



ACTION PLAN
←
for ACHIEVING
→
YOUR GOAL



American Management Association

AMA's ACTION PLAN for ACHIEVING YOUR GOAL

AMERICAN MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

New York • Atlanta • Brussels • Chicago • Mexico City • San Francisco
Shanghai • Tokyo • Toronto • Washington, D.C.

This publication is designed to provide accurate and authoritative information in regard to the subject matter covered. It is sold with the understanding that the publisher is not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, or other professional service. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the services of a competent professional person should be sought.

© 2014 American Management Association
All rights reserved.

This publication may not be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the American Management Association, 1601 Broadway, New York, NY 10019.

The scanning, uploading, or distribution of this book via the Internet or any other means without the express permission of the publisher is illegal and punishable by law. Please purchase only authorized electronic editions of this work and do not participate in or encourage piracy of copyrighted materials, electronically or otherwise. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

About AMA

American Management Association (www.amanet.org) is a world leader in talent development, advancing the skills of individuals to drive business success. Our mission is to support the goals of individuals and organizations through a complete range of products and services, including classroom and virtual seminars, webcasts, webinars, podcasts, conferences, corporate and government solutions, business books, and research. AMA's approach to improving performance combines experiential learning—learning through doing—with opportunities for ongoing professional growth at every step of one's career journey.

AMA's Action Plan for Achieving Your Goal

American Management Association is a world-class training and development organization. Our mission is to support the goals of individuals and organizations through a complete range of products including classroom and virtual seminars, webinars, and corporate solutions.

Follow these 11 steps to plot out your professional goals and how to achieve them. If you need more support, check out our seminars on [productivity, goal setting, and time management](#).

ACTION PLAN

Directions: Write your answers below.

1. **Write the goal down.** Make sure your goal is SMART—specific, measurable, agreed-upon, realistic, and time-constrained. For example, I want to increase my sales revenue 10% this year.

My goal is:

2. **Determine what success looks like on a daily basis.** Make a list here of the actions and behaviors do you need to be doing now, on a daily basis, to achieve this goal. Be specific. For example, if your goal is to increase sales, your daily goal might be to make 5 new sales calls a day and your ongoing behavior could be to start each day with a “power hour” when you make these calls.

Action 1 –

Ongoing Behavior:

Action 2 –

Ongoing Behavior:

Action 3 –

Ongoing Behavior:

3. **Make a list of all the reasons you are not doing it now.** For example, if the action is to make 5 cold calls, it could be because you get involved in responding to emails first thing in the morning.

Action	Why I am not doing it now

4. **Conduct a reality check.** Is your goal realistic, or do you have unreasonable expectations? Your goal should be a challenge, but also feasible. Break your larger goal into smaller, daily goals. Are they achievable given your current schedule? Are there simple things you can do to make time for your new goals?
5. **Plan for obstacles.** Did you try to achieve this goal in the past? Why did it fail? What obstacles did you encounter? For example, does your work situation give you enough uninterrupted time to make 5 calls a day? Which coworkers distract you from these goals? Do you find email distracting? Does your boss interrupt you often? Are you often late to work? List your personal obstacles here.

6. **Make an action plan.** Now that you have a list of probable reasons your goal derailed in the past you can make a plan to overcome them if they come up again. This step is critical, so if you're consistently having trouble with this consider [taking a class in person](#) where you can brainstorm your particular situation and get expert advice on how to tackle what is holding you back. Your plan should include:
- Ways to measure success. Some goals are obvious, but others are not. "To make more money" is easily measured. Whether you are conducting the behaviors on a regular basis that will lead to making more money is less obvious. Take the list of behaviors you worked out earlier and determine how you will measure it on a daily basis.
 - A plan B. Remember those obstacles you listed above—work out a plan to overcome them this time around.
 - Rewards. Don't just think of an overall reward for achieving your end goal; think about how you will reward yourself on a daily basis for the behaviors that lead to it. If your goal is to increase your sales, did you make 5 cold calls every day this week? How will you reward yourself for this behavior? How can you celebrate that is in line with your other goals? For example, you could take another client or person in your network out to lunch, buy a new suit, or invest in something that will polish your professional image. Try to choose reasonable rewards for shorter term goals that will support the goal itself.

Behavior	How I will measure success	Obstacle to achieving	How I will overcome the obstacle	Daily reward for achieving this behavior

7. ***Establish your motivation.*** Make a list of all the reasons you want to achieve this goal and be specific. Perhaps you want to increase your sales because you want to have a higher commission. Money alone is not enough of a motivation to last the whole year. Think about what you want that money for and choose things that have real meaning for you. Do you want to go on vacation to a place you've always dreamed of visiting? Do your kids need money for school? How does earning more money satisfy your higher goals?

8. ***Envision success.*** Imagine what would success look like. Imagine what it would feel like if you were achieving your full potential. Get a solid image that personifies success for you and file it away. Whenever you feel you need a motivational boost, think about this image. Envisioning success is far more powerful than a mere list of reasons you want to succeed. Describe how success looks and feels here.

9. ***Break the goal down into small steps.*** An overall goal can appear overwhelming. Breaking it down into smaller, easier steps lowers the anxiety around starting a goal. For example, if your goal is to increase sales, one step would be to approach new prospects. Breaking that down further your steps would include identifying new prospects, getting their contact information, developing a script for a cold call, and scheduling time to do it. If everything is ready to go when your scheduled time arrives you are much more likely to get it done. What steps do you need to take to accomplish your goal?

- 10. *Develop a buddy system.*** This is similar to writing the goal down. If you commit to achieving a goal with a friend you are far more likely to achieve it. Who has similar goals that you can partner with? How often will you connect with them and compare notes? List possibilities here.

Name of potential buddy:

How often will you check in?

How will you know if you are on track?

Name of alternate buddy:

How often will you check in?

How will you know if you are on track?

- 11. *Remove the clutter.*** Clutter is a word we usually associate with things, but it also describes the daily noise that gets in the way of true productivity. [Learn tactics from FranklinCovey](#) that help you remove the “clutter” in your life and manage your work more effectively. Make a list here of the “noise” that gets in the way of you achieving your goals. What clutter will you remove from your life this week?

Now you have an action plan to achieve your goals. Take this one step further and learn habits that will transform your productivity. Dr. Stephen R. Covey has done extensive research into the daily habits that can change average performers into people who consistently achieve their full potential. Take the time to [learn the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People with their signature course](#). Find out why participants describe this course as life-changing.

Follow the 11 steps above and you will be on your way to achieving your goal. [Discover seminars on productivity, goal setting, and time management at AMA](#).

Our Training Will Transform Your Performance

[AMA](#) is an education provider offering training in critical business skills. You can't learn people skills from an app. You need to experience it, practice it, and get personal attention to the details that make a difference. AMA Seminars give you:

- Extensive practice in a supportive environment getting feedback from expert instructors.
- Tools and techniques designed to improve performance.
- Certified educational units that qualify for [PDU's](#), [CPE's](#), [and more](#).
- Opportunity to network with peers across industries

We don't lecture, we accelerate performance. [Discover AMA](#).