

30 DAYS OF *Hustle*

30 AWESOME DAYS TO TAKE
30 REAL STEPS TOWARD YOUR GOAL

Jon Acuff



If you do the exercises contained in this eBook, your life will change.

You'll write a book.

Start a blog.

Lose weight.

Change jobs.

Apply to go back to school.

Open a business.

Fall in love.

How do I know you'll do some of those things? More than 10,000 people already went through the 30 Days of Hustle and those are the things they did. If they can do it, so can you.

If you want to be like them, do the exercises in this book one day at a time.

Long introductions are a long waste of time.

It's time to hustle.

Jon Acuff

day 1 PICK A WHAT.

No time for pleasantries. Must begin!

Today is all about the WHAT.

WHAT are you going to do in the next 30 days?

Not ten things, not five things, but what ONE thing are you going to do?

Most goals fail because we wake up one day and decide to write a book. Instead of trying to write a chapter or do a little research we decide that right now, right here we are writing an entire book. And then, we realize that's hard to do and we quit.

So today, this is what I want you to do.

1. Find one thing you are going to do in the next 30 days.

2. Make it specific.

Don't say, "I'll get in shape;" say, "I'll lose five pounds."

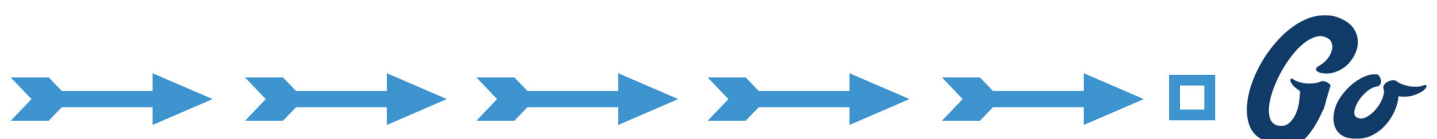
3. Make sure it's your goal and not someone else's goal.

Heidi Grant Halvorson, Ph.D. wrote in her book **Succeed**, "People are even better at keeping their New Year's resolutions when they feel that the resolutions reflect their own personal desires and values."

4. Write it down on a note card and post it somewhere you will see it.

Those four things are mandatory.

Today is the WHAT; tomorrow will be the WHY.





FIND YOUR WHY.

Here we go!

A WHAT goal is great. It's a fun start, but it's not enough. We need a WHY goal too.

What's a WHY goal? It's the heart of the reason you actually want to accomplish that goal.

For example, to quit smoking for a month is a WHAT goal.

To make sure you're always around for the people you love is the WHY goal.

To pay off your debt is a WHAT goal.

To be able to take your kids to Disney with the money you save now that your student loans are done is a WHY goal.

So, WHY are you doing what you're doing?

The reason answering this question is so important is that the WHAT tends to wear out eventually. Come day 8 or day 18, WHAT won't feel that important. Life will be busy again and you'll be tired again and that goal was silly anyway. WHY, on the other hand, lasts longer. Under the true light of life, WHY goals tend to buoy us better than WHAT goals. (Read Simon Sinek's [**Start with Why**](#) for more on the importance of this concept.)

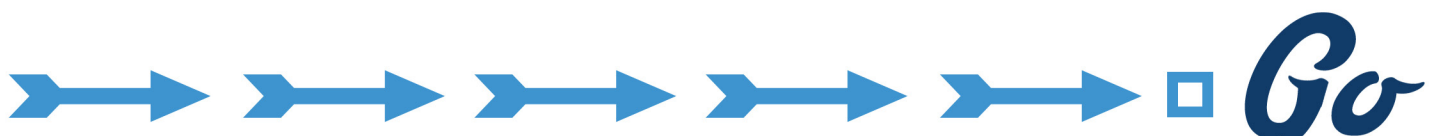
Here's an example from my own life because it's the only one I have:

I wanted to lose five pounds one month. That was my WHAT.

What was my WHY? Because I feel better when I'm in shape and exercising. I feel more confident, have more energy, and am in a better mood when I work out. I also write more when I'm in shape because when one part of my life is hustling the others tend to follow suit. Those are my WHY goals to support my WHAT goal.

Today, in your journal or notebook, answer this question:

"WHY are you doing this?"





GET YOUR HOW.

A friend of mine once had a bad week. He'd made a lot of mistakes. When I asked him how next week was going to be better he replied, "I'll try harder."

That was a stupid answer. He tried hard the week before. A lot of us try hard every week and things don't work out. Why? Because we tend to skip right past "HOW" in our excitement to start a new goal. *Not this time.*

HOW are you going to accomplish your goal during these 30 days?

Here's my example:

I wanted to lose five pounds. HOW did I do that?

1. I began working with a trainer named Jeremy.
He helped me with my diet and my exercise.
2. I also started working out with my friend Nate.
3. I joined a gym that was very, very close to my house.
4. I stopped keeping queso in our fridge at home.

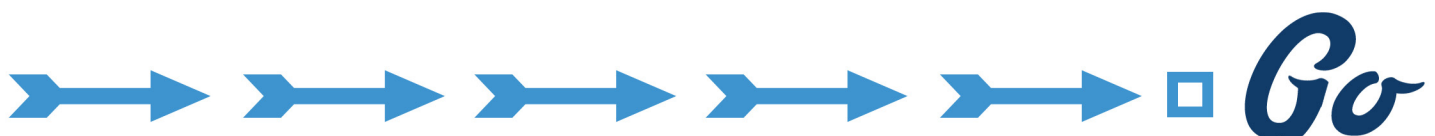
Those are four quick HOW examples from my goal.

If you want to get something done, don't just trust your hard work, trust your HOW work too.

Today's assignment is to write down three answers to this question:

HOW will you accomplish your goal?

P.S. When you complete one of the days, make sure you cross it off on your checklist.



day **4** **FUN COUNTS!**

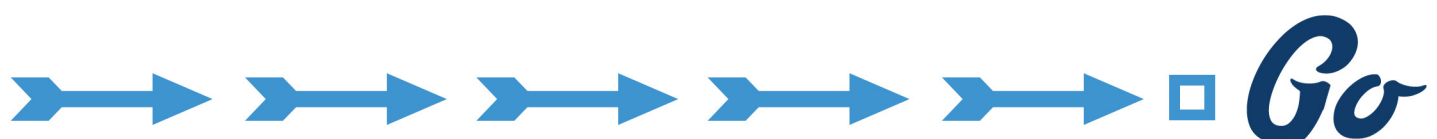
Let's take a quick break from the WHAT, WHY, HOW series. Today's challenge is going to be fun, because it's about fun.

The goals we're talking about are what I'd call "extra life" goals. They're not mandatory. I'm not your boss. Your pay won't be docked if you fail. These are voluntary, want-my-life-to-change, kind of goals. Nowhere does it say they have to suck and be boring!

In my book [Do Over](#) I talk about the importance of having fun. Today, that's what we're going to work on. I want you figure out a way to add some fun to whatever it is you're working on for the next 30 days. It doesn't have to be amazing or dramatic; even something small can make a big difference.

I found a way to make losing five pounds more fun. Instead of just jogging, doing the elliptical or some other exercise I don't really enjoy, I played racquetball more. I love that game. (As comedian Brian Regan says, "It's the only sport where you can be staring at the ball and get hit in the back of the head at the same exact time.") My wife even volunteered to play the sport with me, so I scored some bonus quality time points too. That's fun.

Today is easy; even if you have a goal that doesn't feel too exciting, how could you add an element of fun?





WIN WITH WHEN!

Back in the game!

Let's talk WHEN!

It's fun to plan our goals for someday, but as you know, someday doesn't really exist. It's make-believe. If you really want to accomplish something, you have to decide WHEN you are going to do it. Otherwise, you dramatically reduce your odds of actually doing it.

So, WHEN are you going to work on your goal?

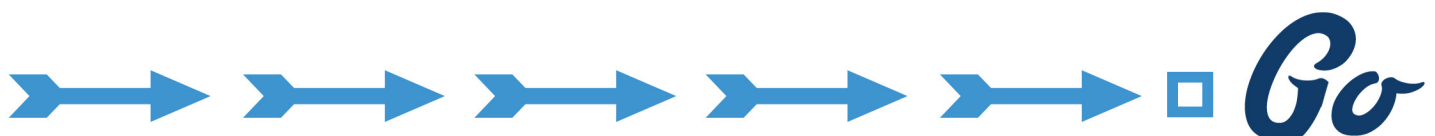
I cover this idea with much greater detail in my book [**Do Over**](#), but for now, here's a quick look at two ways to think about WHEN:

1. Macro
2. Micro

Let's talk macro. I want you to look at your calendar for the next 25 days. Circle days that will be difficult for you to hustle on your goal. For me, I'd circle any days when I travel. When I'm out of town and traveling I find it particularly hard to stay on top of my goals.

Now the micro, at what time of day will you do what you are going to do? The answer has to be specific. You need to know that next Tuesday at 7 a.m. before work starts you're going to hustle. The more specific you can get the better.

Get out your calendar. Get macro. Get micro. Get focused on the WHEN!





WHERE WILL YOU FIND YOUR WHERE?

Away we go!

(It might seem like we're doing a lot of "preparing" for our goals, but you should have started your hustle on day 1. If your goal was to lose weight, you should start exercising on day 1. Just because we're refining the method, don't miss the motion. *Hustle.*)

Time for WHERE!

Geography still matters.

Email is great; Facebook is awesome; Twitter is fun, but *real* life, *real* space is still important.

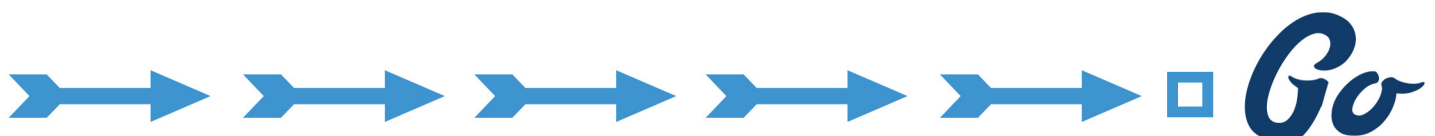
Study after study has shown that people who write down WHERE they will accomplish their goals, in addition to yesterday's WHEN, have better success rates. For instance, in a study by Peter Gollwitzer from the University of Konstanz, Germany, two groups of students were asked to work on essays over the holiday break.

One group was told to write down when and where they would work on their essays. The other group was not given this instruction. At the end of the experiment, 32% of the students who did not make a plan had completed their essays. Guess what percentage of students who came up with a plan finished? 71%! That's twice as many. (Via the book ***Succeed.***)

So WHERE are you going to work on your goal?

Write it down. Facebook it. Tweet it.

WHERE is your WHERE?





WHO IS YOUR WHO?

Let's talk WHO!

Please don't make me quote any more German professors so that I sound fancy. Trust me when I say that it's easier to accomplish a goal when you have someone helping you. The problem is that most of us love the one-man wolf pack mentality. *It's us against the world! We're going to do this alone!* Garbage.

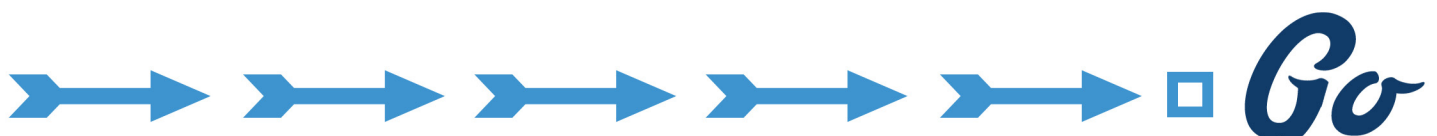
Big dreams take other people. So do small goals.

So WHO is your WHO?

WHO is going to call you on your excuses? WHO is going to celebrate your successes? WHO is going to track the progress with you?

And they don't have to be a best friend, spouse, or lifelong companion. Don't put that pressure on yourself. Your WHO could just be someone you check in with via text every few days.

Today's task is pretty simple: write down a WHO!





THE ROAD AHEAD TAKES VISION.

Vision time!

Read any book on breaking habits, changing your life, or dreaming and you will notice a few common traits. One of them is that you have to be able to envision what the future will look like when you've accomplished your goal.

You need a mental (or real) picture of what life will look like when you've done it. There are several ways to do this:

1. Write a magazine article.

Pretend *Time* magazine is doing a short feature on you. Write that article as if your goal has already been realized. Think 100-250 words for length.

2. Create a dream board.

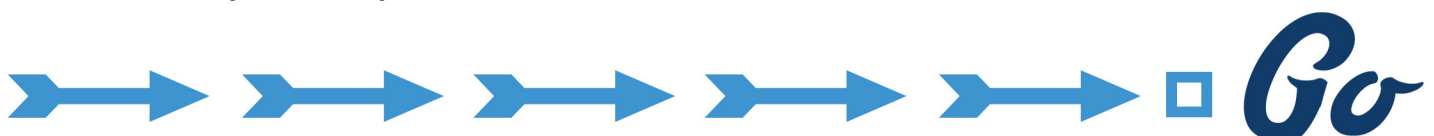
Grab a stack of magazines and rip out any and all pictures that make you think of your completed dream. Glue them on a board and put the board wherever you do your WHERE. (Unless it's Starbucks; people will stare.) You could also create a board on Pinterest, which would be a lot faster and use a lot less glue.

3. Take real photos.

You think this is crazy, but you are wrong. Want to work somewhere? Is that your goal? Drive by the building and take a photo of the sign out front. Working out so that you can fit back into a pair of your favorite jeans? Take a photo of them. Trying to write a chapter of your book? Go to Barnes & Noble and take a photo of the shelf it might sit on one day. (Want bonus points? Actually print the photos out.)

It's time for a little vision.

Get started on yours today!





HALFTIME.

You will hate this one.

This is the worst one.

Seriously, I expect letters. Or emails if where you live they have the World Wide Webs.

Today's challenge is easy though.

Take your goal and cut it in half.

You heard me-get that goal out and reduce it by 50%.

That feels counterintuitive. Aren't we supposed to shoot for the moon so that even if we fail we land among the stars? Yes, if we're talking about a long range, massive goal. I'd like to sell a million books in my lifetime. That's a moon for me. But I would never put that massive goal through the machine of the 30 Days of Hustle. This is about breaking down huge goals into small actions.

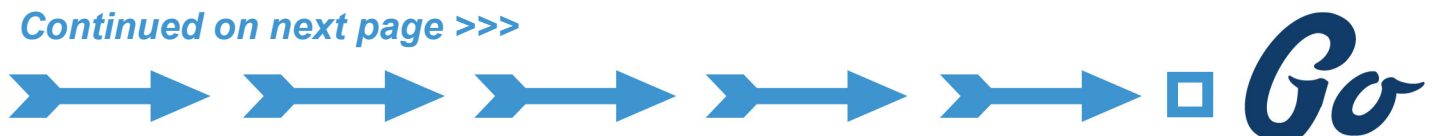
And right now, I bet your goal is too big. We love to come right out of the gate with something massive. The reason is that we confuse long-term goals with short-term objectives. *They're not the same thing.* So right now, take your goal and cut it by 50%. For instance, if you want to be the first person in the office at work each morning for thirty days, change that goal to fifteen days.

Here's what is going to happen. You will hit the new goal of fifteen. You will exceed it and be the first to the office for twenty days out of the thirty. Hitting that goal will make you want to hit more. Winning tends to beget winning. The funny thing is if you didn't cut it in half and still tried for thirty days, the same accomplishment would feel like a failure. Instead of exceeding it by five days you'd fail it by ten and be much more likely to give up.

Don't take my word for it though; here is feedback from five people who went through the *30 Days of Hustle* in 2014 and cut their goals in half. I use the weight loss examples in addition to the writing examples to show that the principle works for any type of goal.

"I worked on going down a pants size. When we cut the goal in half I changed my goal to just fitting better in my current size! Goal accomplished!"

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HALFTIME (CONTINUED)

"My goal was to lose 5 lbs, which became 2.5 once cut in half. I ended up losing a total of 6 lbs this month."

"My goal was to write 12 pieces of content for my new accounting tutor website. When you told us to cut the goal in half, my goal became 6 pieces. I finished with 8!"

"I wrote 30 new blog posts of 300+ words each day on my blog. I cut my goal in half to write 100+ words each day. And I did WORK. 28 out of 30 days I wrote 300+ words on my blog, the other 2 days I wrote 100+ words. The goal was to write, and write I did!"

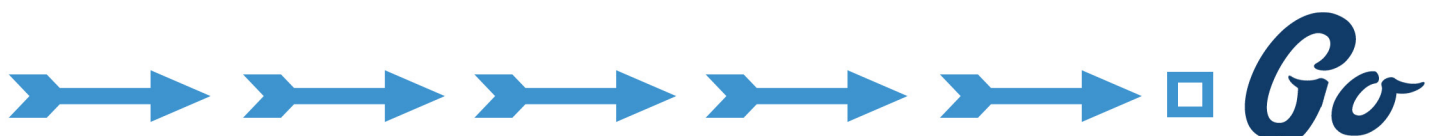
"I lost 6 lbs! Was hoping for 10, but since I cut my goal in half, I met and exceeded it! Here's to another 30 days!"

Do you see what happened in each of these cases? They cut their goals in half, still did great, and-most importantly-are eager to do it again. That's the key. Most people will think this approach is weak or "doesn't count." But hardcore approaches that force you to overreach forget to take in the importance of the word "pace."

Launching a Do Over is a marathon, not a sprint. I know that if I can get you to do a little one month and win, you're more likely to do a little more the next month and win even more. In the course of a year or maybe even a lifetime that approach will always beat the kill-yourself-for-a-month approach. That tends to end one of two ways: You miss your goal and give up, or you hit your goal and are so spent that you give up.

No, for me the best sign that a paced approach can work is the very last thing the very last person in the example above said: "Here's to another 30 days!"

P.S. If your goal is to take medicine or something lifesaving, by all means do not cut that in half. Or if it's to not punch coworkers in the face, don't start punching them. Or if you're training for a race and have a very regimented training plan, respect that. A race plan doesn't count because your plan already prevents you from having a goal that is too big.





TRIGGERS FIRE GUNS + KILL GOALS.

Today is about triggers.

Alcoholics Anonymous often uses the phrase HALT to describe the four most difficult moments to resist a drink.

H = Hungry

A = Angry

L = Lonely

T = Tired

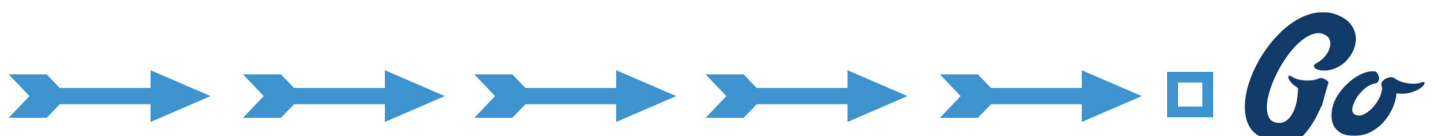
Over the last few decades, they've identified those four states as triggers, things likely to help trigger a breakdown.

I think HALT works well when it comes to goal chasing too. I know that when I am tired and exhausted from business travel for instance, it's hard for me to eat well and exercise. In addition to those four things though, let's figure out what other triggers might hurt your progress.

As you survey your life, are there triggers that tend to knock you down? Is it impossible for you to turn on the TV without watching for two hours straight? The TV might be a trigger for you. Do you have a friend who likes to keep you out late when you promised you'd write early in the morning? That person might be a trigger. Does having queso in your fridge call to you at night? Turns out that's a trigger for me.

Today's task is to identify your triggers.

Write them down so you're not surprised by them. Tomorrow we'll talk about how we can defeat them.



day

11

IF WE'RE GOING TO HUSTLE, THEN WE'D BETTER READ TODAY'S CHALLENGE.

Yesterday we talked about our triggers; today we're going to attack them.

One of the simplest, most proven methods of dealing with obstacles that block our goals is *If-Then* statements.

Here's what they look like:

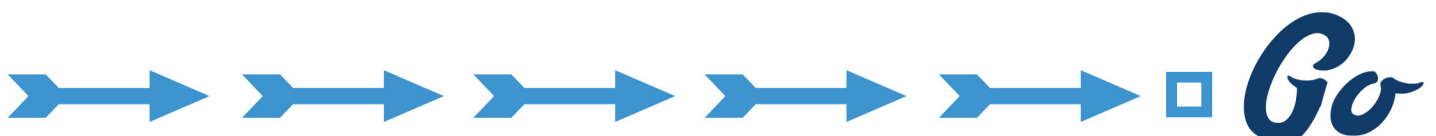
"**If** Jill calls and wants me to go out tomorrow night, **then** I will tell her I have to study and can't."

"**If** I have to fly cross country, **then** I will pack a healthy snack instead of eating something fatty at the airport."

"**If** I feel discouraged about my progress, **then** I will call my accountability partner and get some encouragement."

You basically take every trigger from yesterday and then write down what you are going to do when it happens.

That's today's challenge. Write down at least three *If-Then* statements.





DATA IS EVERYTHING

If your GPS didn't have the names of streets in it, it would be useless. If your laptop keys didn't have letters on them, it would be useless. If your entire contact list in your phone didn't have names listed for each number, it would be useless.

Why?

Because data matters.

For maps and keyboards and phones...and for goals.

If you're not measuring your goal, you'll never really know if you're making any progress.

That's what we're aiming for. The real goal of a goal is to help you do better than the day before. You're not competing against someone else in most goals; you're competing against the you from yesterday. And unless you know how you did, you won't know how you're doing.

Today's challenge is to make sure you're measuring your progress. To the best of your abilities, figure out some data your goal might deliver.

If you're trying to lose weight, it's easy. The scale is your data machine, as are calories, minutes exercised, etc.

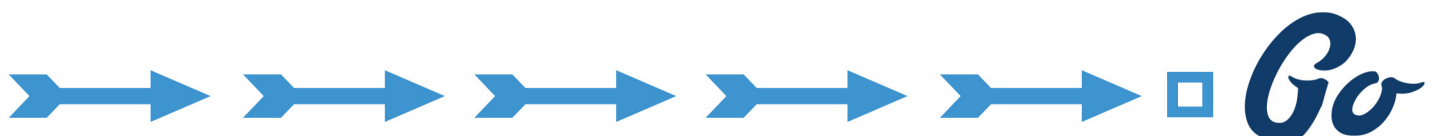
If you're trying to research a new business idea though, maybe data feels fuzzier. In that case, I would make measurements like this:

1. Number of other businesses I studied.
2. Number of pages of material I read related to the industry I'm looking at.
3. Number of new followers I gained on Twitter that might turn into customers one day.

There are always ways to collect data from your goals.

Data doesn't lie.

Find one thing you can measure related to your goal today.





WHO IS AHEAD OF YOU?

This is the next level WHO we're about to get into. (That kind of rhymed.)

Someone has already done what you are trying to do. Someone went before you and fell in some potholes. They know where the road is dangerous; they know where the wins are; they know the way to the finish line.

Find those people and learn from them.

There are no shortcuts to success, but relationships come pretty close. Learning what worked (and didn't) for someone else can be a huge help for you.

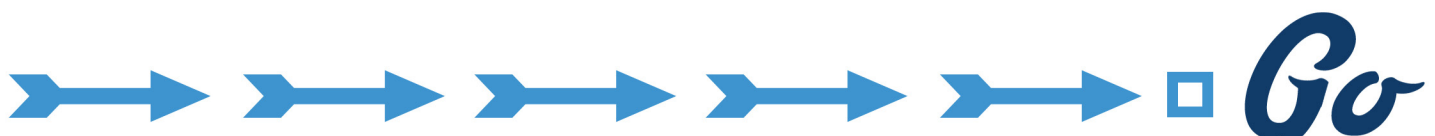
Here are a couple of ways to do it:

- **Read books by people who have accomplished what you are trying to accomplish.**
Take notes about what they did and how they did it.
- **Interview your circle of friends.**
I guarantee at least someone has done something similar.

This is WHO round 2.

For me, talking to my trainer Jeremy, who lost two hundred pounds, helped me with my tiny weight loss goal. He's a genius.

Today's goal is to get one tip from one person who is ahead of you.



day 14 TO THE LIBRARY!

Time to hit the books!

Yesterday I briefly mentioned the idea of reading a book. Today, let's talk about it a little more.

One of the most important things I've done toward accomplishing my goals is read books. Over and over again, I have been amazed at how critical a simple book can be to helping me crush a goal.

So, when was the last time you read a book about your dream?

When was the last time you went to the library and felt like a billionaire?

(I can get any book I want!)

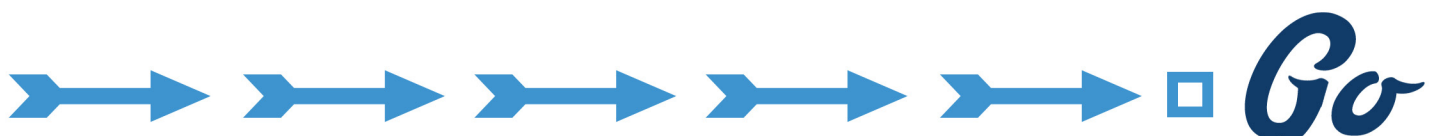
When was the last time you dusted off a classic or found a new title to add to your arsenal?

Want to hit your goals?

Find one book. That's all we're talking about this month. One book.

P.S. Want a few suggestions? Here are books I love!

1. **[Steal Like An Artist](#)** by Austin Kleon
2. **[The Heart Aroused](#)** by David Whyte
3. **[The Brand You 50](#)** by Tom Peters
4. **[The Big Leap](#)** by Gay Hendricks
5. **[Orbiting the Giant Hairball](#)** by Gordon MacKenzie





MARK YOUR PROGRESS OR YOU'LL NEVER KNOW YOU'RE MAKING ANY.

Halfway done!

Hard to believe it's already been fifteen days.

We don't have time to mess around.

Today's task is to do a quick progress report.

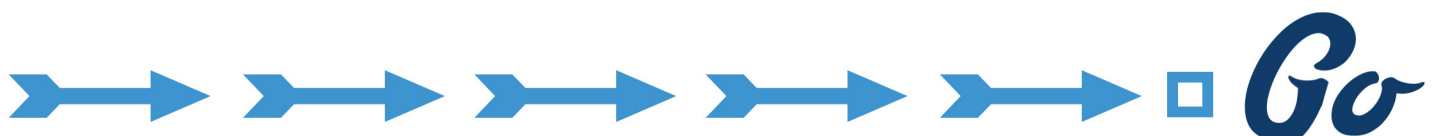
Take out a piece of paper. Draw a line horizontally across the page. On the left side, write "0%" at the end of the line. On the right side, write "100%."

Where is your goal at now? Are you halfway there? Are you 25% there? If you and I had coffee to discuss this, where would I see you place your goal?

That's the first part of a progress report. The second part is figuring out what it will take to close the gap between where you are today and reaching 100%.

So the challenge to you becomes: write down one "bridge:" an action that will take you from today to finished.

Write it down in your journal or notebook.





GOING THROUGH THE DIP, WHEN IT FEELS LIKE TIME TO QUIT.

Oh no, it's the Dip!

Why did I recommend you read good books the other day? Because they teach you good things.

Case in point, Seth Godin's book, [The Dip](#), is on my personal list of "Top 10 most influential business books." I read it for the first time when I was building my first real blog.

The concept is simple. Godin argues that in any endeavor or goal there is a period of easy wins. He uses learning Spanish as an example. When you first start studying, it's fun to pick up those initial words and you feel like you've made some progress. But after this rise in your ability, you hit what he calls the Dip, a time when things get hard.

This is the valley of any adventure where most people quit. This is the conjugating of verbs or the week when your weight loss doesn't move the scale an inch. This is the Dip. And I would suggest that depending on what you are trying to do, it can start happening as early as day 16. So if you are in the Dip or will hit it soon, here are three things I think you should do:

- 1. Admit it.**

Sometimes, just giving yourself permission to acknowledge that's where you're at is very freeing.

- 2. Reconnect with your WHY.**

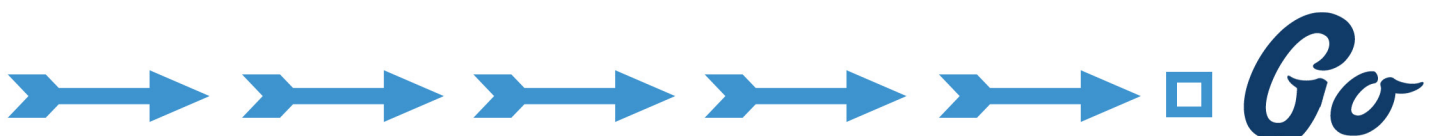
Remember that from day 2? Studies have shown that if we reconnect with our WHY during difficult times it actually helps us get through them.

- 3. Tell your WHO.**

Don't go it alone. Tell the person who is holding you accountable what's going on.

The Dip isn't fun, but it's often where a lot of growth is hidden. For more on the concept, check out [Seth Godin's book](#).

Otherwise, it's time to go!





EVERY BIG ADVENTURE NEEDS A BIG SOUNDTRACK.

I don't like when goal-setting books and blogs are so serious all the time. It feels like a chore and the duller something is, the less likely I am to actually stick with it.

We talked a little about fun last week; now let's get more specific with something I always talk about when it comes to goals.

Music.

Every big adventure needs a big soundtrack.

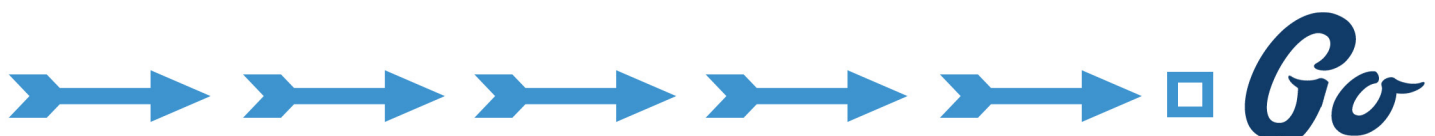
We know this is true when it comes to things like jogging. We all run a little faster when "Welcome to the Jungle" comes through our headphones. But most of the time, we don't do a good job applying the power of music to our goals.

Today, I want you to find one song that keeps you going. (At this point in the 30DOH Challenge, I've already emailed you 17 different songs. You can pick one of those if you want to.)

It doesn't have to be hardcore rap or "Eye of the Tiger." Motivating doesn't always mean fast and loud. Some of my favorite motivational music is by a guy named "Ulrich Schnauss." I don't know why I put his name in quotes, probably cause it sounds exotic. He has a really chill song called "... Passing By." I listen to it some mornings when it's early and I need to ease into my goal of writing.

So that's it.

Write your song down in your journal or notebook.





BALLOONS FLY HIGHER WITHOUT ANCHORS.

I once got burned out at a job.

Without really even thinking about it, I became the guy in the office who was always criticizing everything. As I wrote about in my book [Do Over](#), I was the jerk who would burst the new guy's bubble as he expressed his week one excitement about his new job.

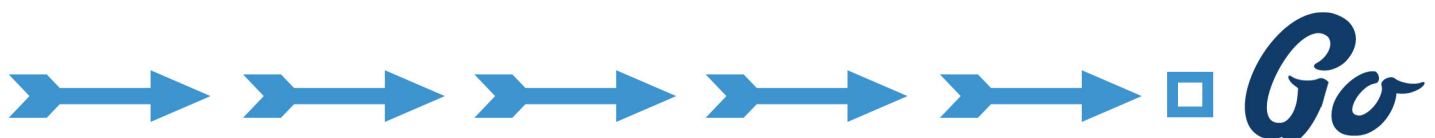
I became an anchor for other peoples' dreams, intent on holding them back with my frustration about my own dream. I didn't realize it at the time, but looking back I can see that's what I was doing.

Chances are you have some anchors in your life too. People who by their words or actions weigh you down and impede your hustle.

Some of those people you can turn into friends by letting them know in a kind way that they've been an anchor to you. Other people won't want to transform no matter what you tell them.

It's painful to learn that with some people you only have one thing in common. If you don't party as much as they want to because you're working on a big project, the calls stop coming. That's OK though, because every dream isn't for every friend. Other people, though, will love the chance to reinvent a friendship and will be sorry they weren't more supportive.

Look around and be honest with yourself. Are you surrounded by anchors? Are you being an anchor for someone else? Is today the moment to let an anchor go?





TOOL TIME!

Sometimes our goals fail because we don't use the right tools.

I would define a tool as anything that helps you succeed.

I think the problem is that a lot of us see tools as crutches. We think that we need to man up and just do it! So instead of buying a book about beating writer's block for ideas, we just buckle down with a blank sheet of paper and strain our way through one lame paragraph.

But tools are critical.

Here are a few I am using right now.

1. Moleskine notebook.

I'm such a hipster. Writing things down and actually seeing my progress is a huge help for me.

2. Timer on my iPhone.

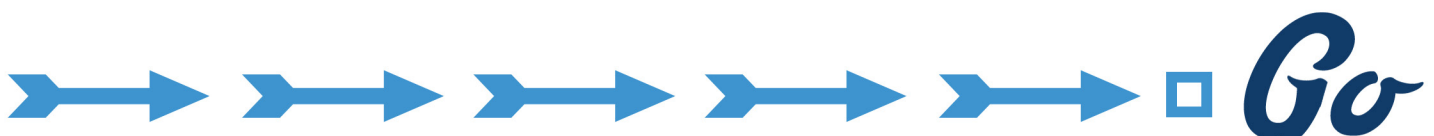
I like to do sixty minute bursts of work. I set a timer and then just focus on the task at hand. (I'll teach you how to do this on day 28!)

3. The Nike Running app.

It might seem silly, but being encouraged by complete strangers on my exercise progress really motivates me.

We all need tools if we are going to really accomplish our goals.

P.S. If you read the word "tool" as a synonym for "jerk," this challenge is super awkward.





BATCH! BATCH! BATCH!

A number of experts have written about this concept over the last few years and today I'll add my own take.

Batching a series of tasks is often the best way to get them done.

For instance, I batch wrote seven of these challenges one day when I worked on them. I didn't write one a day; I sat down and knocked out almost 25% of them in one session.

Why does this work?

Because *momentum* works.

When you get in the zone of a task, you break through all the inertia that keeps you stuck. Once that door is open, it's easier to walk through a few more tasks. Here are a few possible examples:

1. Trying to eat better?

Prepare three lunches in advance instead of just one.

2. Writing a blog?

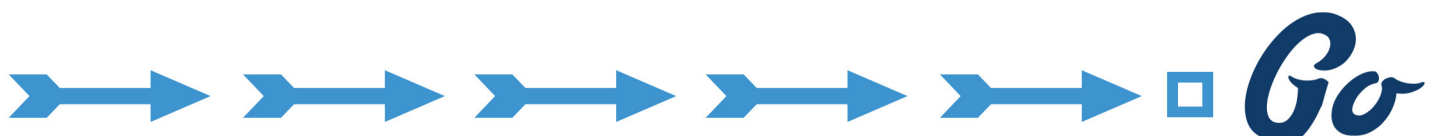
Write four posts next time you write instead of just one.

3. Applying for jobs?

Send out five resumes each time you sit down instead of just one.

Every goal, no matter how unique, can be broken into a batch process.

Today's challenge is to figure out a way you can batch your goal.





YOU CAN REST OR BURN OUT. CHOOSE WISELY.

Chasing a dream often involves getting comfortable with tension. If it was black and white all the time it would be easy. But it's not; accomplishing goals is usually grey.

For example, one of the biggest tensions is between hustle and rest.

I hate rest. It doesn't come naturally to me. It's not something I'm good at.

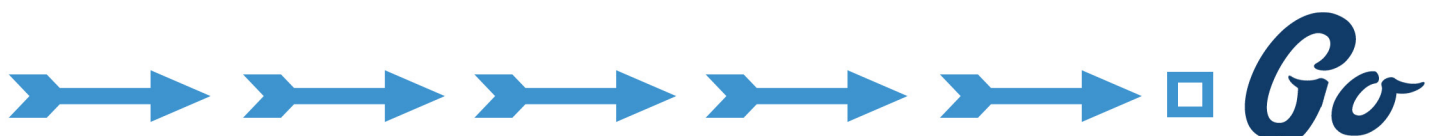
When I had a 9 to 5 job, it was hard for me to unwind on a week's vacation. I usually wasn't really relaxed until day 6 or 7 and then I had to go back to work. I needed a week just to unplug. Our culture feeds this every time someone brags about how busy they are or how many emails they have in their inbox.

We fail to see that a nap contributes to success or that goofing off is a valuable part of the creative process.

Today's goal is to rest. Maybe for you that means taking a fifteen minute break to walk around the building at work. Maybe that means going to a movie tonight. My counselor once suggested I read novels because I was reading too many nonfiction books.

I don't know what shape rest takes for you, but I know you need it.

So what's it going to be today? How will you rest?





PERFECT ISN'T THE GOAL; AWESOME IS.

I would like to think that you and I are going to go a perfect 30 for 30 this month! That we will hit every task, accomplish every challenge and walk away with a 100% completion rate.

Unfortunately, thirty-nine years of life discourage me from believing that.

Odds are we won't be perfect this month. Try as we might, we will make mistakes, have some moments where we drop the ball or get busy and focus on other things. When that happens, and it will, I want you to remember these three things:

1. Perfection is not the goal.

Never was, never will be. We're not aiming for a perfect month; we're aiming for a month more productive than last month.

2. You can't cram for goals that really matter.

Maybe in college you could wait all semester and then pull an all-nighter, but most of life doesn't work that way. If you missed three days of challenges, don't try to do them all in one day.

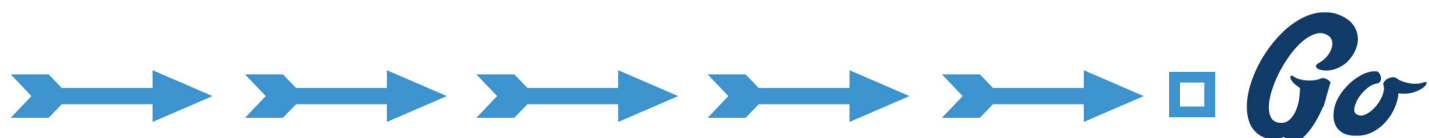
3. Every day is a chance to declare *Do Over*.

You get to choose to move forward to day 23 or start on day 1 again. You're the boss of the 30 Days of Hustle! You get to call *Do Over* whenever you want.

If you haven't done everything perfectly, don't worry about it.

Don't let perfection cripple you before you've even taken a month's worth of steps forward.

(Even if you missed some days.) Today's challenge is simply to let perfection go.





HUSTLE IS A LIFESTYLE, NOT AN AXE BODY SPRAY.

You might not be writing your book because you're eating too much queso.
(It pained me to say that.)

Your business might not be succeeding because you're not sleeping enough.

Your relationships might be suffering because your finances are crazy.

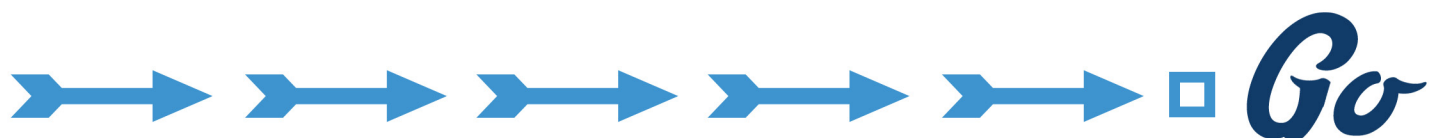
These examples might not seem related, but they are. We are one person, and when one area of our lives gets out of whack, the rest suffer.

Today's challenge is to do a quick diagnostic on your life. Take a look at the main areas:

1. Physical
2. Emotional
3. Financial
4. Career
5. Mental/Intellectual
6. Spiritual
7. Social

Is there one or more of these that is wildly out of balance? If so, you might need to tweak that before you can accomplish a goal, even if the two feel unrelated.

Scan the list, pick the area you need to work on and go!





EXCUSES HATE THE BRIGHT LIGHTS.

"I just made excuses until my dream came true!" Said no one ever.

It's true; excuses never move us forward. They only drive us backward...but we still make so many of them, don't we?

If ideas came as easily as excuses we'd all be geniuses.

Today's task is to drag a few of your excuses into the bright light of day.

I want you to write down three excuses that you tend to make. And then I want you to write the truth beneath them. I'll go first:

1. It's hard to work out because I always travel so much.

Not true. Sometimes I travel, but there are other months where I'm home the entire time. Travel doesn't prevent me from working out always.

2. It's hard to eat healthy because I have so many lunch meetings.

Not true. Nashville is full of healthy restaurants and most menus have healthy options on them.

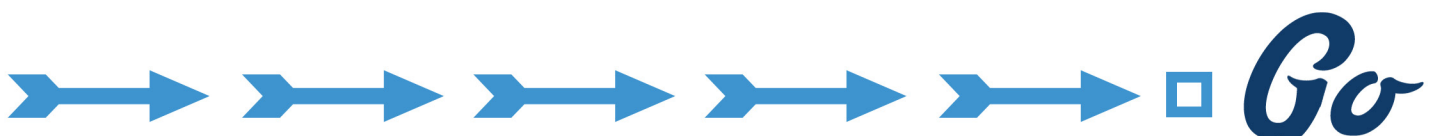
3. The workout my trainer gave me takes too long.

Not true. I just don't give myself enough time at the gym.

The funny thing is that once you do this exercise, it's harder to listen to those same excuses next time.

Get your pen and your paper.

Let's eliminate a few excuses.





GAME ON!

The book [Change Anything](#) by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, David Maxfield, Ron McMillan and Al Switzler, is a game changer. I could probably write about it a dozen times.

A tactic the authors shared to accomplishing life change is to “Make it a game.”

They dare you to gamify your challenge.

To do this, you need only three things:

1. Limited time.
2. A small challenge.
3. A score.

The first one we already have. This is called “30 Days of Hustle,” not “365 days of Hustle.”

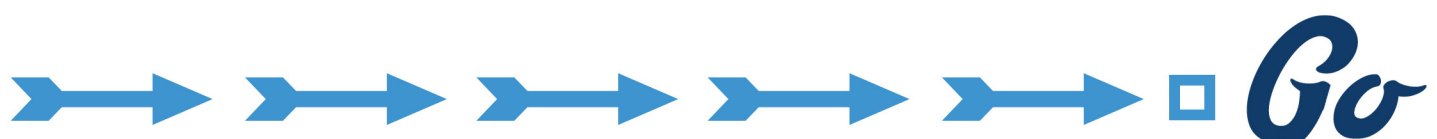
The second one we have too. Early on, I encouraged you to cut your goal in half.

That third one though, it can be tricky. How will you score yourself? It gets back to that data question from day 12. How will you turn the data you are tracking about your goal into a game?

One way I did was with a huge, productivity calendar from the NeuYear company. (You can see the one I use [right here](#).) I write things I need to accomplish on it and then I cross them off one by one when I am finished. I like seeing all the big X’s add up on the calendar. I challenge myself to see how many days in a row I can go.

Is that silly? Maybe, but it works because games work.

Today’s challenge is to think about your goal in terms of a game.





LOOK INTO THE FUTURE

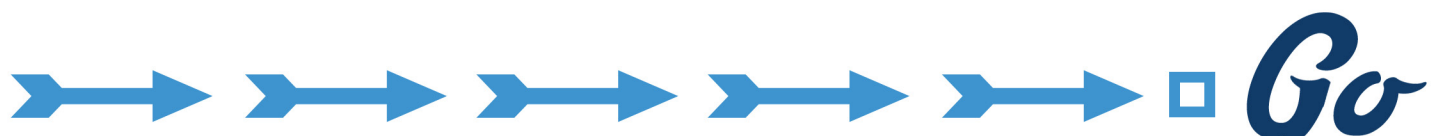
One time, my family went skiing in Colorado. We stayed at a friend's house in Crested Butte.

While we were there, we realized the last time we had visited was in 2011. We hadn't been there for three years. Suddenly, we started talking about all the things that had changed during that time. Then, we started to dream about what we hoped would have happened if we visited three years later. It became a fun, easy way to look into the future a little bit. Author Stephen Covey said you should, "Begin with the end in mind," and that's what we did by dreaming.

Today, as we get closer to ending the 30 Days of Hustle, I want to ask you two similar questions:

1. If you go through the 30 Days of Hustle a second time, where do you want to be after the 60 total days you've invested?
2. If you hustled for twelve months, instead of just 30 days, what do you hope you will have accomplished?

That's it. Two simple questions. Two easy ways to look into the future a little bit.





BE GRATEFUL.

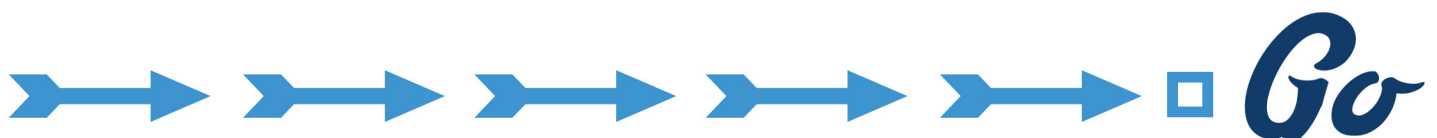
Today's hustle challenge is about gratitude.

I lost sight of that when I was building my first blog. I put my head down, hustled, and then acted like people didn't matter. I distanced myself from a lot of folks who were actually helping me along the way. I very rarely said those two important words, "Thank you."

I don't want you to make the same mistake I did. Someone in the last 27 days made your goal easier. Maybe they didn't run those miles with you or finish that business plan with you, but in some way they contributed to your goal.

Today, let's thank them. It doesn't have to be a complicated, fancy thank you note. It can be as simple as a text message or a phone call. Maybe you need to publically tweet your appreciation. The format doesn't matter as much as the act does.

That's it. Take sixty seconds as soon as you're done reading this and thank someone who helped you with your 30 Days of Hustle.





ONE LAST TRICK FOR THE ROAD!

There are a few things I am afraid of. Bears, obviously. Mismatched queso and chip portions where you end up with queso left but no chips. (I just got a little sweaty even typing that sentence.)

But some of my fears are more serious than that, and sometimes that includes writing.

How can something I feel called to do, something I love, something that is my passion, have fear associated with it?

I think it's because on some level, we're terrified of the thing that matters most to us. If we didn't care about it, we wouldn't be afraid of it. But if we're able to experience big joy doing something we'll also be able to experience big fear associated with it. That's why most people have huge "what if" dreams but never do anything with them.

I therefore, have the tendency to avoid writing. And you avoid whatever your thing is too. But fear not, I developed a very simple iPhone (or Android) trick to beat fear. It's the easiest thing on the planet, I promise.

Here's what you do:

1. Open the clock on your smartphone.
2. Choose timer.
3. Pick one hour.
4. Hit start.
5. Do your thing until the timer sounds.

That's it. Sound too simple to work? Try it first.

As we've discussed this month, part of our fear is that we think we have to do everything all at once. We're afraid of the size of the dream or the magnitude of the mission. We think we have to accomplish everything in one sitting. The enormity of that expectation paralyzes us.

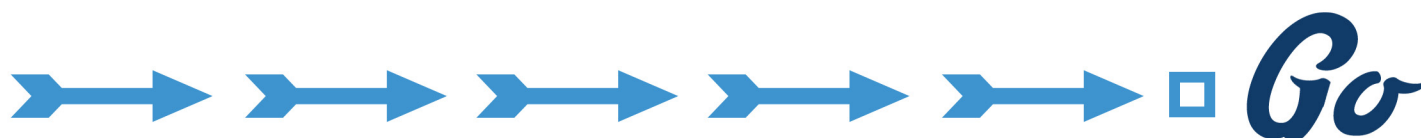
I can't write an entire book in one afternoon. But I can do just about anything for 60 minutes. That's not too scary. I can handle that.

And what often happens is that by the time the alarm goes off I'm in the flow and have a little momentum. I can steal another 30 minutes from fear.

How have I written 5 books in 5 years? In 60-minute segments. That's how.

As we get ready to wrap up, don't head into the wilderness thinking you have to accomplish your goal all at once now that the 30 Days of Hustle is over.

Work on it 60 minutes at a time. (Or 10 minutes if that's all you have available today.)





MAKE HUSTLE A HABIT!

The research on how long it takes to turn an action into a habit is a little fuzzy. Some sources say it takes 20 days. Some studies say 30, 60 or even 90. Although the exact number is difficult to determine and might be different for each person, the heart of how you create a habit is not hard to figure out.

All you have to do is repeat something for an extended period of time.

It's Day 29 of the 30 Days of Hustle and you've got a really special opportunity right now.

I want you to ask yourself these two questions:

1. What worked?
2. What didn't work?

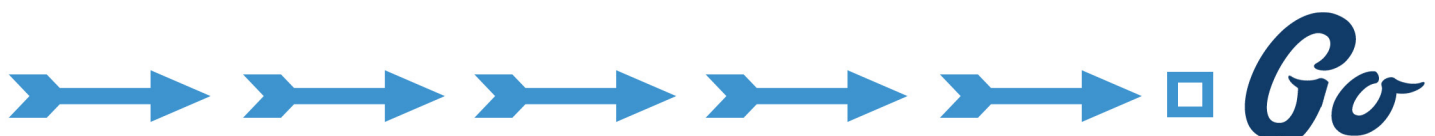
Often, we're sprinting so quickly that we never make time to do a quick assessment of where we've run. Or, we get so distracted by all the other commitments life requires that we don't learn from our mistakes.

Today, spend a few minutes writing down a list of things that worked and things that didn't. Did planning things out on the calendar help you stay faithful to your goal? Great! Repeat that activity for the next 11 months of the year.

Did the accountability partner you picked fail to respond to a single one of your texts? OK, find someone else to help you. That person gave you a month of research, don't ignore it.

Though the name is 30 Days of Hustle, the goal of this challenge was to give you some tools and habits you could use all year.

Carry forward what was helpful. Drop what wasn't.



day 30 THAT'S A WRAP!

We did it! For 30 days, we tried.

Did we knock out every day? Maybe. Maybe not, but I guarantee you did more on your goal this month than you did last month.

Today's challenge is easy.

It's time to brag.

I want to hear about what you worked on.

I created a quick survey. All you have to do is write a short sentence or two about what you accomplished.

This is our chance to say that together, we wrote 10,000 pages of new books, lost 1,000 pounds, and...well, you get the idea.

That's it. I'll even go first. The first time I went through the 30 Days of Hustle I lost four and a half pounds. My initial goal was five but then I cut it to two and a half, I hit my goal!

Now it's your turn!

Fill out the brag survey [right here!](#)

Thanks for being brave. If you liked the ideas in the 30 Days of Hustle, make sure you check out my book [Do Over!](#)

I hope your next 30 days are just as awesome as these were.

-Jon

