

BUSINESS EYE

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Motivation - that's what you need

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We are just over a week in to the New Year. How are those New Year's resolutions holding up?

Are you still on track? In the Western World, January takes its name from the two-headed Roman god Janus, so it is perhaps not surprising that we tend to start each New Year looking back over the last one and forward to the next one.

The top three stand-out NY resolutions are normally to eat more healthily, to get more exercise, and to save

more money.

There are, of course, many others, from stopping smoking to reading more and taking up a new hobby.

Research suggests that around a third of us don't make such a resolution, many because it's a known fact that few NY resolutions are achieved.

Research from the University of Plymouth suggests that by the middle of January about a third of us have already failed and less than 10 per cent of us deem our efforts to have succeeded when the next New Year comes around.

Some attempts seem to work.

For example, those who succeed in a Dry January, which focuses on change in a limited period, are likely to see benefits that last for up to six months.

But a resolution is surely more about changing your habits and how you behave long into the future, so per-

haps abstaining from something that is hurting you for a month only, doesn't really count.

Being able to stick to your plans is an essential mission, a critical aspect in any business.

As business and leadership guru, Stephen Covey, wrote: "Only the disciplined are truly free."

"The undisciplined are slaves to moods, appetites, and passions."

In taking a consistent new direction we have two principle tools at our disposal; discipline and motivation. Discipline comes from Latin and is about teaching.

You can think of self-discipline as teaching yourself self-control and shaping your behaviour, so that you're not such a slave to your motivations.

Motivation, on the other hand, is the 'why' behind your goal; your internal emotion-engine that says you can, when the rest of you says you

can't.

Motivation is a life-long skill that you can improve through self-awareness and focussed strategies.

The better you know your own drivers and levers, the more effective you'll become at getting the results you want.

The secret to effecting permanent change is to maximise motivation and thereby minimise the need for discipline.

In practice this means setting yourself up to succeed.

So, if you love walking but hate the gym, build walks into your life.

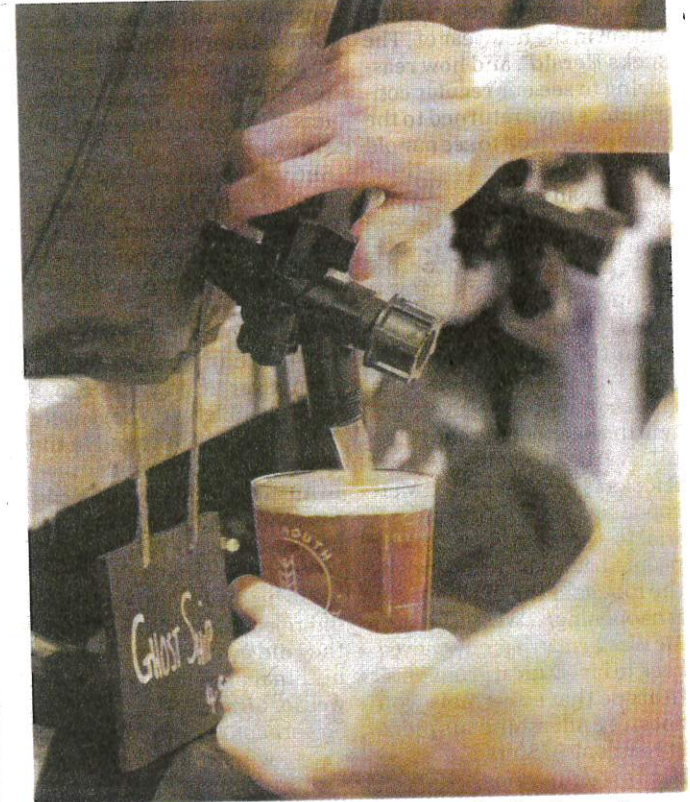
If you love shepherd's pie and hate raw fish, then stick with it, but eat less of it.

Never take the road that requires maximum discipline if you can avoid it.

In the end most change fails because it requires too much discipline and is not by the readily available motivation.

Good luck!

PICTURE SUPPLIED



Good luck keeping your New Year resolutions... such as Dry January!