


January 2008

Happy New Year!

What new and exciting things are you beginning this year? One thing I'm beginning is a quarterly newsletter. Welcome to the inaugural issue!

My intention is to provide you with useful information, interesting quotes and exciting news about my business in each issue. I would love to hear your thoughts and comments about the newsletter – including any ideas you may have for topics to include in future issues. Just send an email to karen@lifetailoring.com. If, however, you would like to opt out of receiving future issues, please send an email with UNSUBSCRIBE as the subject to karen@lifetailoring.com.

I hope you enjoy this issue!



*Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it!
For boldness has genius, power, and magic in it.
Begin it now! -- Johann Goethe*

Resolutions that Stick!

Copyright © Karen Finn 2008

Many people start out the New Year making some bright and shiny resolutions with the intention of improving their life in some way. But, have you ever noticed how quickly resolutions become tarnished and then forgotten? The statistics I've found show that about half of the resolutions made are abandoned by the end of January and that only about 1 in 10 resolutions is actually kept. Heck, even the word *resolution* drums up feelings of dread, deprivation and discipline for some people.

If you'd like to increase the chances of achieving the things you yearn for this year (a.k.a. your resolutions), just follow the five steps below.

1. **CLARIFY What's Really Important to You**

The only things any of us ever do are those things we want to do deep down inside and actually believe we can do. So, it's vital that we only set goals that are important to us, that reflect our own values and are achievable.

Unfortunately, many people make resolutions because they feel they should or that they have to or even because their friend is doing it or has already done it. These people may have really great intentions, but they just aren't committed to the resolutions for

themselves. As a result, these are usually the first resolutions to tarnish and fall by the way-side.

Instead, think about what would truly inspire you to accomplish. Create a resolution that is compelling, joyful and would get you excited to see it through.

Below you'll find two examples of common resolutions and some possible reasons people could have for making them. Select the reasons that would motivate you to achieve each and notice which reasons wouldn't.

Resolution 1: I will exercise regularly.

- A. I should get in better shape.
- B. I miss being active and being able to touch my toes.
- C. I love running around with my kids and I would love to be able to keep up with them.
- D. Craig exercises regularly. I think I will too.

Resolution 2: I will have my products and services in such demand that I need a waiting list.

- A. I ought to have more clients than I do.
- B. I would like to be more successful.
- C. I really believe in the benefits of my products and services and enjoy sharing them with others.

2. FOCUS on What's Most Important

Now that you've clarified what's really important to you. Focus on it. I have found that focusing on your top priorities is the key to success rather than spreading yourself thin trying to focus on too many things at the same time.

Here are some questions you might explore to increase your focus if you have several goals you want to achieve:

- Is there one goal that would make the others easier to achieve?
- Is there an overarching goal which encompasses two or more resolutions?
- Is there an order to which the goals can be done?

The final part of focusing is to write down your very specific and compelling resolutions. Being specific is crucial because it helps to keep your attention on exactly what you want instead of some vague idea or concept you're trying to achieve. Making it compelling is the second vital piece of focus because if you aren't excited about it, it probably is not going to happen.

Let's take a look at the first example resolution and see if it's specific and compelling enough to focus on.

Resolution 1: I will exercise regularly.

I'll bet if we asked 10 different people what this resolution means; we'd get 10 different answers. To make this or any resolution more specific and compelling for you, you need to decide what it really means to you. Ask yourself the WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE and HOW questions. For this example, you could ask:

- What kind of exercise will you enjoy doing the most?
- How often will you exercise?
- With whom will you exercise?
- When will you exercise?

- Where will you exercise?

Now, write it down! Put it into your own words so you feel motivated every time you read it.

3. **PLAN Your Way to Accomplishment**

Now that you know what you want to accomplish, how are you going to do it? Develop a game plan that has mini goals in it AND that is flexible enough to fit you and your lifestyle. Tailor it to fit you perfectly. Remember the saying “*your eyes are bigger than your stomach*”? Well, aspirations are often bigger than immediate resources and/or time can support. Be sure to allow yourself more time and resources than you think you will need.

Let’s take another look at our example goal.

I will exercise regularly.

When most people take on this goal, they decide that they’re going to exercise 7 days a week – even if they haven’t exercised for years. They want to jump from 0 to 7 immediately. Most people who make these kinds of goals abandon them quickly. Instead practice a little under promising and allow yourself to over deliver. For example, start out exercising for just 2 days a week and build gradually to 7. This approach will increase the likelihood of you sticking with your goal – not even to mention the health benefits of reduced stress. You will build tremendous momentum and feel empowered all along the way.

The idea of under promising and over delivering is really a great one to use with any of goal. It will dramatically enhance the quality of your life almost immediately.

4. **BECOME ACCOUNTABLE**

This is where the real fun begins. Tell someone else what your goal is and ask them to support you while you’re working on achieving it. Some people you may want to approach about keeping you accountable are your significant other, a family member, a friend, a trainer, a teacher, or even a coach. You will want to determine a frequency at which you will share your progress with them that fits well with your goal.

By human nature, we’re all much more productive when we’re accountable. Choose people who are really supportive of you and your efforts, but who also will tell you the truth when you need a little course adjustment. Being accountable to someone else significantly improves your chances of realizing your goal and living the life you deep down want.

5. **CELEBRATE Your Success**

Celebrate your successes all along the way. Make sure you set up rewards to keep your motivation alive on those days when you are tempted to ignore your goal. Keep your focus on how wonderful your life will be when you achieve your goal.

Don’t fall into the trap of thinking that following through on your resolution is reward enough. I and many of my clients have done that before and it just isn’t enough to keep us moving forward when the going gets tough. You deserve to celebrate each and every success along the way.

So, what are you resolving to do in 2008? I'd love to know. If you'd like some support in achieving your goals for this New Year, contact me for a complimentary coaching session. I've even enclosed a gift certificate for you to make achieving your resolutions even easier. I can be reached at 817-988-8086 or karen@lifetailoring.com.

