



6 Ways to Stay on Track with Your Goals

Easier said than done, the expression goes. But when it comes to not doing work toward your goals, falling back on this expression can have some serious consequences. Here are a few tips for staying on track.

1: Write it down. When it comes to keeping appointments and meeting deadlines, most people have to write them down—or else they somehow disappear until after they’ve passed. The same is true with goals. Without visually concretizing your aim in writing, your goal is likely to dissipate into thin air.

2. Set a schedule. If your goal doesn’t have a due date, then you can always keep putting it off if things get in the way, or even if you just feel lazy. Put the goal on your calendar. If it’s something big, don’t try to cram too many other things into the days before your deadline.

3. Break it down. Your goal will be easier to accomplish if you break it down into digestible steps. When architects plan a building, they don’t just put it up in one day: it’s built in parts, from the foundation up. The same is true with your goal. Break it down into weekly, monthly, or even yearly chunks, depending on how far out the deadline is.

4. Get Accountable. Studies have shown that when you have to report to someone else, you’re more likely to stay on track. Pick an accountability buddy—it could be someone working towards the same goal, like a gym partner, or perhaps just a friend or family member. Set up times when you’ll check in and notify them of your progress.

5. Be Positive. Remember the story of The Little Engine That Could—he was able to climb the hill because he kept on saying “I think I can, I think I can.” You should have the same reaction towards your goals: verbal and mental positivity. Use affirmations, positive thinking, and support from those around you to reach for the clouds.

6. Treat Yourself. When you hit a milestone, do something nice for yourself, whether it’s going out to lunch or buying a new article of clothing. Plan a special event or prepare to claim a prize when you reach your goal. Teachers are great at leveraging this tactic: when their class hits a behavioral or educational goal they throw a pizza party. Why not use the same strategy and celebrate with a nice treat when you reach the end of the road?