

SMART^{er}
RESOLUTIONS
2021

Choose, plan and achieve
your 2021 resolution



SMART^{er} entrepreneurs
Make more money

SMARTer Resolutions 2021



2020 has been a challenging year for most people. The nations health, wealth and wellbeing, have all come under extreme pressure. Many of us have experienced an unwelcome change to our work and home life. In short, its been s***e. Hopefully, 2021 will be more positive and what better way to start than achieving e resolution that is personal and meaningful?

But 80% of 2021 resolutions will fail in January, according to Forbes. Why is this? In most cases, the resolution is relatively vague. The plan to achieve it is not great. The work needed to accomplish the resolution is unlikely to be prioritised or be managed in the way needed for success.

This guide is designed to give you a helping hand. We have included some great techniques and easy to use templates combined with helpful and practical coaching notes.

We hope it will help you identify resolutions that are personal and meaningful. It will help you make an effective action plan and manage the achievement process.

There are three practical steps



CHOOSE



PLAN



ACHIEVE



Choose a resolution that motivates you



Eight areas in your wheel of life



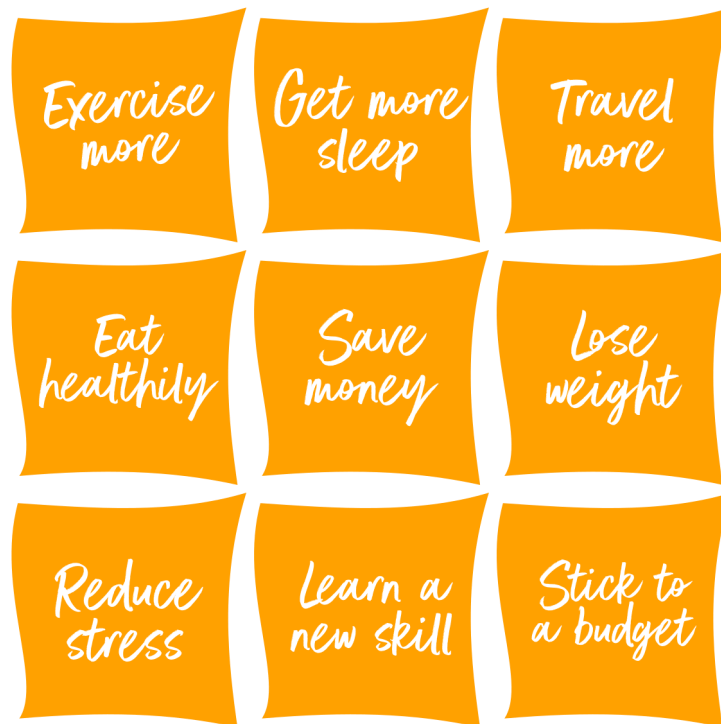
Your wheel of life

If you need a bit of help choosing a resolution that is personal and meaningful you might like to try the wheel of life approach. The “Wheel Of Life” has been around for over a thousand years and is widely used in personal development. You may be familiar with it if you have been exposed to life coaching or personal development for greater effectiveness. It is a visual analysis tool that enables you to think as deeply as you want to about your life and how satisfied you are with it. It has eight areas representing eight areas of your life. Have a think about each area and ask yourself

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- What is good about this area?
- What is not so good?
- What do I want to change?

Choose a resolution that motivates you



The most popular resolutions in the UK and USA



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Top resolutions from the UK and USA

Perhaps the wheel is not for you? Maybe the top choices from the UK and the USA will help? The graphic shows the top choices made in each country, according to YouGov. They are Exercise more, Save money, Eat healthily, Lose weight, Reduce stress, Get more sleep, Stick to a budget, Travel more and Learn a new skill. Maybe you want to make changes in one of these areas? If you are still not so sure and need more data, have a look at

- YouGov <https://yougov.co.uk/topics/lifestyle/articles-reports/2019/12/31/quarter-brits-will-make-new-years-resolution>
- YouGov <https://today.yougov.com/topics/lifestyle/articles-reports/2020/01/02/new-years-resolutions-2020-health-finance>



Plan how you are going to achieve it



SMART resolution planning

If you set yourself well thought out, written SMART resolutions that are meaningful to you, you are nearly three times more likely to achieve your objectives compared with someone who simply tries hard. Good resolutions help you focus on what is important, provide a sense of direction and purpose and motivate you when the going gets tough. The resolution setting and planning process gives you more clarity in your decision making. It helps you plan how to overcome potential objectives before they arise.

Completing the SMART resolution plan

Describe, as simply as you can, using positive language, the precise resolutions you want to achieve. Write the resolution in a form that is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound. Then you will be able to develop appropriate action steps.

The S in S.M.A.R.T. stands for SPECIFIC. You have a much higher chance of achieving a specific resolution than a general one. To set a specific resolution, ask yourself who is involved? What do I want to achieve? Where will the resolution take place? When will it take place?

The M in S.M.A.R.T. stands for MEASURABLE. Your resolution is measurable when it can be quantified. You need to establish concrete benchmarks for measuring progress towards each resolution you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on the road to success, reach your target dates, and experience the sense of success that spurs you on to continued effort required to achieve your resolution.

The A in S.M.A.R.T. stands for ATTAINABLE. Your resolution also needs to be realistic and attainable to be successful. In other words, it should stretch your abilities but still remain possible. Attainability may be influenced by time. Let's say your resolution is to become CEO of your company, this may be unattainable if you have just started your career and your timeline is 6 months but totally attainable if it's a lifetime resolution.

The R in S.M.A.R.T. stands for RELEVANT. Your resolution must have relevance to your current position and condition to be effective. Ask yourself, is this the right time? Is it worthwhile? Does it matter to me? Will achieving this resolution contribute to my success?

The T in S.M.A.R.T. stands for TIME-BOUND. Time is money! Make a tentative plan of everything you do. Everybody knows that deadlines are what makes most people switch to action.

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Plan how you are going to achieve it



SMART resolution planning principles



So install deadlines, for yourself and your team, and go after them. Keep the timeline realistic and flexible, that way you can keep morale high.

Start Date

Enter the date you started completing the resolution.

Benefits & Losses

List here all the advantages you will gain or losses you will avoid when you achieve your resolution. Include concrete benefits such as improved income or items you will possess. Identifying both benefits, you will gain and losses you want to avoid. This is important because these are the two driving factors in human motivation.

Obstacles & Solutions

Identify the obstacles you are most likely to encounter, then make plans to crush them. Consider possible obstacles and formulate possible solutions or actions for overcoming them. Add these strategies to your Specific Action Steps for Achieving this Resolution.

Evaluating existing obstacles also increases your awareness of the constraints you need to work within. To choose the most effective course of action, you need to consider limitations like budget, team member's skills and attitudes, available resources and market conditions. Working out how to handle these constraints logically and efficiently should impact the action steps you choose

Affirmations to Support This Resolution

Write some personal affirmations. These will motivate you and help you when the going gets tough. Make your affirmations positive and express them in the first person and in the present tense to give them the impact of your commitment.

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Plan how you are going to achieve it



Read or repeat them several times a day to encourage yourself in using the attitudes they describe. Reading or repeating affirmations raises your confidence in your ability to lead and succeed.

Visualisations to Support This Resolution

Increase your commitment and belief in your ability to achieve your resolution. Use this section of the resolution planning system to decide how you will incorporate visualisation into the pursuit of your resolution. Decide on the visualisation items you will use and how you will use them.

Specific action steps to achieve this resolution

This page of the template deals with the practicalities needed to achieve your resolution. The first step is to think about the action steps you will need to take. You may find it easier to use project management, task management or calendar apps at this stage. Most solutions on the market will help you manage the complexity more efficiently. If you decide on this approach, the entry details will vary according to your choice, but the principles will remain the same.

List the exact actions you must take to bring your resolution into reality. Many resolutions depend upon completing a series of action steps that you must take in consecutive order, one after another. After listing the steps, indicate the order you must take them in. Some steps might need to be broken down into their own resolution with some smaller, more detailed action plans. Set a target date for each action. When you study each action step, record the date in the date reviewed column. As you take action, enter the date you completed it in the date completed column. This gives you a visible check on your progress.

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Resources

Identify the individual(s) and resources needed to achieve this resolution.

Measures

How are you going to track your progress towards your resolution? Identify benchmarks, KPIs and appropriate performance measures to measure. This provides you with a sense of achievement that will motivate you even more.

Target date

Once you have planned the action steps needed to achieve your resolution, you can work out how long you will take to do the entire job. Fill in the "Target Date"

Plan how you are going to achieve it



The Pareto principle or the 80:20 rule



The Pareto principle or the 80:20 rule

Vilfredo Federico Damaso Pareto was born in Italy in 1848. He became a well-known philosopher and economist. Legend has it that one day he noticed that 20% of the pea plants in his garden generated 80% of the healthy pea pods. This discovery caused him to think about uneven distribution. He analysed different industries and found that 80% of production typically came from just 20% of the companies. He thought about wealth and discovered that 80% of the land in Italy was owned by just 20% of the population. This leads him to the Pareto principle that he is best known for, "**80% of results will come from just 20% of the action.**"

So how can you apply Pareto's principle to gain more value in your life?

Are you a small business owner? It's essential to identify your best (and highest-paying) clients. These are the people that like you, like your product and buy more of it than anyone else. The 80/20 mindset says if you want to grow look after these people and get more like them.

#But we are trying to achieve a resolution. We have chosen one that is personal and meaningful, we have made a SMART plan which is full of well thought out, practical activities. These activities have differing effects on your ability to achieve the resolution. Some are very high value, others are not. The 80/20 mindset says prioritise the high value over the low-value ones every time.

Key principle

SMART resolution plan

Action steps

Order	Action step										Target date	Completed

Resources

Measures



Work your plan & achieve your resolution



Achieve is the third step in the process. It's the point where your plan makes contact with the practicalities and challenges of everyday life. In my experience, few plans survive this step unchanged. If you planned using an app, you use regularly, you will already be aware of the challenges that exist on your time and resources. Your ability to achieve your resolution will depend on how you adapt and manage your plan on an ongoing basis.

With so many activities competing, you need a simple, straightforward system to prioritise and schedule them. I recommend you consider an approach based on value and urgency.

Firstly, let's define value. It's a very personal thing and will be different for each of us. If you chose a personal and meaningful resolution, I would guess achieving it will be valuable to you? Perhaps you have chosen a health-based resolution and want to lose some weight or knock a second off your 100m PB? Therefore any activity you have planned has value to you, some more than others.

Urgency is much easier to understand. It's all to do with time, is something is past due, it's more urgent compared with something you need to do next week.

How do you make the decisions that result in the right activity being done at the right time for the right amount of time? We have a system, and it looks like this

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Prioritising and scheduling activities

Our categorisation quadrant helps you sort and prioritise activities by value and urgency. All you need to do is look at the activities you want to add to your calendar or task list and ask two questions;

- Is this activity valuable to me or not?
- Is this activity urgent or not?

Quadrant one activities are valuable and urgent. You should do them right now or schedule for today. Quadrant two activities are valuable but not urgent. They can be deferred or if possible scheduled. Quadrant three activities are not valuable and, wherever possible, should be delegated. Quadrant, four activities are not valuable and not urgent. You should consider deleting them as they are not going to help you achieve your resolution.

Work your plan & achieve your resolution

	Urgent	Not urgent
Valuable	Do it now 1	Defer 2
Not valuable	Delegate 3	Delete 4

SMART Activity Management Quadrant



If you have many activities in the same quadrant, you may want to work out, which are the most urgent or create the highest value for you. This helps you focus on the highest priority activities first. Take a quadrant from the matrix and see if asking these questions helps you rank them.

For prioritising by value

- Is it a high-value activity (80/20 principle)?
- Does it contribute to your personal goals?
- Are other high-value activities dependent on it?
- Does it create value?

For prioritising by urgency

- Is it overdue?
- Is it due soon?
- Does it need doing now?
- Can it wait a little while?

Activity management apps

How you schedule your activities depends on how you choose to manage your calendar and task list. Some choose a paper-based approach using annual calendars and lists at the basic

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Work your plan & achieve your resolution



end to the many types of organiser available at the more developed market end. Others and I count myself among them, choose apps to manage activities. I feel they are generally so practical and straightforward to use, it's hard to go wrong. The two functions you need are a calendar and task list. Some apps provide both functions, others focus on one. I recommend that the app or apps you choose are available on all or certainly most of the platforms and devices you use. There are loads of review sites to help you, here are a few to get you started

- Ntaskmanager <https://www.ntaskmanager.com/blog/best-to-do-list-apps/>
- Hubspot <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-to-do-list-apps-tools>
- Zapier <https://zapier.com/blog/best-calendar-apps/>
- Techradar <https://www.techradar.com/uk/best/best-calendar-apps>

Work your schedule

You have an excellent resolution, a SMART plan, you have prioritised and scheduled. The only things left at the moment is to work your schedule. What could possibly go wrong? Many people are challenged by procrastination, lack of focus, interruptions, and low persistence levels.

Procrastination can prevent you from starting your activity. Clearly, if you don't start your cant finish and all your work so far is for nothing. First, you have to realise that you are procrastinating and why you are. Perhaps you just don't like a particular activity? Think about giving yourself a small reward when you have completed it. After all, we all like rewards, and you have to start the activity before you can complete it. Perhaps you are a perfectionist and would instead not start a task you feel challenged by rather than completing it imperfectly? Tough gig, perfection is the enemy of productivity. Easy to say but hard to change. A gradual realisation of what it is costing in terms of success helps combined with an acceptance that "good enough" really is what you need to succeed.

Lack of focus is a particular problem during activities that call for periods of flow where chains of thought are required. One technique that might help you is the Pomodoro technique which consists of several work periods interspersed with sort breaks, followed by a more extended break at the end. If you google Pomodoro, you will find there are lots of apps you can use.

Interruptions also break your chain of thought and, with a bit of planning can be reduced or removed. It is challenging to manage interruptions by a poor manager who uses every form of communication to disturb your day. You can perhaps reduce or focus their interruptions by agreeing times of the day to talk and times to work, it's worth a try. If you are working from home, you have additional challenges from friends and family. I would try to agree on some boundaries here too. An understanding that there are times you need to work and not be disturbed is a great start. You can reinforce this with "do not disturb" signs or badges. Make it easy for everybody by agreeing times to talk for friends and family as well.

Low levels of persistence result in many half-completed activities and plans, both reduce your chance of achieving your resolution. It is essential to keep your motivation levels as high as

Work your plan & achieve your resolution



possible, especially when the going gets tough. It may help if you turn to your plan and look at the benefits of achieving your resolution and the losses of not achieving it. Is there something there that will drive you forward? It's also worth using the visualisations and affirmations you put in your plan. It is quite uncanny how effective these can be

Review and adapt

The review is a crucial activity for achieving your resolution. It helps you keep on top of things, plan, adapt and change your approach. Let us look at a couple of critical reviews to help you. They have different objectives, so the content and format vary accordingly.

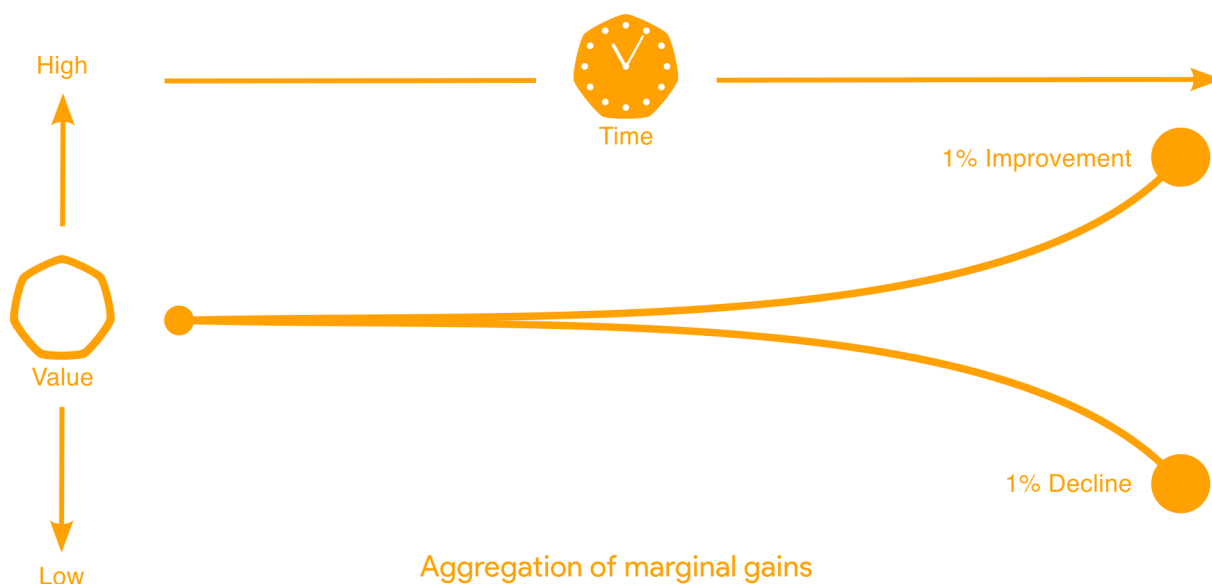
Daily

The most basic type of review involves clearing down incomplete tasks and meetings then re-scheduling and prioritising them.

Weekly / Monthly

Weekly reviews allow you to look at the week's performance, goals, activities and notes. The information needs to be at a level of detail that helps you adapt and tune your plan, schedule and prioritise accordingly. The level of detail should enable you to check that you are on course to achieve your resolution.

Work your plan & achieve your resolution



Aggregation of marginal gains

Dave Brailsford was appointed as performance director to the Great British cycling team in 2003. Since 1908, British riders had won just a single gold medal at the Olympic Games, and they had fared even worse in cycling's biggest race, the Tour de France. In 110 years, no British cyclist had ever won the event.

He had a strategy that he referred to as "the aggregation of marginal gains." Brailsford said, "The whole principle came from the idea that if you broke down everything you could think of that goes into riding a bike and then improve it by 1 %, you will get a significant gain when you put them all together."

Brailsford began by making small adjustments you might expect from a professional cycling team. The team tested various fabrics in a wind tunnel and had their road riders switch to indoor racing suits, which proved to be lighter and more aerodynamic. They redesigned the bike seats to make them more comfortable and rubbed alcohol on the tires for a better grip.

But they didn't stop there. Brailsford and his team continued to find 1 % improvements in overlooked and unexpected areas. They tested different types of massage gels to see which one led to the fastest muscle recovery. They hired a surgeon to teach each rider the best way to wash their hands to reduce the chances of catching a cold. As these and hundreds of small improvements accumulated, the results came faster than anyone could have imagined.

That same year, Bradley Wiggins won the Tour de France. The next year, his teammate Chris Froome won the race, going on to win again in 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Small improvements may seem insignificant and unlikely to result in significant gains, but they do. . What would happen if you made a 1% improvement each week? By the end of the year, your overall increase would be 66%.

Key principles



SMARTer entrepreneurs Make more money



Because they

Have the best business ideas that take current circumstances into account. One moment it's lockdown; next, dine out and go to the pubs, then three tiers, then four, then what? How do they choose the best business idea to thrive in this unpredictable economic climate? How do they choose the best business idea in 2021?

Research and analyse the market, the customers they intend to serve, the competition they will face and, the partners they plan to work with. They self-assess and evaluate their resources, skills, experience, processes and mindset.

Make strategic and tactical plans to drive the business forward. Using the data, knowledge and insight gained in the research and analysis phase, they work out how to use the resources at their disposal in the most profitable way.

Test how effective their strategies and plans are on limited test scale. This provides the opportunity to select the best options, then adjust and tune them before committing serious money.

Take action, full steam ahead, all systems go, this is where the magic happens. Their business idea is out there in the marketplace competing for business with all-comers. They have to deliver it and adjust as needed to make more money.

We help business entrepreneurs become SMARTer business entrepreneurs and make more money. We have tried, tested and proven processes combined with real-world experience, skills and mindset needed to succeed in these challenging times.

