



SET RUNNING GOALS

Run Coaching: Set Goals and Intentions

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Welcome to the Run Strong coaching clients newsletter. Each newsletter will have a weekly focus to help you learn, improve, and develop healthy habits that will benefit your running performance.

Since this is the first week, we will focus on goal setting, mindset, and intention. Don't worry, the specifics of your running training are coming soon!

Goal Setting

The first step is to set specific running goals. It's not enough to say that you want to run faster, or you want to run a marathon, you need to define your goals as clearly as possible.

It's essential to define what you are working towards, and why, so that when you run into challenges and setbacks (spoiler alert: you will), you can look back and remember why you started.

At the end of this lesson, you will list your #1 Running Goal as precisely as possible.

- I will run a 5K in under 25 minutes in (time frame),
- I will improve my running pace by one minute per mile in (time frame)
- I will train for and run a marathon in (time frame)
- A goal that is important and meaningful to you

Don't use my examples, tell me yours, and be as specific as possible.

Outcome goals vs. Process goals

What we just named was an outcome goal. It's the result that we want to achieve from our daily actions and training over time.

The outcome goal is the starting point, but it's important to remember that we can't control outcomes. Not every person will progress in their training in the same way, under the same time frame. We differ in experience, age, background, and genetics. Many factors can influence outcomes, so it's more important that we set our intention on our actions. What are we doing consistently to perform better?

I can set a goal that I want to qualify for the Olympics, but no matter how committed I am to that outcome, it's not likely to happen.

I can set a more realistic goal that I want to improve my running pace by 20 seconds per mile in three to six months, but setting the outcome goal is not enough, it's the reason we need to also set process or behavior goals.

I can control what I do; how I behave, but I can't control outcomes.

Behavior goals allow us to practice the actions that we can control, our behavior, not the end result.

To set appropriate process goals you need to ask yourself, what actions do I need to take to reach my goal?

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Here are some examples (Yours may be different):

- Never miss a workout because "I don't feel like it." Never. Sickness or injury are valid excuses for missing or rescheduling a workout. If I am too tired or too busy, that is not a reason to skip. I can't control the outcomes of my exercise practice, but I can control my consistent behavior. If I am not consistent, I'll never reach a challenging goal.
- Aim for eight hours of sleep every night. That means I might have to go to bed earlier than usual.
- Pack my lunch for work four days a week and make healthy, low-calorie, high-nutrient choices if I choose to go out.

These are daily lifestyle goals. A healthy lifestyle involves exercising regularly, good sleep hygiene, and eating well. Adjust your lifestyle to behave like the person who is capable of achieving your goal.

What Skills Do I Need To Develop?

The next consideration is what skills do you need to develop to improve and reach your goals?

For a runner, it may mean to work on running form, technique, breathing, pacing, strength, mobility, self-care, or meal prep. These are all skills you can develop that will improve your running performance.

Why Do I Want to Achieve My Goal?

Ask yourself Why. Why do you want to achieve your goal?

The reason must be meaningful because if you want to run a marathon so you can show off to strangers that follow your Instagram account, you'll probably give up when the going gets tough because your why has no consequence.

Why do you want to achieve this goal?

Why is that important to you?

Why does it matter if you do it or not?

Believe You Can

Do you believe you can? Without the belief that we can achieve our goals, we won't.

If you haven't achieved your goal yet, it's because you're untrained in the necessary actions, skills, or mindset. You can do it when you put in the work, and you believe that you can; One doesn't work without the other.

Overcome Obstacles

Anything worth achieving will come with challenges. If it was easy, it wouldn't be rewarding. Expecting that you likely will have setbacks will help you realize it is all part of the process. Expect the unexpected. Instead of giving up when the situation gets tough, how will you respond this time? It's worthwhile to take note of the obstacles that may have held you back in the past.

From your past experiences, what are the barriers that could hold you back from putting these new skills to work, practicing, and training to reach your goals?

Your Commitment To Your Training

What are you committed to doing over the course of your training? Write your commitment as a statement.

I am committed to behaving like an athlete in my daily practices, workouts, sleep, and nutrition.

I am committed to maintaining a 90% compliance rate in my workouts so I increase the likelihood of reaching my goals.

Write your own!

Confidence

If you survived this long on earth, chances are you have achieved difficult tasks or overcome obstacles in your life. If you can achieve success in one area of your life, you are likely able to transfer some of those skills to reach your new goals now.

Reflect on your past achievements and what skills you developed in that process. If you did that, you can surely do this when you put in the hard work.

The Goal Setting Workbook

#1 Name your #1 specific running goal

#2 Name some actions (process goals) you think you may need to take daily or weekly to reach your goal.

#3 What specific skills do you think you need to develop or improve?

Run Coaching: Set Goals and Intentions

#4 Why do you want to achieve this goal?

#5 Why is that important to you?

#6 Why does it matter if you do it or not?

#7 On a scale of 1-10 how confident are you that you can put in the consistent actions to reach your goals?

Run Coaching: Set Goals and Intentions

#8 What are the barriers that could hold you back from putting these new skills to work, practicing, and training to reach your goals?

#9 What is your commitment to yourself over the course of this training?

#10 What have you achieved in the past that give you confidence that this goal is possible for you? What skills are transferable?

Next week we will establish your baseline performance goals. We will establish where are starting so we can determine the next steps in your training, and have a measurement in which to compare your future improvements.

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