

Hi, everyone,

In this week's lesson we're going to talk about the importance of measuring your progress. I've introduced a number of different strategies and techniques so far, and hopefully you've already begun to make some of those changes.

But what's working so far? What should you tweak and adjust?

It is all too easy, as a motivated, ambitious person, to overlook wins and only focus the things we still want to improve, all the things that did not (yet) meet our expectations, and all the work yet to be done. However, research has shown that one of the most important drivers of productivity is seeing progress—even the small wins.

Teresa Amabile, a professor at Harvard Business School, analyzed nearly 12,000 diary entries provided by 240 employees from seven different companies, looking for the best ways to foster progress and enhance inner work life every day.

She discovered something she called “the progress principle.” Of all the things that can boost emotions, motivation, and perceptions during a workday, the single most important is making progress in meaningful work. And the more frequently people experience that sense of progress, the more likely they are to be creatively productive in the long run. Whether they are trying to solve a major scientific mystery or simply produce a high-quality product or service, everyday progress—even a small win—can make all the difference in how they feel and perform.

You can read all about their research and conclusions in their book, *The Progress Principle*. But the takeaway that I want you to get from this for this week is that you can't benefit from the motivation boost that this sense of progress provides if you don't recognize the progress.

Amabile and Kramer, explain further:

“When we think about progress, we often imagine how good it feels to achieve a long-term goal or experience a major breakthrough. These big wins are great—but they are relatively rare. The good news is that even small wins can boost inner work life tremendously.”

So what can you do to proactively acknowledge even the small wins?

Keep a daily journal of small wins. The easiest way to do this is with a free smartphone app from Strategic Coach called “Winstreak.” This is a very simple app that only does one thing: prompts you to write down your wins for the current day and list your three desired wins for the next day.

At the end of each day, regardless of what happened, record what your biggest “wins” were. Then, plan what your biggest wins will be for tomorrow. This will keep you focused on your goals while recognizing and celebrating your achievements—or wins—along the way.

Also, when you do the weekly and monthly planning that I described earlier in the course, make sure to take time to write down what you accomplished during the previous week or month. This is important not only for maintaining a sense of forward progress or momentum, but for making sure that tasks and projects don't fall through the cracks.

If you're going to be tracking your wins, you need to have a way of measuring and tracking your progress overall. For example, if your goal is to have six new functional medicine patients a week by June of next year, then you obviously need a system in place that will tell you when you've reached that goal.

Last week I mentioned the importance of personal retreats, periods of time that you set aside for reflection, brainstorming, and visioning for your life and your business. These retreats are also a great time to acknowledge your successes and take note of things that you'd still like to improve.

Finally, it can be very helpful to have feedback in this process. Entrepreneurs are often soloists by nature. But getting insight and support from other entrepreneurs with similar goals is one of the most powerful ways that I've found to move forward faster. I'll be talking about a specific way to facilitate this kind of feedback and support in the productivity tip for this week.

Okay, that's it for now. See you next time!