

five ways



to reignite your motivational spark

By ANGELA HEISE

As we find ourselves in March (yikes!), ANGELA HEISE shares some tips on how to get back on track if your motivation is waning.

If you're like 80 per cent of the population, there is a good chance you've already given up on the intentions you enthusiastically set yourself at the beginning of the year. All but a mere 20 per cent of people usually abandon their resolve by February.

It is difficult to keep yourself motivated for any goal, and so easy to fall back into bad habits or counterproductive behaviours once the New Year cheer has given way to the daily grind. So what can you do to avoid the numerous obstacles standing in the way of your goals?

Obstacle 1: Your goal is too vague.

If you cannot describe it, you cannot achieve it. Being healthy, fit and successful is not a goal.

Solution: Whether it's creating a new daily habit, setting a physical goal such as fitness, or a financial one such as retirement, make sure it is measurable. Be very specific in what you want to achieve. Put numbers in: 'I work out in the gym three times a week' or 'I add an extra \$xxx per month to my superannuation to have \$xxx when I retire at (age).'

Obstacle 2: Your goal is too far away.

If you haven't put a time frame around your goal, or it's far, far in the future, staying motivated can be hard.

Solution: Break up the big goal into smaller ones. Set milestones and dates. If you want to go on a trip around the world, decide when you want to go, calculate how much money you will need and start a savings account. Every time you reach a certain amount, celebrate.

Obstacle 3: Your goal doesn't fire you up.

If you think it's a reasonable goal but you just can't get excited about it, chances are you'll abandon it.

Solution: Check what needs are attached to your outcome. Let's say you are working towards a promotion. In reality, you are happy where you are and are only doing it because people tell you it's the right career move. The need for approval is not nearly as motivating as self-actualisation.

Obstacle 4: You're exhausted just thinking about your goal.

If you are working simultaneously on several goals, you are spreading yourself too thin. Managing attention is one of the biggest human challenges, so working on more than one goal dilutes intention and therefore motivation.

Solution: Focus on one or two closely-related goals at a time. This is especially important when it comes to changing habits and establishing new behaviours.

Obstacle 5: You feel discouraged about reaching your goal.

If you are working on a big goal, your brain is not your best friend. It loves habit, so it may put up a lot of resistance by dragging you back into your comfort zone.

Solution: Get a role model and an accountability buddy. Replace the inner voices that tell you it's too hard with those that tell you that you can. A role model shows you it's possible, and a buddy helps you stay on track by keeping to milestones and deadlines. **LSJ**



Angela Heise is an emotional productivity and leadership coach with more than 20 years' experience. She supports people to be the best they can be at work and in life. Find out more at angelaheise.com