

New Year's Resolutions

The start of a new year gives you the opportunity to 'turn over a new leaf' and focus on some health and personal goals. Life coach Mark shields provides some tips to help you turn your resolutions into realities.

Recent research shows that while 73% of us were happy to try something different in the New Year, only 52% of participants in a resolution study were confident of success with their goals and only 12% actually achieved them.

Men achieve their goals 22% more often when they engage in goal setting, (a system where small measurable goals are set, such as a pound a week instead of saying "lose weight". Whilst women, it seems, increase their chance of succeeding by 10% when they make their goals public and enlist support from their friends.

A New Year's resolution requires commitment to a project or to the reforming of a habit and is often a lifestyle change that is generally interpreted as advantageous. The name comes from the fact that these commitments normally go into effect on New Year's Day, encompassing a new start.

Goal setting

Goals are vital in us achieving what we want in life. They add priority and focus to our lives and can keep us on track to achieve our objectives. Goals start with a vision and finish with a plan. But if you don't break them down they can sometimes appear too daunting.

Goals start with a vision, picture what you want, explore the opportunities, and then be specific. Remember to write them down. Remember a thought or a good idea is just a thought or good idea until you write it down. A valuable rule when setting goals is to ensure that they are **CSMART**.

Commitment: How important is it that you achieve this goal?

Specific: Have a clearly defined end point.

Measurable: ensure that the results can be measured and progress monitored. When you see progress this will create momentum and motivation and it will improve your confidence and self belief, which are paramount for success.

Achievable: Make sure your goal is achievable. Aiming too high will impact on your confidence if you fail to succeed.

Relevant and realistic: Make sure your goal is within your physical, emotional, financial and time-related abilities.

Timescales: Work out how you will monitor your results and set a realistic end date.

Focus and direction are vital when implementing change in your life and you need to be organised with set and clear timescales and objectives from the outset.

The next step

Once you have decided on your new year's resolutions the next step is to write each one down ensuring the written goal has all the components of CSMART.

In order to bring your goal alive, you now need to establish how you are going to achieve it. What you now need is a set of actions that enable you to achieve your goal. Time to create an action plan! Writing these actions down forms an integral part of the whole plan. -

Following through

Many people fall short because they don't build in a review process. Sometimes you may need to take extra action or different action to ensure your goal is achieved. So reviewing your progress along the way and making any necessary changes is essential if you want to reach your end point. Following the **GROW** review model can be of great help.

G= Goal

R= Reality or what you have achieved

O= Options or what you can do differently

W= Way forward

Now think what extra you could achieve by applying the full CSMART and GROW models into your 2012 resolutions. Your results will astound you and remember - if you always do what you've always done you'll always get what you've always got.



Mark is a Life and Business Coach, media expert, author and motivational speaker, appearing regularly in the media on TV and

Radio. He is also a successful NLP trainer with his own training school Life Practice UK. www.lifepractice.co.uk

