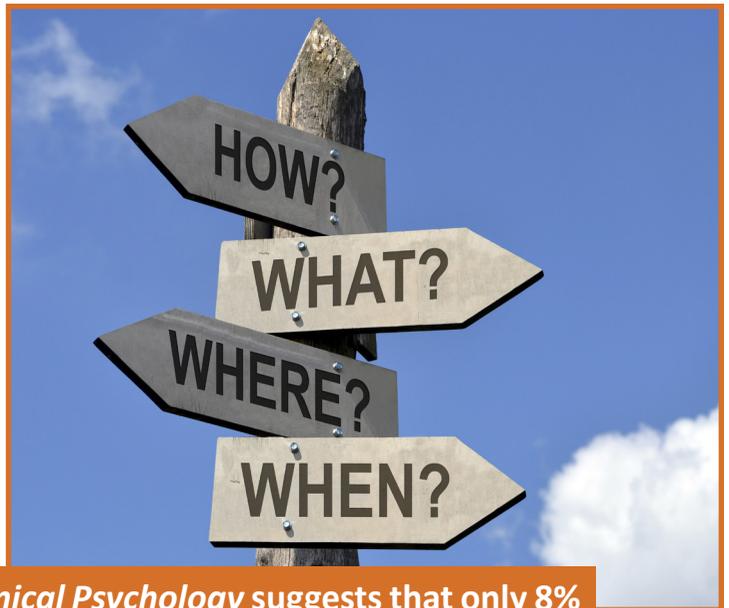


# Forget about making resolutions



A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* suggests that only 8% of people are successful in achieving their resolutions. So if you don't want to go down the failed resolutions path, rather set goals, and achieve them.

Setting goals should be a productive exercise — an opportunity to better yourself. But coming up with a long list of goals can be counterproductive as you might lose focus. Rather have a few goals and stick to them.

## Make 'SMART' goals

When coming up with goals, it might be a good idea to have them meet these five criteria as created by Professor George T. Doran:

- **Specific:** Set clear goals. Identify what you want to accomplish by giving detail. Saying you want to exercise isn't very specific, but saying "exercise by cycling everyday" is.
- **Measurable:** The only way you'll know whether you're achieving your goal is to quantify it. Don't just say you want to run further this week than last week. Say you want to run 5km more this week.
- **Attainable:** Goals should be attainable. If you're starting out swimming, don't aim to do 200 laps in the first week. If you set a goal that's impossible to achieve you might

demotivate yourself.

- **Relevant:** Your goal should relate to your life plan because then you'll make the effort to achieve it. If you want to be healthier, cycling, running, or swimming will help you achieve that.
- **Time bound:** Your goal should have a deadline. Explicitly state that you want to be able to squat 100kg by a certain day and month as this will increase the urgency.

## Write your goals down

Write down your goals and stick them up somewhere visible to remind yourself of what you intent to do.

## Come up with an action plan

Plan the steps and cross them off as you achieve them to indicate progress. Regularly reviewing your goal helps maintain relevance and value. Your ultimate destination will remain the same, but daily, weekly, or monthly revisions might prompt a slight change of route.