

Decision-to-Action Planner

A decision without a plan to act is just an intention.

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How to use this tool

Use this planner immediately after committing to a decision (Step 7 - Decide and Commit), before moving into action (Step 8 - Do and Deliver). Its purpose is to close the gap between deciding and doing.

Carry forward Record your decision in a single sentence. If you cannot state it clearly in one sentence, the decision may not yet be fully formed.

First actions Break the decision into your first three concrete actions. Each action should be small enough to complete within the time you have committed to. Give each one a single person responsible (often you) and a date: this makes the commitment specific and accountable.

Completion looks like Write a single sentence describing what done looks like for this decision. This prevents action from drifting into vague ongoing effort.

Obstacles Think ahead to what could derail the first action. List each obstacle specifically and decide your response in advance. Deciding how to handle friction before you encounter it works better than improvising when it arrives (Gollwitzer and Sheeran, 2006).

Commitments Record who needs to know about this decision and what you are promising them. Telling someone what you have promised, and by when, makes it harder to let it slide.

Help Note who could help you carry this out, and with what. Few decisions are carried out alone.

Success criteria Carry forward your success criteria from Step 1, then describe the evidence you expect to see when this is working, and by when. This is what you will return to at Step 9 (Reflect and Learn) when you review the decision.

Readiness check Complete this last. If you cannot tick all four boxes, identify the gap and close it before you begin.

CARRY FORWARD Before you begin

My decision, in one sentence (from Step 7)

FIRST ACTIONS What will I do first, and by when?

Be specific. Vague plans do not survive contact with a busy week. Each action should be small enough to complete within the commitment window.

Action	Person responsible	By when

COMPLETION How will I know I have acted on my decision?

In one sentence - I will know I have acted when...

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OBSTACLES What might stop me, and how will I handle it?

Think ahead: what could derail the first action? What have you already tried and failed? Identify the obstacle and decide your response in advance.

What might stop me	How I will handle it

COMMITMENTS Who needs to know, and what am I promising them?

Who	What I am promising them	By when

HELP Who could help me carry this out?

Who could help, and with what...

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SUCCESS CRITERIA How will I know this is working?

My success criteria from Step 1, the evidence I expect to see, and by when I expect to see it...

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READINESS CHECK Before you begin

- ☐ I have a clear first action
 - ☐ I have identified the main obstacle
 - ☐ Someone knows I am doing this
 - ☐ I know what success looks like
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Source: Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2006). Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 38, 69-119.