

Good Intentions

flicker, add1sun

Best if used for...

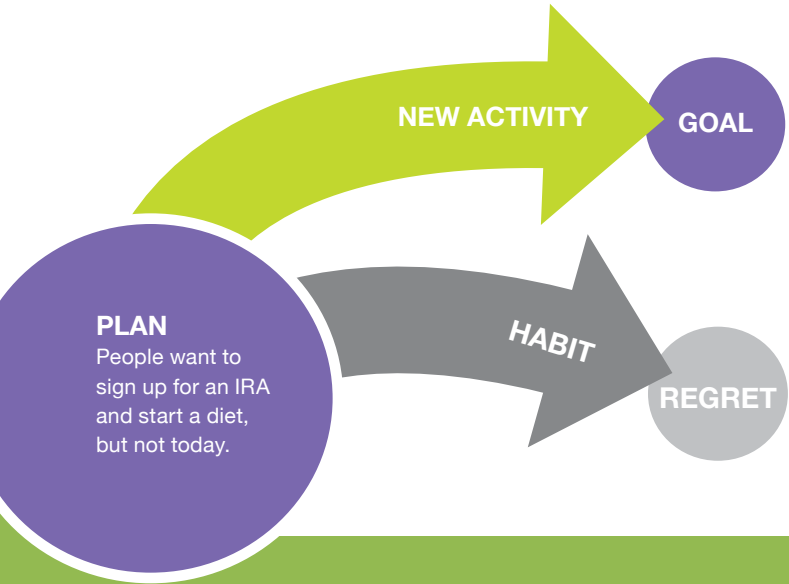
Research Synthesis, Idea Generation

Use this to...

Use this pamphlet if you suspect there is a mismatch between people's future intentions and their behavior. The questions posed will help you think about how to help people act on their intentions in terms of their plans, habits, activities, regrets, and goals.

Planning is different than doing

The path of good intentions...



People want to accomplish things,

but even when they have a plan or value change, they often find it hard to follow through on new goals and activities. By understanding the path of good intentions where people set goals but fail to achieve them, designers can help people accomplish what they set out to do.

Before you begin....

Identify the goal and any existing plans or activities that support it.

What is the goal?

What objectives are we trying to help people accomplish (e.g., health, financial security)?

What are the steps necessary to achieve the goal?

What are the existing processes that help people get there (e.g., eating right and exercising, going to a bank and opening an account)?

What systems exist to support these activities?

What are the options currently available to help people achieve their goals (e.g., health clubs and diet groups, investment tips)?

Look through your research notes...

Jot down any stories or observations that fall into the following categories:

Plans

What plans has the person made to achieve his or her goal?
How have past plans turned out?

Habits

What is the person doing instead of following his or her plan?
Are other people enabling these behaviors?

New activity

Which stories or experiences does the person relate to his or her goal?

Regret

How does the person feel about plans that have fallen through?

Goal

How achievable does the person feel the goal is?
How interested are they in achieving the goal?

e.g.

working it

STICKK

- Makes goals public and explicit
- Guarantees negative outcome if goals are not adhered to

stickK.com

CREDIT CARDS

- Obscure future outcomes by bundling purchases and delaying billing
- Facilitate purchases by increasing convenience and establishing a social norm

Solve for patterns across observations...

Look for the patterns below and try using the related suggestions to increase the likelihood that users will achieve their goals.

Plans

They've tried this plan and failed before.

Could you use peer reinforcement to encourage participation, and factual information to draw distinctions? (Strategy Cards #8, 17)

Habits

They have to give up things or engagements they enjoy.

Could you make change more gradual and phase out their existing activities or products? (Strategy Card #3)

New activity

It's a one-time action.

Could you get people to pre-commit, or make the new action the default to remove the burden of choice? Could you minimize the perception of risk by providing factual information and stories? (Strategy Cards #9, 11, 17, 19)

The people around them aren't doing the new action.

Could you form new peer groups to support the new routine, or combat this perception with factual information? (Strategy Cards #11, 19)

Regret

They feel bad about not following through on plans.

Could you remind them of these feelings when they are faced with future decisions? (Strategy Card #18)

Goal

They don't think they'll stick to their plan.

Could you improve their expectations through stories, or break apart the goal into smaller milestones? (Strategy Cards #5, 9, 18)

Even if they follow their plan, they don't think the desired outcome will actually occur.

Could you break apart the goal into smaller milestones and increase feedback along the way? (Strategy Cards #5, 9)