



Get Started Right

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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January is a time when many individuals set goals and decide to make changes that will improve their lives. Unfortunately, by February their plans are often abandoned long before success is reached. The result can be disappointment mixed with self-disgust.

It doesn't have to be that way though. By following a few simple steps, your resolutions will be realized:

1. Don't say it unless you mean it - Most people would say that they want to be wealthy, thin, lovable and healthy but not all of them are willing to do what it takes! If you aren't prepared to make the necessary changes in your life there isn't any point in kidding yourself or others so don't make any bold statements unless you are serious!
2. Know your "why" - What are you hoping for? Do you want to save enough to take a trip? Are you wanting to lose weight in order to enjoy better health? You need to know what will motivate you to keep moving forward so that you don't become discouraged and quit before you reach your goal.
3. Be specific and realistic - The more clarity that you have, the better possibility of reaching success. For example, instead of saying, "I want to lose weight", or "I will lose one hundred pounds this year" say "I want to lose twenty pounds by June 30." This is specific and realistic.
4. Do your research - Talk to individuals who have become successful or developed expertise in the area in which you want good results. Even just one good idea can save you time and effort.
5. Set out a plan - Break your desired outcome into small goals and specific steps that you can do over time. Putting your plan in writing will be much more powerful than just randomly thinking about it.
6. Make a commitment - You will need to emotionally and mentally decide that you are going to follow your plan even when you are tempted to quit. Set aside a specific time each day when you will focus on doing what is needed to reach your goal. Then, block the time on your calendar and fiercely protect from interruption.
7. Start - Theory without action is just theory. You need to begin now.
8. Evaluate your progress - I find that when I review my progress on a daily basis I achieve more. If I accomplished what I had planned that day, I feel good about it. If I didn't, I am not overwhelmed by defeat because tomorrow is just one sleep away and I can start again.
9. Make adjustments - Sometimes changes are needed to allow for the unexpected or to improve progress. Be thoughtful about this, though, and make sure that the adjustments are reasonable and necessary.
10. Celebrate - You don't have to wait until you have reached your final goal and you definitely don't need to spend a lot of money in order to congratulate yourself for doing well.

As we face the brand new year ahead of us, we need to remember that what we will experience over the next twelve months will be the result of the choices that we make. Hope you make some good ones!