

Forget a New Year's resolution — 'The 4-Hour Workweek' author Tim Ferriss explains the right way to set goals

Required Annotations	Student-Created Annotations	Summary / Questions / Reflection
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Comprehension	Comments
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If you ask Tim Ferriss what his New Year's resolution is, he'll tell you he doesn't believe in them.

But that's not to say "The 4-Hour Workweek" author and "The Tim Ferriss Show" podcast host doesn't have a collection of ambitious goals.

In a Facebook LIVE Q&A about his new book "Tools of Titans," he recently explained to *Business Insider* that his goal-setting philosophy is built upon a quote attributed to the ancient Greek poet Archilochus: "We don't rise to the level of our expectations; we fall to the level of our training."

That is, while individuals may have different **innate** talents, the world's most successful people have always been those who develop skills and instincts through countless hours of practice.

To apply this to an example New Year's resolution: You're not going to be able to run a marathon by year's end on **sheer** optimism alone — you're going to have to make sacrifices in your personal life that allow you to rack up hundreds of miles over several months and seek out proper guidance to ensure you won't be sidelined by an injury.

This isn't to say you need to aim low in order to be "realistic."

"I would say that you can have unrealistic goals — according to other people — as long as they are specific, measurable, and you have timelines," Ferriss said. "I would also say that my tendency is to treat my whole life as a series of two-week experiments, or six-month projects."

Ferriss said that when he develops these experiments or projects, he goes in with the understanding that some will fail. But that's preferable to **embarking** only on guaranteed successes that inevitably only use a limited amount of your potential.

"If you're swinging for home runs, you're going to strike out, and I prefer to swing for the home runs," Ferriss said.

He also sees these goals as parts of a larger context enhanced by daily habits. He said his own habits include a journaling practice in which he records what he's grateful for, meditation, and fashioning a prioritized to-do list. Ferriss will write down whatever comes to his mind and then determine which of them must be completed that day.

"That's how I find these dominoes that will knock over the others," he said.

Questions

1. What three things do you need to achieve an "unrealistic goal," according to Ferriss?
2. What are three things Ferriss does daily to help him reach his goals?
3. Circle the portion of the text that explains the quote by Archilochus.