

6 Ways to Hold Yourself Accountable and Crush Your Goals This Year

I've been on a networking mission as of late. In an effort to create a free online community for entrepreneurs and business owners, I have been speaking to as many people as possible through in-person meetups, social media and other various online communication.

Entrepreneurs have to motivate and support their team, while holding them accountable, in order to be successful. But, what about when it comes to holding ourselves accountable? This is one topic that came up often – and one that I discussed in detail with a handful of entrepreneurs. Those discussions led to this list of six ways to hold yourself accountable, which can help you crush your goals.

1. Write everything down

This is one thing that I take to the extreme simply because I am a very visual person. Writing down everything, from to-do lists to short and long-term goals, just works for me. I like to see them constantly, which allows me to focus on each one.

I write my daily to-do lists on multiple sticky notes and place them all over my monitor, and as I complete them, I take them off and toss them in the trash. Those bright colored sticky notes stare me in the face, and my goal is to rid my monitor of them as quickly as possible every day.

Derek Jansen, who founded Grad Coach, writes down both short-term and long-term goals in a journal. He says, "I like to create a plan to reach every goal, which are all part of my big picture plan. Having them in writing and constantly

looking at them results in me obsessing over them and working hard to make sure each one is accomplished.”

Like Jansen, my goals are written down – they are on a large whiteboard that hangs above my standing desk. It’s literally impossible for me not to constantly look at them – they stare me in the face while I work.

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2. Identify your personal mission statement

I have a very simple mission statement: Live life to the fullest, work relentlessly to create amazing companies and brands and give selflessly.

“Your personal mission statement doesn’t have to be a long-winded statement. It simply needs to define you as a person and define what it is that you are working toward each and every day,” says Xie Zhuopeng, CEO of IoT Chain.

Zhuopeng’s definition of what a mission statement needs to be is spot-on. Using mine as an example, it explains who I am and what I get out of bed every morning for. Recite it in your head every morning or print it out and hang it in your office. When your mission statement fuels your fire, you know that you have found the right passions and path.

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3. Reward your accomplishments and milestones

I used to never take vacations – I would work nonstop with very little breaks. It was so unhealthy and had a negative

impact on my health and overall happiness. Once I came to terms with the fact that it was not only fine to take vacations, but actually beneficial, I started to use accomplishments and milestones as indications of when I would take off and unplug to recharge.

Frank Grimes, President of The Associates Home Loan of Florida feels that this approach almost forces you to get away for a much-needed recharge. "It's very easy to make an excuse and say that you will take a longer vacation next year, but it's important to step away occasionally to regroup and just relax. Rewarding myself with a vacation to my favorite destination every year helps me reach personal goals, while also feeling like the time off is well-deserved," he says.

I too have a favorite destination, and that's Hawaii. For me, it's the perfect setting – the beach, the vibe and the activities – and I always return fully recharged and full of new ideas.

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4. Create micro-goals

Micro-goals are responsible for several successful brand launches that I have been a part of. When you identify several smaller goals, and commit to hitting each one, it keeps you accountable in terms of the overall success of the end goal.

When we launched an ecommerce brand in a week, it was a result of a well thought out plan that had several micro-goals we needed to knock out of the park – manufacturer, branding, website, logistics, financial goals, marketing plan and the launch. Without the smaller goals identified we would never have gone to launch in a week's time.

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5. Review your performance

As an entrepreneur, it's important that you are brutally honest with yourself. In the end, it's you that is responsible for your success or failure. I'm constantly reviewing my own performance, and I'm not afraid to tell myself when my performance is not up to par.

If you really want to be held accountable, constantly keep yourself in check. "As a business owner, if you start to slack, and your sales slow and business is down, there isn't anyone to blame but yourself. A business owner that blames others is destined to fail, because he or she would rather point fingers rather than review their own performance," says Ozer Taysun, of Westchase Roofing Services, a business he founded ten years ago.

Taysun is correct – blaming someone else is an excuse that unsuccessful entrepreneurs makes. If your personal performance is suffering, own up to it and commit to making a change. If you don't review your performance, who will?

6. Seek feedback from your team

I just talked about reviewing your own performance above, and it's very effective – as long as you are honest with yourself. If you want completely unbiased feedback, ask your team.

You might be thinking, "Employees won't be completely honest with their feedback because they don't want to get fired," but that won't apply to most businesses, provided you have nurtured a strong company culture within their business.

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