

New Year's resolutions that really stick

The month of January inspires the desire for change in many of us. A new year brings with it the promise of new opportunities, and the motivation to pursue them.

Defining goals and thinking big is great – but often when we make New Year's resolutions we tend to get swept up in the excitement, and let our ambitions become unrealistic. We focus on the big stuff, like earning a lot more money, or working for a particular organisation, but goals like these take time to achieve.

Big goals, alone, don't work

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There's a saying that the best way to eat an elephant is one bite at a time, and it applies perfectly to goal setting and achievement. You can absolutely set yourself a lofty objective, but you'll only achieve it if you break it down into smaller, bite-sized goals that you can manage over time.

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Here are the three reasons why you need to break that big goal into smaller goals works:

1. **Game plan.** You'll know that your goal is achievable, with the right approach and planning. Write down three key things you'll need to achieve to reach your big goal, then pen which actions you'll need to take to achieve those three smaller goals.

What you'll have written down is a loose game plan that will lead you to

success. You can also adjust it along the way, to ensure you stay on track towards your big goal, if a smaller one doesn't pan out.

2. **Maintain motivation.** With bite-sized goals, you'll be able to celebrate your success along the way. Every small goal you achieve will take you one step closer to having achieved the big goal, which will help you maintain motivation and momentum.

Take the time to celebrate each success, and then move swiftly onto the next task.

3. **Avoid analysis paralysis.** You'll put far less pressure on yourself to do everything all at once. By focusing on one smaller goal at a time, but still keeping your end goal in mind, you'll find it easier and less stressful to tackle each task.

When the pressure is off, you're less likely to go into analysis paralysis (when you overthink the goal and end up getting nothing achieved), and more likely to think rationally, make good career decisions, and take action.

What's your big goal for this year, and how are you going to break it down so that you can achieve it?