

Template: Implementation Intention

YOU ARE TWO TO THREE TIMES more likely to follow through with a habit if you make a specific plan for when, where, and how you are going to implement it. By outlining a clear plan of action and clarifying exactly what you need to work on, you make the task simpler which means it requires less motivation to do. So when you wake up the next morning and find that your motivation has faded, you still might have enough to get started because the next step has already been outlined and is simple and clear.

Researchers refer to these action plans as an “implementation intention,” a specific plan of action that can be executed when the time comes to act. An implementation intention is a choice we make beforehand about when and where to act. It refers to how you intend to implement a particular habit.

The format for creating an implementation intention is:

“When situation X arises, I will perform response Y.”

A simple framework to design your own implementation intention is what I call The Action/Time/Location Strategy.

I will [ACTION] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. For example:

- I will meditate for one minute at 7 a.m. in my kitchen.
- I will study Spanish for twenty minutes at 6 p.m. in my bedroom.
- I will exercise for one hour at 5 p.m. in my local gym.

Give it a try with the template on the next page.

I will _____ at
ACTION

_____ in _____ .
TIME LOCATION