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About the Author



Richard Yadon is an accomplished business executive who has worked for several major corporations (MetLife, Prudential, Willis, AIM) and has started his own businesses. He is a self-improvement guru who believes that anything is possible with clarity of intent and strength of purpose. Working with his clients to uncover their true potential, he emphasizes self-honesty and constant balance, steering away from the burnout and exhaustion that are so common among highly-motivated people.

Richard has seen time and again what happens when people are willing to fight for their visions. He strives to impact the world in a positive way and to effect mindset shifts that lead to greater productivity and lower energy expenditure simultaneously.



Introduction

Anyone can come up with a goal, but *not* everyone has the ability to achieve it. For that to happen, you need to take action first. Goals are not like dreams or prayers. You cannot just close your eyes and wish for it to happen. You have to *do something*.

But of course, it does not end there. Certainly, taking the first step toward reaching your goal is the most crucial but it is *not* the only thing you have to do. There are a lot more steps to take and you have to work hard, and for that you need to *be focused*.

You need to learn how to ignore distraction. Perhaps in a perfect world, no person would have to be subjected to distraction when trying to accomplish a goal. But this is reality, and distraction comes in all shapes and sizes.

Sometimes, distraction comes from within. This is the *insidious* of distractions because how do you ignore something that lives inside your mind or heart? This is when motivation kicks in. As the old adage goes, *when the going gets tough, the going gets tougher*.

- Goals are like a destination that you have to reach.
- Taking action is what gives you direction toward your goal.



- Staying focused ensures that you are always on the right path.
- And lastly, motivation is what makes sure that you will do anything and everything to reach the end of the path, arrive at your destination, and achieve your goal.

This is a never ending and rather flexible cycle. At times, you will need to motivate yourself in order to take action. Other times, you need to take action to stay focused. Which goes first does not matter so do not be surprised if you find yourself jumping from one tip to another. What matters is that you are taking all the positive steps toward reaching your goal.

So, if you are ready to finally make your goal come true, then here goes!



Tips for Taking Action

Tip Number 1: Just do it.

The first step is always the hardest. Your mind will come up with all sorts of scenarios to prevent you from taking that scary first step toward your goal. That does not mean you are a coward, though. It is just your brain's way of defending yourself.

Sometimes you have to listen to what your heart has to say and *just do it*. Everything else will be a lot easier once you get past the first hurdle – and that is to ignore your brain's dire warnings and go with your gut instinct.

Tip Number 2: Doing something is not always a *physical* action.

Don't confuse the need for taking action as doing something literally or physically. There are many other ways for you to take action without ever lifting a finger. For instance, consider the act of *planning*.

It is never wise to try achieving a goal without a plan. If you want to spend the least amount of time and effort in achieving your goal, then you need to come up with a step-by-step plan for accomplishing it.



A good plan takes into account all potential consequences as well as all the possible avenues you may take in order to reach your objective.

Tip Number 3: Breathing helps.

Are you feeling nervous or nauseous? Does the effort to reach your goal stress you out? It is normal to feel uneasy about tackling a challenging goal. Taking action is often synonymous to taking risk. You are nervous because you know that risks can either end with success or failure, and who wants to end up failing?

Whenever you feel like there is a panic attack coming on, just take a deep breath. Better yet, take several deep breaths. Studies show how breathing can effectively clear the mind and help calm your nerves. Go ahead and breathe - inhale all the way from your stomach to take full advantage!

Tip Number 4: Take a page from the most successful books.

You may think that you are the only one suffering a certain kind of problem, but you are not. With a little research, you are sure to find something in common with ordinary and extraordinary people.

Look around you. If you are authentic and open about your challenges you are bound to find someone in a similar situation.



Tip Number 5: Take baby steps.

Be your own person. Do not push yourself to achieve the same things others have done in the same way they did. In the end, you have to remind yourself that every person is unique and, consequently, has their own set of strengths and weaknesses.

Also, it could be that you are just starting out and the other person you are comparing yourself to is years ahead of you in terms of expertise and experience. The other person *cannot* afford to take baby steps, but you can and you should!

If you rush things too much, everything may end up backfiring on you.

Tip Number 6: Rome wasn't built in a day.

This is obviously related to the previous tip, but it is different in the way that it takes into account what you want to do with your time.

It is good to have a plan for everything, but you do not have to accomplish everything in a single day. Even if you have the energy to do so, those around you (family members, co-workers) who have a stake in reaching your shared goals may not have the time and similar energy to do so.



Give them a break. If all of you work hard, then you all deserve to rest. There is always tomorrow.

Tip Number 7: Do not pressure yourself.

Pressuring yourself is different from motivating yourself. Motivating yourself will get you to take action while pressuring yourself will only succeed in paralyzing yourself.

There are going to be others in your life that will try to pressure you about getting things done. Why burden yourself with more pressure when you can give yourself a pep talk instead?

Tip Number 8: A little competition is good – just do not make a big deal out of it.

Competition can motivate you because the more you delay, the further behind you will be in achieving your goal. Friendly competition is also effective for staying focused and getting you pumped up, but be careful!

If you let yourself focus too much on the competition, then you may end up forgetting about the bigger picture. In the end, being too competitive may be another source of distraction that you absolutely do not need.



Tip Number 9: Believe in yourself.

Taking action requires you to have faith in yourself – especially if people around you are telling you that you cannot do it. Remember no one knows you better than yourself. You know what you are capable of. If you believe that the goal you have in mind is well within your reach, then it truly is – no matter what others may say.

Tip Number 10: Get a companion.

Just because you have someone with you and willing to help you out doesn't imply that you are not strong enough to accomplish your goal. It also does not make your goal any less satisfying. If anything, the goal becomes sweeter because you have someone to share it with!

If you feel that you need your spouse or best friend to be at your side to accomplish a particular goal, then go and make it happen with them.

Tip Number 11: Get someone to do it for you.

Taking action also does not mean that you have to do everything alone. Say your goal is to build a house. Does that mean you should do everything, from pouring concrete to installing shingles? Of course not!



Taking action may also mean finding the best person to do the job. Do not be shy about admitting that something is well beyond your actual KSAs (knowledge, skills, and abilities). There are just some things in life that are better left in the hands of an expert.

Tip Number 12: Do not be too proud to ask for help.

A lot of people confuse taking action as doing something that directly contributes to achieving a specific goal. What they fail to understand is that sometimes, indirect actions also matter just as much.

Sometimes that action is just an internal mental shift. For instance, the act of forgetting about your pride. Some people may say that it has nothing to do with achieving a goal, but what if it is your pride that is holding you back from getting much-needed help from an expert?

Tip Number 13: It is okay to start again.

What if there comes a point in time that you realize that the first step you took was actually the wrong one? Or what if you suddenly realize that what you are doing is not taking you toward your goal but away from it?

If this happens, the only action you SHOULD NOT take is quitting.



If you realize that something is wrong, then clear your mind and retrace your steps until you find out what critical mistake you committed. Correct it and move on. If you have to, start from scratch – the sooner, the better!

Tip Number 14: Never stop trying!

As mentioned earlier on, the process of achieving one's goal is never ending. Taking action also means that you have to get back on your feet if you stumble. It is even okay if you have to start all over again. In the end, what is critical is that you do not let your failures keep you from continuously taking action and moving forward.

Pick yourself up, dust off, and learn from your mistakes. You will be a better and stronger person for doing this!

Tip Number 15: Have a back-up plan.

Plans – just like rules – can be broken. And you need to be prepared for that eventuality right from the start by having a back-up plan ready.

Others feel that back-up plans are akin to admitting failure. It is not. Rather, back-up plans are actually a smart way of acknowledging the fact that change is the only thing that is constant in the world. There is no way for you to predict



what is going to happen in the next minute, but you *can* try to prepare for things that could happen.

Tip Number 16: Consider your resources.

Taking action gives you direction but that is not what it is all about. You also have to consider the resources you have on hand. How do you make the most out of them? What other resources do you need in order to make a move? Where can you get it?

Willpower and motivation, as well as focus, are all great things to have but these are *internal* resources. You also have to back up your plan with external and concrete resources like money, manpower, and skills.

Tip Number 17: Look before you leap but leap all the same!

There are two kinds of risks: manageable and unmanageable. You are lucky if all the steps in your action plan are manageable risks. What if they are not? Should you stop and let all your previous hard work go to waste?

Risks are scary, and it is a good thing that you are aware of them. Those who think they can take on any kind of risk are simply foolhardy and reckless. That is not courage, it is a lack of wisdom.



If you come across an unmanageable risk or a risk where the stakes are too high, do look before you leap. Consider the ups and downs, but most importantly of all – consider what your brain and guts have to say. Then leap – and leap high – if you really need to!

Tip Number 18: Do not be too rigid or stubborn.

You have to know when to give up and change tactics. On paper, your plan may look fool proof and absolutely brilliant, but a lot of things in the real world are unpredictable and derail your plan.

You have to know when to stop knocking yourself against the wall and find another way toward reaching your goal. Remember: when there is a will, there is a way. If your Plan A did not work, what else is your Plan B good for if you are not willing to use it?

Tip Number 19: Do not wait for things to happen. Make it happen instead!

The most successful people I know are always active participants. Instead of passively waiting, hoping, and wishing that something would happen to them – they are proactive and make things happen.



They are not the kind to wait for a sign from the fates or a falling star to appear before they get moving. If they have a goal in sight, and they have a plan for achieving it, then they will move heaven and earth to get it.

Tip Number 20: Give yourself a reasonable deadline.

Existing commitments may be a valid reason slowing the progress toward your goal. You also have to understand that some of these commitments are never going to go away. They are there for life. Don not let these “commitments” keep you from taking necessary action.

You have to be firm with yourself and give yourself a deadline. It may be a date further out than you wanted. Sometimes, that is the only way to get things done.

Tip Number 21: Be decisive.

When you do commit yourself to a plan of action be decisive about it. This keeps your progress steady and make it easier for you to achieve your goal. If you are in a leadership position, people are unlikely to have faith in your decision if they can see your faith and commitment wavering.

You have to show them that you know what needs to be done and you have the power to help everyone reach their goals – if they follow you.



Tips for Staying Focused!

Tip Number 22: Make a checklist.

Checklists show you where you are, how much you have progressed, and what still needs to be done in order to achieve your goal.

Even if you suddenly fall sick and have to leave the office for a week, the moment you get back your checklist will be enough to bring you up to speed.

Tip Number 23: Set a schedule.

The quickest way to reaching your goal is to schedule your action steps – and stick to it. How many hours each day can you truly set aside for reaching your goal? What part of the day is the best time to work on reaching your goal?

A schedule also means having a specific place for you to do your work. Choose something that will benefit the kind of work that you are doing and the kind of person you are. Will something peaceful and quiet work more for you or do you prefer to be working outdoors and surrounded by sounds of nature?



Tip Number 23: Make it a habit.

It is not enough, of course, to simply make a schedule. Creating one is easy – it is the “doing” part that is difficult. To easily stick to your schedule, you have to turn it into a habit. Treat it as an integral part of your day that you absolutely cannot miss.

Your body does not automatically search for caffeine in the morning just because it wants to. It was trained to do so by repetitive action, strengthened by your own desire for a delicious cup of coffee. Your mind also does not look for its daily fix of quiz shows in the evenings for no reason. It was trained to do so as well.

So why can't you train yourself to make your goal achievement schedule a part of your daily routine as well?

Tip Number 24: No excuses!

It is critical that you do not make any excuses. If you do, then the excuses will never stop. Your body has a “giving-in” muscle and every time you give in, it gets more powerful. Before you know it, that muscle has been flexed so much that it is impossible to ignore.



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