

HOW TO SET GOALS AND ACTUALLY STICK TO THEM

Rachel Tellez

STAFF WRITER

The semester is coming to an end, and you've just realized you haven't met a single "big goal" from that list you made back in August. You may be thinking, "Where did I go wrong?" or "How did I let this happen, again?" Don't fret, because we've all been there.

In fact, according to the University of Scranton, 92 percent of people who set New Year's resolution goals never actually achieve them. What's more is that a recent survey of 521 students, conducted by Stage of Life, showed that 75.4 percent of students set goals for themselves; however, of that group, 81 percent have failed to achieve them.

Let's break this cycle, and be like those eight percenters who consistently and exceptionally achieve their goals. Here are five tips to set realistic goals and actually achieve them.

SET THE RIGHT GOALS

When you sit down to think about what goals you want to accomplish, set realistic goals that are within reach. Don't set a goal of getting a 4.0 GPA by the end of the semester when you currently have a 3.1. Instead, aim for a 3.3-3.5 GPA. This would require hard work and dedication—but it's possible.

WRITE THEM DOWN

Write your goals down and see them all the way through. If you're not much of a pen and paper person, then download one of the many goal-tracking mobile apps—Strides and Goals On Track are my favorites. Dr. Gail Matthews, psychology professor at Dominican University, found that students are 42 percent more likely to achieve their goals by simply writing them down on a regular basis.

BREAK THEM DOWN

As you're writing down your goals, think about how you'll make them easier for you to accomplish. You want to be as specific as possible. If you want to get at least a B in Dr. Mckee's philosophy or ethics class, you can achieve this by setting a weekly goal of completing the required readings before each class. You complete the readings, you ace the quizzes. You ace the quizzes, you're halfway ready for the exams.

CHECK-IN

Keeping track of your progress is key to accomplishing your goals. Check each goal off your to-do list as you complete it. As you visualize your progress, you're minimizing the stress that a long list of to-do's packs on.

REWARD YOURSELF

Ah, the best part. Whether you've completed your goal(s) or you're halfway there, don't

forget to reward yourself. Planning incentives at different milestones of your goal process helps you stay focused and determined. We live in Miami—take a break and have a night out with your friends, unwind at the beach or be a tourist for the day. Whatever the reward may be, take advantage... you've earned it. Just don't stop there, keep going.

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