

Seven tips to help you stick to your goals

Setting goals can motivate you to make changes and take steps to ensure your financial future. Some goals may be large in scope and take place over a long period of time. How can you make sure that you stick to them, especially when challenges get in your way? Here are some tips that may help.



1. Start SMART

Before you start, it's important to make sure that your goals are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. If any of those elements are missing, it can make the goal difficult to track and maintain.



2. Connect to your values

Connect your goals to your core values. Think about why you want to achieve this goal in the first place and make sure it matches with what you believe in. For example, you will be more motivated to save for your children's post-secondary education if you believe in the value and positive outcomes that higher education can bring.



3. Break it up

Asset-building goals can involve a large cost over a long period of time. Break up large goals into smaller goals with shorter-time frames to make them easier to manage. For example, instead of thinking that you need to save \$10,000 in ten years, reframe it as saving \$20 per week.



4. Anticipate challenges

Think ahead about challenges that might get in your way and prepare for them. For example, will it be difficult to meet your savings goal during the holidays because of extra expenses? Set aside more money in the months leading up or think in advance about some ways to reduce your spending.



5. Reduce decision making

The more choices we have to make each day, the more likely we will make one that sets us back from our goal. Take the decision making out and make saving an automatic process. For example, you can set up an automatic transfer to move some money at each paycheck into a savings account.



6. Find a buddy

Find someone you feel comfortable sharing your goals with, and who will help you have a realistic and positive outlook on your journey. This person can help encourage you when things get tough and help keep you accountable when you are tempted to do something that will set you back from your goal. Talking with others who have set similar goals can also be a good way to share tips and experiences.



7. Celebrate successes

Keep track of all the positive steps you are making towards your goal and celebrate them! Find a way to display your successes, no matter how small, and look at them often.