

Goal Achievement

Goal achievement, especially when it comes to health and wellbeing, can be a mystery. Most of us have no trouble with the first step (i.e., Setting the Goal). Setting a goal is the easy part; it's those other steps that can be a puzzle. But you can turn achieving your goals into a science with the right strategies. Here are a few of ideas:

DO create a plan. DON'T wait for "someday" to roll around.

Setting the goal is just the first step. Know where you're going, what resources you'll need, who can help and, most importantly, what Plan B is when life throws a spanner into Plan A.

DO start small. DON'T focus on too many things at once.

Try focusing on one goal at a time. Use a small goal that you know you can do each day for the next two weeks, like getting up without the snooze function or drinking eight glasses of water. Build that first habit to boost your confidence and pick up speed.

DO write it down. DON'T forget to give yourself a deadline.

Deadlines turn wishes into goals. The act of writing down your goal is powerful enough to keep you committed and focused. Better yet, find a visual that represents your goal or how your life will be different. Seeing it makes it seem more possible.

DO be specific. DON'T deal in absolutes.

Avoid the words 'some' and 'more' as in "I will get SOME exercise" or "I will eat MORE veggies". It leaves too much wiggle-out room. Deal in measurable things that you have control over. And don't say 'never' or 'always'. All or nothing is a common attitude that leads people back to bad habits.

DO leave room for failure. DON'T expect perfection.

Persistence is the key. Accept the fact that you might not make it on the first try. Only 40% of people who successfully followed New Year's resolutions did it on the first try; 20% of resolution achievers took six or more tries before they got it right – but they *did* get it right.

DO track your progress. DON'T fool yourself into failure.

Memory can be pretty selective. It conveniently forgets that extra muffin while remembering activity that never happened. The only way to know for sure is to track goals regularly with a checklist or journal.

DO reward your success. DON'T beat yourself up over failure.

This is the step that trips up many people. Negative thoughts are usually in our heads, telling us every day what we're doing wrong. This is not the approach to take to succeed with your goals. Focus on what you're doing right instead! If you take a step back, learn from it and take two steps forward.

DO find a support system. DON'T try to do it alone.

A goal-buddy can make all the difference this time. People who can help are all around you – at work, friends, family. Just add one person to your support group, and you double your motivation, double your energy, double your commitment – and double your FUN.

DO make a commitment. DON'T ever forget that *you can do it*.