

Find success in keeping your New Year's resolutions:

Small Steps to Build Wealth

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Each year, almost half of Americans develop New Year's resolutions to improve different aspects of their lives. Among the top five are spending less money and saving more money, according to a University of Scranton study published in the Journal of Clinical Psychology.

Do you find it difficult to stay motivated? We can apply behavior change theory to help us succeed. Researchers have identified proven behavior change strategies that can help make your New Year's resolutions stick. Good money management is about more than crunching numbers. Use these techniques to reach your personal finance goals. Here are a few strategies to help you succeed:

- Set Specific Goals – behavior change is more likely to occur if you have a written goal. Include a timeline and dollar amount. For example, instead of saying “I will save more money.” Say “I will save an additional \$500 by May 1, 2015.”
- Think Positively – People with negative thought patterns give up more quickly than those with a positive outlook. Use positive terms in your written goals.
- Find a Place to Start – The thought of changing long-term habits can be overwhelming. Procrastination can derail your resolution. Sometimes, people want to change but they are uncertain of where to start.
- List Personal Action Steps – Decide on specific action steps you can take to achieve your goal. For example, increase savings by 2% or pay an extra \$25 per month toward your credit card balance.

Download free factsheets and worksheets. Visit the Small Steps to Health and Wealth page on our website at: <http://www.uaex.edu/health-living/personal-finance/small-steps-health-wealth.aspx> Small Steps to Health and Wealth™ is a national Cooperative Extension program developed to help Americans take action to improve health and increase wealth. The program was built around a framework of 25 research-based behavior change strategies.

Learn more about personal finance at www.uaex.edu. The Cooperative Extension Service has the latest research-based recommendations to help you save money, decrease debt, build wealth and improve financial stability.

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