ten minutes. These few minutes here and there all throughout the day can add up to two, three, four hours or more spent mindlessly scrolling and wasting time. As such, you may decide the first step towards boosting your productivity is to break the habit of checking your phone. You may turn it off when you're working on your goals, or if your habit is too strong, you may decide to physically place your phone in a different room than the one you're in.

We all have bad habits, many of which are detrimental to the goals we set for ourselves. For example...

- Time management (such as procrastinating or mis-prioritizing)
- Nutrition (such as overeating or eating poorly)
- Health (such as smoking or lack of exercise)
- Distraction (such as binge-watching tv or not sleeping enough)
- Negativity (such as listening to discouraging people or believing lies about ourselves)
- Communication (such as not talking to others or failing to honor commitments)

These and many other sub-habits within these categories (and other categories) can be our undoing when it comes to reaching our goals. So...

1. Identify bad habits that are blocking your path to success.
2. Figure out a way to break the bad habit.
3. Replace the old with something new that is helpful.

Next...

4. Get in the Habit of Asking Questions

Kids tend to ask a lot of questions. As adults, we tend to suppress that tendency, perhaps because we want to appear “smart.”

Forget about what others think and instead get in the habit of asking questions.

- Find out why your friends, coaches, family members and business associates do things the way they do.
- Find out what bad habits they’ve broken and how they’ve replaced them with better habits.
- Find out where they’re going against the common wisdom.
- Find out what tools they’re using, what strategies they like, and what books they’re reading.

Bottom line:

Get curious again.

Ask questions and then be sure to actually listen to the answers.

For example, if you’re planning a trip to Disneyland, then ask others who have been to Disneyland for their travel itinerary, favorite attractions, things to avoid, and so forth.

Moving on...

5. Listen for the Negative Self Talk

Whether you realize it or not, there’s a constant stream of “talk” going on inside your head. When you learn to listen to this self-talk, you may be a little shocked by what you hear.

For example, maybe you have the thought, “I should write a book of poetry” or “maybe I should start a business” or “maybe I should learn to knit.” And then immediately after that, you think, “Maybe

not – that sounds like a lot of work, and I wouldn’t be very good at it anyway.” Boom, that’s negative self-talk.

Your goal is to start listening to what you’re telling yourself. Ask yourself, would you say that same thing to a good friend? If not, then why would you say it to yourself?

Learn this...

Nobody talks to you more than you do.

What you need to be saying to yourself is, “*If this is something I really want, then I should give it my best effort.*”

On a related note...

6. Change That Thinking

If you’re in the habit of thinking negative things whenever you start thinking about your goals, then you’ll want to get in the habit of replacing that negative talk with something more positive.

Let’s go back to the example above where you’re thinking that writing a book, knitting, or running a marathon sounds like a lot of work. As soon as you realize where your thinking is heading, you can change it.

You might acknowledge that it’s a lot of work, but you can think about how you’ve done much harder things in your life. And you might even start making a plan for taking small steps every day. The person who wants to write a poetry book for fun might craft one poem per day, while the person who wants to start a business blogging might craft one blog article per day, while the person who wants to run a marathon might work out each day (or take an appropriate day of rest).

As you go through this process repeatedly...

You’ll get in the habit of thinking about how you can do something, rather than thinking about why you can’t.

Next...

7. Start With a Positive Attitude

Perhaps you have a habit that you know isn't useful – and may even be outright harmful – so you know you need to get rid of it and replace it with a better habit. And maybe your first thought is, *"This is gonna suck."*

Sure, getting rid of bad habits isn't always fun – but you're just going to make it harder on yourself if you go into the process with a poor attitude.

Instead, focus on the positive aspects of why you're doing what you're doing.

Example #1: If you're getting in the habit of getting up earlier, you might focus on how it will be great to have a couple hours of uninterrupted focus time before everyone else in the house gets up.

Example #2: If you're going to eliminate that late night snack, you might focus on how much better you're going to feel (and look) when you shed those extra pounds.

The key to staying positive rather than negative is this...

Remember the reason.

You will stay motivated and disciplined while breaking a bad habit (and forming a good one) if you can keep your eyes on the prize that awaits as a result of your effort.

8. Understand That "Slipping Up" is Normal

Slipping up, backslicing, making a mistake – these are relatively common occurrences when you're in the process of creating new habits and/or breaking bad ones.

The key is to not let one slip-up turn into a big problem.

Instead, acknowledge you messed up and then get right back on track.

Let's go back to the example of writing a book. Let's suppose you decide you're going to get in the habit of writing 1000 words every day. You do great for the first 10 days or so, and then one day, you just don't feel like writing... so you don't.

Ideally, you'd sit down and write at least a few words – even just 100 words – to help reinforce the habit. But if you don't do that, don't let it derail you. Starting tomorrow, get right back to writing 1000 words each and every day.

Or let's suppose you're trying to lose weight. You slip up and go way over your calorie count for the day. A defeatist attitude would be to say, "I already messed up, I might as well eat whatever else I want today." A better attitude would be to get right back on track with the very next snack or meal.

Do you see this is a much better way to handle setbacks? When you make a mistake, remember this...

Don't pile on ... move on.

9. Get Support

Making big changes can be difficult – but you don't need to do it alone. You can ask for help from friends, family or colleagues. Whenever possible, be specific about the type of support you're seeking. (Otherwise, you may have people offering unsolicited advice when you're just looking for emotional support, or vice versa.)

Example #1: Let's, once again, go back to the writing example. In order to gain their support, you can tell your friends and family what you're doing. You can also join writers' groups, and you may even recruit others to join you in forming this new habit to achieve your goal.

Example #2: Or let's suppose you want to start a business. You might seek out an online or offline group of entrepreneurs with whom you meet on a regular basis to discuss your goals and the steps you need to take to achieve them.

Remember, even though nobody else can make changes for you, they can support you as you make those changes.

10. Set Yourself Up for Success

One of the keys to developing good habits is to make it easy for you to engage in the new habit while making it more difficult for you to slip back into bad habits.

For example, let's revisit the idea of realizing you spend too much time mindlessly scrolling through your phone, which can hamper both your personal and professional goal achievement. You can arrange for success by removing or blocking the apps and websites that you normally scroll through (such as social media). End result – you've set yourself up for success.

Learn this...

Guardrails keep you out of the gutter.

Whenever possible, put some things in place to keep you moving straight ahead with your goals so that you don't take a detour along the way.

11. Track Your Progress

When you start making a lot of changes, you may forget just how far you've come. That's why it's a good idea to track your progress. You may even keep a journal where you document what changes you're making, what bad habits you're breaking, what good habits you're implementing, and so on.

You can track how you're doing with your habits as well as any favorable results you're seeing as a result of these new habits. When your motivation starts to fade, just look at your journal to remind you of how far you've come, and how small changes can produce big results.

12. Prepare to Make Sacrifices

As mentioned earlier, you want to go into the process of forming new habits with a positive attitude. However, you also want to mentally prepare yourself to make sacrifices.

A good way to do this is to really think it through – any sacrifice you make is going to be well worth the reward in the end.

For example...

- Foregoing that second scoop of ice cream will be worth it when you fit into that new dress.
- Skipping Netflix tonight will be worth it when your new novel is available on Amazon.
- Running in the cold weather will be worth it when you cross that finish line and receive your finisher's medal.

Bottom line:

Choose what you want most over what you want now.

13. Choose a Sustainable Pace

If you're just getting started with a new project and new habits, then you may be raring to get going – and that might result in you choosing an unsustainable pace.

Sure, you can keep up the pace for a few days, a few weeks or even a few months – but then you're going to run out of the fuel you need to keep going. That's when many people crash and burn and give up on their dreams.

That's why it's so important for you to choose a sustainable pace. Just as you wouldn't start running a marathon as if you were doing a 100 yard dash, you also don't want to sprint out of the gate with a bunch of new habits and new goals. Pace yourself to conserve energy and keep your motivation up and running.

Bottom line:

Don't try to do too much too soon or too often.

If you can't keep doing it for the long term, change things up a bit so that you are doing things that you can endure in.

14. Understand New Habits Take Time

Here's a habit worth developing: patience. You didn't create your bad habits overnight, so you can't expect them to disappear overnight either. Likewise, a good habit takes time to really take hold.

NOTE: Studies vary for how long it takes for something to become a habit. Some say 21 days, while others say 66 days. Still others show the range to be from 18-254 days. The truth is this: there isn't a specific time frame because there are many variables that apply to each specific person trying to establish a specific habit in a specific season of life with specific circumstances and specific support people. The one thing everyone agrees on is this: habits take time to form, so keep working on them until they do.

Here's the gold standard...

If it feels like you're still forcing yourself to engage in the new habit, then it's not a habit yet.

Once it becomes part of your normal routine and feels almost effortless in that regard, then you'll know your new habit is starting to solidify. But until then, be patient and keep working on it.

15. Get in the Habit of Getting Another Perspective

When you're working towards your goals, it's easy to get tunnel vision and not see the big picture or notice your blind spots. That's why you'll want to get in the habit of getting another perspective from a trusted friend or two. You might even join a mastermind group for this purpose.

By doing so, you'll be able to identify...

- Improvements.
- Alternatives.
- Resources.
- Corrections.
- Solutions.

And other ways to bring about the changes you desire that you may not have recognized or been aware of.

16. Get in the Habit of Helping Others

When you focus almost solely on yourself, your motivation is going to start fading. What you're doing starts to lose meaning. That's why you want to get in the habit of helping others.

This not only applies to your business goals – which should be centered around helping your audience – but also helping out whenever you can, wherever you can, when it comes to your personal goals too.

Develop the habit of helping at least one person per day, and you'll start feeling a lot better about everything.

TIP: Joining social media groups or forums devoted to your goals will give you an excellent opportunity to help others. For example, you can join business groups, weight-loss groups, knitting groups and more. In these groups, you can offer encouragement and advice to others (and receive the same from them in return).

Next...

17. Stay Inspired

The idea here is to get in the habit of looking for positive inspiration.

You might...

- Read motivational quotes or books,
- Listen to music,
- Share your progress with others,
- Watch Ted talks, or
- Engage in your religious practices.

Do whatever is natural to you and keeps you inspired, motivated and moving forward.

Conclusion

Your success in reaching the goals you have set for yourself is going to depend on you developing a series of good habits at the same time as you're breaking bad habits that no longer serve you. Start small and go at a sustainable pace, as these small changes will create big results.

The Failure Report

17 Tips For Turning Setbacks Into Comebacks

If you're going to succeed in a big way in pursuing meaningful goals, then there's a good chance that you're going to have plenty of "failure" along your path to success.

Basketball great Michael Jordan famously said, "I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

Jordan understands that failure is part of success. And if you want to enjoy success in your personal and professional life, then you also need to reframe the way you see failure. That's exactly what you'll learn how to do inside this report.

Let's jump in...

1. Reframe Failure

The first thing you need to do is reframe the way you think about failure. If you think about it as a success-killing mistake, you're going to have trouble moving on from it. Instead, you need to do two things:

1. Realize failure is a part of success. Very few people who are wildly successful in life didn't first encounter failure along the way.
2. Reframe failure. Instead of thinking of failure as a negative thing, start thinking of it in a positive way.

If you start seeing failure as a potential lesson rather than a project-ending mistake, you'll be able to accomplish both of the items above. Remember...

Every mistake actually eliminates something in the way of your success.

Why? Because finding something that doesn't work gets you closer to finding what does. (As long as you don't keep doing the same thing over and over expecting a different result!)

2. Analyze the Issue

In order to learn from your mistakes and turn failures into lessons, you need to analyze what happened. Ask yourself:

- Why didn't my plan work?
- What could I have done differently?
- Does this plan need a "tweak" to work, or does it need to be scrapped so I can try something entirely new?

Let me offer a couple of examples to illustrate...

Example #1: You roll out a new infoproduct, and hardly anyone is interested in it, much less buys it from you. You'll need to analyze the problem carefully to determine if this product isn't selling because:

- *There's no demand for the product. (Failing to do market research.)*
- *The sales letter is poor. (Failing to optimize sales materials.)*
- *The product title and/or graphics aren't compelling. (Failing to test.)*
- *The price is wrong. (Failing to test.)*
- *The traffic is untargeted. (Failing to get interested prospects.)*

And so on. You may need to do some tracking and tweaking to uncover the problem.

Example #2: Let's suppose you created a weight-loss plan, but it's not working for you. You'll need to analyze why it's not working. For example:

- *Are your calorie requirements wrong?*
- *Did you balance your macronutrients?*
- *Is your diet too restrictive so that you're having trouble sticking to it?*
- *Did you plan the right kind of exercise?*
- *Are you using measures to avoid adaptation?*

Do you see? You need to figure out why something didn't work / isn't working in order to figure out what will work.

Which brings us to the next point...

3. Take Responsibility

One of the keys to turning failure into success is to take responsibility for what happened. In other words, how are you personally responsible for this failure?

Many people readily take credit for successes, but they readily blame outside forces for their failures.

If you always blame outside forces, then you're giving up power and control of your own future. If you take responsibility, then you're also saying that you can do something differently next time.

Example #1: Go back to the example of the infoproduct. Someone who blames outside forces may say "I'm ahead of my time – the

audience just can't see what an amazing product this is." Someone who takes responsibility might say, "I didn't do my market research, so I created a product no one wants. I need to do my research to correct this problem."

Example #2: Or take the example of a weight-loss plan not working. You may say, "My metabolism is too slow – it's a medical problem – and there's nothing I can do about it." If you take responsibility, then you might say, "I designed a diet plan for someone with a faster metabolism, and that's my fault. I need to tweak my plan."

Believe it or not, this is quite empowering. It turns a setback into a stepping stone!

On a related note...

4. Avoid Making Excuses

Some people start to take responsibility for a mistake, but then they also make an excuse. This essentially negates the idea of accepting responsibility.

Fortunately, this problem is really easy to spot. If you're accepting responsibility while using the word "but" in the process, then you're probably making an excuse.

Example #1: "I didn't create a diet plan that's a good fit for my metabolism, BUT there really isn't a good plan." See? You start to take responsibility, and then use the word "but" to create an excuse.

Example #2: "My product didn't sell well because my sales copy wasn't very good, BUT I didn't have the money to hire a copywriter."

When you use the word "but," you're making an excuse and pushing control to an outside force.

Don't excuse. Don't rationalize. Don't justify.

The point is, you put your success back in your control by owning the mistake and removing the excuses. If the problem is something you created, it's a problem you can avoid next time.

5. Avoid Letting Blame Overcome You

While you can and should accept an appropriate level of responsibility for a mistake, on the other hand, you don't want to become bogged down with blame.

You don't want to dwell on your mistakes or dwell in the negative feelings associated with those mistakes (especially to the point that you're unable to move forward). Accept responsibility, determine what you will do differently next time, and then move on.

Bottom line...

Don't let responsibility for your mistake turn into fear of making another mistake.

HINT: You're definitely going to make another mistake.

You're never going to achieve perfection, but you can achieve excellence. And accepting responsibility for, learning from, and moving on from mistakes is a big step in the right direction.

6. Talk to the People Who Are Affected

If you have friends, family, business partners, team members or similar who were affected by your mistake, talk to them about what happened.

Acknowledge your responsibility for the failure, let them know what issues caused the failure, and let them know how you plan to move forward.

7. Don't Fall Into Analysis Paralysis

After you make a mistake, especially a big one, it's easy to have issues with analysis paralysis. You may feel like you're busy learning from your mistakes by analyzing every possible angle over and over – but the truth

is, you may just be afraid of moving forward and making another mistake.

To overcome this, recognize when this sort of fear holds you back. See analysis paralysis for what it is. And then reframe your mistakes again, and think about “failing forward” –which is where each mistake you make puts you one step closer to success.

On a related note...

8. Create a Plan to Move Forward

You’ve analyzed your mistakes. Now you need to create a plan to move forward. This plan should fix whatever issue created the original mistake.

Example #1: If you didn’t do your market research, and now you realize the product isn’t selling well because no one wants it, then your next plan is to start by doing your research... and create a new, in-demand product based on that research.

Example #2: Maybe you’re trying to lose weight, and it wasn’t working. You realize your calorie count was too high, and your macronutrient balance was out of whack. You can now make a new plan and start again (immediately).

This is such an important thing to do. Adjustments are a part of every successful endeavor, so be sure to make them as you pursue your goals.

9. Look for Other Potential Pitfalls

As you’re formulating your new plan, don’t just look at the mistake you made last time – you’ll also want to try to predict other potential pitfalls. That way, you may be able to save yourself from making another mistake.

Example #1: Let’s start with the weight-loss example. Maybe you fix your nutrition plan so that it has the right macronutrient levels and calories. However, maybe you realize that you’re eating the same thing every day – that will not only cause boredom, it can also cause your body to adapt. So, you tweak your plan to introduce

new foods to keep your taste buds happy (this helps prevent cheating) and keep your body from adapting.

Example #2: Let's go back once again to the example of the infoproduct that's not selling. Let's suppose you've determined that the issue is that there is no demand for the product. You do your research and create another product. Good to go, right? You think about what else could go wrong, and you realize your sales copy might be weak. So, you avoid that potential pitfall by hiring a professional copywriter or at least getting a critique.

The point is the same in both of these examples...

You've solved one problem, and you've helped ward off another problem.

With every goal, there are potential issues. Brainstorm and research what they may be and, beginning with the most likely, set yourself up to avoid them or handle them.

On a related note...

10. Learn From Others' Mistakes

There are other people who've done exactly what you're trying to do, and they made plenty of mistakes along their path to success. The good news is that many of these folks documented their mistakes so that others can learn from them.

TIP: You can uncover these mistakes using a Google search (e.g. "common list-building mistakes" or "common dieting mistakes").

You can also search for specific people who are working on the same goals to see what types of mistakes they've made or what types of mistakes they've seen other people make.

Example #1: If you want to learn about gardening mistakes, then you might head to a local garden club meeting or join a gardening Facebook group to learn how to avoid common mistakes.

Example #2: I've got decades of experience creating effective content – infoproducts, blog posts, emails, lead magnets and more. I not only share my best strategies in my writings, I share my mistakes too and how to avoid them. You can learn about some of these mistakes at: <https://www.Nick-James.com>

Here's the truth...

Common mistakes accompany every meaningful goal

Rather than simply discovering these by trial and error (who wants to do that?!), you can simply avoid them by knowing what they are and taking steps in advance to prevent yourself from making them.

11. Step Outside Your Comfort Zone

Most people have a comfort zone based on familiarity. You can find success within that comfort zone. However, in order to enjoy a big measure of success, most people need to step outside that comfort zone.

They need to shed that security blanket of familiarity and do things they've never done before.

The point is, one big mistake you can make is to never venture outside your comfort zone. You can overcome this mistake by acknowledging that your taste for success is bigger than any fear of the unfamiliar.

Try something new, and you may just find yourself seeing a desirable result that is new.

12. Take Action Right Away

A few moments ago, I mentioned that you should create a plan that paves a new path to success, but you don't want to get bogged down in analysis paralysis. Indeed, once your plan is ready, then take action right away.

This is like the old adage that if you fall off the horse, you need to get right back on it. The longer you stay off the horse, the harder it is to get back on because your irrational fears can take over your mind. Same with

making mistakes. The longer you sit on the sidelines and don't take action, the harder it will be. Make your plan and get right back on track as quickly as you can.

13. Bring In Another Perspective

As we've mentioned repeatedly here, you need to own the mistake. You need to determine what went wrong and accept responsibility.

But what happens if you can't exactly figure out what went wrong?

Then it's time to bring in one or more experts to help you. An expert may be able to point to a specific mistake (one of your blind spots) or, at the very least, they can tell you the troubleshooting steps you need to take to uncover your mistake.

If you have experienced friends, you may be able to get this help for free. Otherwise, don't be afraid to hire a consultant or coach to help you out.

Do. Not. Remain. Stuck.

There is someone who can help you figure out what is holding you back, and then you can resume progress again.

14. Understand You Get More Than One Shot

One reason that people get so bogged down in their own mistakes is because they believe they only get one shot. But that's completely untrue. Just as we discussed elsewhere in a previous report, Thomas Edison didn't get his lightbulb to work the first time he tried – it literally took him thousands of tries to get it right.

The point is, disregard the thinking that you're somehow only allotted X number of mistakes.

NOTE: Obviously, you want to minimize your mistakes and avoid the costliest ones. But even major failures don't mean that you will never succeed. You're probably the biggest scorekeeper in your

life, so cut yourself some slack. Remember, the score that matters is the final one.

15. Acknowledge Your Feelings

Yes, it can hurt to fail. You can be disappointed, sad, frustrated, afraid, worried and angry, among other emotions. Go ahead and feel these feelings.

Acknowledge them and process them so that you don't bottle them up. And then move forward with a clearer head and a better attitude.

TIP: Revisit other reports in this set (ex. The Mindset And Motivation Report) to help you through emotional periods of struggle.

16. Read About Other People's Success

Need a spark of inspiration and motivation after stumbling and failing? Then read biographies and autobiographies detailing other people's successes. These biographies often list the person's mistakes and setbacks – you can find inspiration by knowing it's possible to fail in a BIG way and still go on to enjoy massive success.

17. Choose Healthy Coping Skills

If you're the type to dwell on your mistakes, and you feel like you can't just "snap out of it," then be sure you're choosing healthy coping skills.

- Don't let your disappointment turn into unhealthy habits such as over-eating or self-medication.
- Do turn to exercise to reduce stress and calm your mind, and do talk with a friend or even a professional if you're having any troubles moving past your experience with failure.

The question isn't, "*Will you make a mistake?*"

The question is, "*How will you handle the mistakes you make?*"

There is a healthy way and an unhealthy way to do this, and only one of these will make things better instead of worse. Are you tracking with that?

Conclusion

As you just discovered, failure is not your “game over” sign. Rather, it’s a lesson for you of what NOT to do next time. If you can reframe failure to take away the negative aspects (including your disappointment) and focus on the positive, you’re much more likely to find your path to success.

Conclusion

It's Time To Get Your Achievements Unlocked...

... And go from being someone that just 'starts' projects to someone that successfully get's them 'finished' as well.

And with that, we also conclude this set of reports. Now you have some great ideas about...

- How to become more productive,
- How to set good goals,
- How to plan your path to success,
- How to execute that plan, and
- How to overcome the obstacles that typically trip you up on the path to success.

If you take what you just learned and implement these 204 tips, tricks and ideas, you're going to put yourself one giant step closer to your goals.

Recommended Resources

Six Figures A Year In Information Publishing Our best-selling book that shows you the four keys to success for setting up a simple \$100k+ a year business from the comfort of your own home. Get your copy for free at: www.SixFiguresAYear.com

Serious About Six Figures.com 12 Month training program which further explains how to produce orders, build your list, generate traffic, grow your income, create content and work less hours while still banking \$100k+ a year:

www.SeriousAboutSixFigures.com

One Letter From Retirement Some positive news for unprecedented times... You could be just one letter away from the end to all your financial worries... And here's exactly how to write it:

www.OneLetterFromRetirement.com

Lazy Way To Email Riches Can you click send? Then you can generate an instant income, anytime you want... even in a shoestring budget, and even WITHOUT a website. How? By dispatching simple emails from home... No office... No staff... And do it at anytime that suits you!

www.LazyWayToEmailRiches.com

Product Licensing Formula This is anything but average... It's a proven way of making money from home which no one else is talking about... Yet it can generate \$20,000 - \$40,000 per month and takes around 1 hour to do (just 2-3 days a week):

www.ProductLicensingFormula.com

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