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THE MAGIC FORMULA FOR STAYING ACCOUNTABLE TO YOUR CAREER

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Hello and welcome back to the Career Reset podcast.

Today, my friends, I am talking about staying accountable to your career, bringing your career goals to life, and really making them happen. I'm going to give you some valuable tips to help you stay accountable to your career goals.

In fact, I'm going to give you what I call the magic formula for getting things done. It's magic because it works and it's not overwhelming. I really want to make it easy for you to stay accountable, stay motivated to execute, and stay on top of your career plan because of all the things that you've done to get to this point, staying on top of your career plan, really making it happen is the part that most people struggle with.

You can do all the other stuff, and figure out what you want to do. Meet with people for advice and dedicate the time to writing your career plan. But when it comes to actually making it happen, when it comes to actually going out and making your career goals a reality, often what happens is that people will start strong and then the energy starts to peter out.

Because when you start taking action, when you start challenging yourself to go after a goal, all of a sudden there is this ongoing battle in your mind with your confidence, with your motivation, and you're constantly navigating all of these thoughts that are coming into your head so that you can overcome them. You can continue to take action, keep moving forward, and keep pushing your career plan forward in this case. That constant navigation of dealing with those thoughts that are coming into your head sounds like a lot of work.

Sometimes, it feels like a lot of work and it seems like it would be a lot easier if you would just forget about the whole thing. Just close your eyes and coast on the job that you have right now. That feels like it would be the easiest thing to do. Go back into that fingers-crossed mentality that we talked about in the last episode where you feel like, *'If I just do my job well, everything's going to work out for me.'*

But I have two things to say before you decide to go down that fingers-crossed path. First of all, staying accountable to your career does not have to be overwhelming. The second thing is closing your eyes and coasting is the most dangerous thing you can do, at least for your career and in other parts of your life, but

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definitely for your career. We're going to get into how to stay motivated, how to keep your eyes open and keep taking action. I'm going to walk you through my magic formula for doing that.

I want to remind you as well that this podcast is the fourth episode in a four-part series on how to take back control of your career. If you want to know what we actually cover in the ultimate career reset membership, we dig into everything that I've been covering with you in this four-part series. We go into all of this information and a lot more.

I'm launching my podcast with this series because I really believe it's foundational to not only share what I do at the Career Reset and what I'm going to be talking about in this podcast but also what it takes to have the career that you want. In the show notes, I'm going to link to all the episodes in this series to make it really easy for you to jump around and get the information you're looking for. The show notes are @thecareerreset.com/06.

Now, the last piece of the puzzle, the last piece in this four-part series when you're taking control of your career is really the long game. It's really going out there and going after your career goals and making them happen, bringing your career plan to life, starting to do the things that you need to do to make your career goals a reality and the challenge is that a lot of people will take this stage of the process for granted because they think it's easy. We all think it's easy.

We all do stuff every day. We all know how to do stuff. We all have to-do lists. We know how to work through our to-do lists. We feel like we do this all the time. We don't really need to focus our energy on figuring out how to make things happen. We know how to make things happen. But the reality is, anytime you're pushing yourself out of your comfort zone to start doing things differently, to really start doing things that might make you a little uncomfortable, things often can go sideways very easily.

Your brain starts to kick in and it tries to convince you to stop doing these things that are making you uncomfortable. It starts to feel unsafe. So it says, *'No, stop. We need to go back to safety. We need to go back to comfort land.'* It starts to give you all these excuses to start to push you off track, especially since you're only accountable to yourself in this mission. To take control of your career, no one's making you do it. It's really easy to make that decision to fall off track.

As long as you have a job right now, it's easy to deprioritize your career management because no one's waiting for you to do it. You have a job, you can eat, you have shelter, you can survive where you are right now. What's the point in worrying about the future? What's the point in doing all this prep work and laying the groundwork anyway?

It's really easy to just close your eyes when something gets hard or when we're nervous to do it or it gets uncomfortable and no one's really waiting for us to be doing it. It's easy. We don't do it. We think it's okay to deprioritize those kinds of things. And that's natural because your brain is wired to one, stay safe, and two, conserve its energy to do as little work as possible.

The minute your brain senses that discomfort, it wakes up and says, *'Hold the horses, what's going on here? What is going on? We can't have this. We need to chill a little.'* Your brain starts sending you messages like, '*Are you sure*

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you want to be doing this? Do you really have to be doing this? Wouldn't it be easier just to do this other thing, instead? Or just do nothing or just put this off until you're really, really sure and you're really, really ready.'

That's why people fall off things like diets or meal plans, let hobbies go, or have all these unfinished projects all around the house. You hit a roadblock or something gets really hard and you start making excuses to stop doing or stop focusing on whatever it is you're trying to do. I fall victim to that all the time with my workout and exercise regimen. It's easier for me to stay in bed, cuddle with my dogs than it is to get my butt to the gym and get a little sweat on.

We only re-engage in this *'hard stuff'* when a crisis kicks in because when a crisis kicks in, a crisis by definition sometimes means that your safety is in jeopardy. When your safety is in jeopardy, your brain gets super focused.

We'll start to prioritize that hard stuff. And it's okay to do that sometimes with some things, but as we talked about before, when it comes to your career, we don't want to wait for a crisis to motivate you because that's when you end up making either short-term decisions or emotional decisions that don't always work out. Or you might actually find yourself trapped in a really tough situation with very few options, and you don't want to find yourself there for sure.

What can you do instead? How can you consistently stay accountable to your career, maintain the momentum, and focus on making your career a priority with as little struggle as possible? Those little struggles with that tricky brain of yours. Thankfully, you're here because I've got a simple magic formula that I want to share with you today. Here it is: **Momentum equals small steps plus consistency multiplied by wins.**

I don't know if you know this about me, but I am a former math student, so formulas for me make a lot of sense. It's always easy to put things very consistently into a formula because it makes it easy to follow. Each part of this formula is pretty critical – the small steps, the consistency, and the wins. If you skip any part of this formula, you will lose momentum. I'm not saying you *might* lose momentum, you *will* lose momentum for sure. It's not a risk, it's for sure.

Believe me, I don't take those things lightly. I don't take these emphatic direct statements lightly. I'm usually much better at couching things with maybes and kindas and all that stuff. But this is for sure. You need the small steps. You need the consistency and you need the wins.

Let's go through this, each part of this formula, and I'm actually going to start with consistency. Consistency is where you choose how much time you consistently want to dedicate to your career. You have to decide where you're going to prioritize your career in your overall life. What I recommend is a career before the job. This means prioritizing your career before your day job. Because a lot of people tend to put career management in the work bucket. It sits in the work bucket of your life with all the other things you do to earn money.

Like in terms of the time allocation that you want to give it. I get that. It makes sense. But once you put your career management in that work bucket, people say within that work bucket that they have to do the things they get paid to do. First, because they need the money. We all need the money. They don't want to upset the people

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who are paying them. And once they do that, then they'll get to their careers, because no one's paying them to do that. I used to think that way too. But it's a backward thinking.

Putting your career before your job is actually making sure you're nurturing, you're watering, you're fertilizing your ability to make money and show up for your family and your life and all the important things and all the people who are counting on you. Because if you don't nurture and water and fertilize that ability that you've got that network, that plan, those goals, sooner or later, like we've talked about, you're going to find yourself in a tough situation where you're putting some things at risk. You don't want to find yourself in that situation.

So putting a career before the job is really critical. It actually helps you stay accountable to the people and things and bills and mortgages and all those things that count on you. That doesn't mean that you should dog it on your day job. I'm not saying that you still need to put in 100%. You still need to show up and do the job that you're getting paid to do. What I'm saying is you need to get into the habit of putting yourself first. Planning your time around yourself first. In this case, it means consistently putting your career before the job.

How do you do that? How do you effectively prioritize your career before your job? Well, it's pretty simple. First, you need to decide how much incremental time you will spend every week on your career. I recommend a minimum of about an hour a week, more is better if you can. And if you only have 30 minutes a week, that's fine too. You need to decide how much incremental time you're going to spend on your career, and at the beginning of each week when you're planning out your whole week for your work, you're going to plot this time in first.

Yes, you have meetings. Yes, you have work you have to get done. Within your workday somewhere, whether it's before you start or at the end of the day, wherever it works for you, you're going to plot this time in first. You can say you're going to take this incremental 60 minutes and do it all in one shot. Or you can break it up across the week, 10 minutes a day, or something like that. Whatever you want, depending on what you need to get done that week.

But the very first thing you do is plot that time and in plotting that time and being consistent, there are only two rules that you need to follow. That 60 minutes that you plot every week or whatever that time frame is for you, wherever you put it, you must commit to making it your number one priority in the timeframe that you put it in. Assuming there are no medical emergencies out there, nothing is going to distract you from getting what you committed to doing in that timeframe. No exceptions.

The second rule is you have to do it every week. You have to put that 60 minutes or whatever it is on your calendar every week. The only exception here is when you go on holiday, otherwise, every week. So that time you put on your calendar for your career is your number one priority. No excuses. Nothing takes priority over it unless just a medical emergency. And the second thing is it needs to happen every single week. That's it.

You might've noticed that I keep saying the word '*incremental 60 minutes.*' The incremental time you're spending. What I mean by that is when you're purposefully executing your career plan, you will see that some of the things that you need to do for your career plan, you can actually integrate them as part of your day job. It's not incremental work. It's work that you can purposefully do throughout the course of actually just doing your job.

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For instance, it could be things like focusing on building relationships with certain people that you work with or nurturing specific relationships. It could be working on behavioral blind spots that you're trying to improve certain behaviors, and so you can practice that on the job. Maybe it's also activating certain achievements or going after certain achievements as part of your job. Things that you've identified on your plan. Those are things that you are actually integrating into how you do your job every day.

In this case, it's not passive. It's not just passively showing up and doing your job because you are purposefully and knowingly integrating behaviors and actions and going after things that are part of your career plan. You're really leveraging what you do on a daily basis to help you grow your career. When I say an incremental 60 minutes or whatever time you're allocating, I'm talking about time that is not part of the day job. The time you're spending on things that you can't integrate into the day job.

Like LinkedIn profiles and networking, writing, contributing to blogs, working on your resume, or building and revising your plan every week or every quarter. Those are things that are not part of the day job. They're incremental and you want to spend somewhere around at least an hour doing that every week. But whatever you've got, give it to it. Like if you only have 30 minutes, give it 30 minutes. The important thing is consistency. Doing it every week and prioritizing that time, protecting it, and making sure you give that gift to yourself.

Let's go on to small steps because that's really the foundation of actually doing the work. It's easy to get overwhelmed when you think about all the little steps you need to take to get to your big goal. It sounds huge. It sounds overwhelming. You start thinking that you have to build a support network and brand visibility and LinkedIn and network and resumes and interviewing and start looking for a job. There's so much to do. How are you ever going to get it all done?

It's easy to freak out about this. It's easy to get overwhelmed, especially when you already have a ton on your plate, and I'm sure you already have a ton on your plate, so I want to remind you that building your career plan or reaching your career goals is really a long game. It doesn't have to be done by next week. It doesn't have to be done by next month. You just need to focus on getting there.

If your goal is to get a certain kind of job in a specific organization and it takes you two years to get that job versus one year, is that so terrible? If it takes you one year versus six months, is that so terrible? At the end of the day, you got the job you wanted. At the end of the day, you achieved your goal. It doesn't matter how fast you get there, you just want to consistently go after something. The only time it makes sense to have a strong sense of urgency is when you don't have a job and your financial well-being is at risk.

In that case, you definitely want to spend more time and dedicate more time to that job search. You can spend those eight hours a day building your plan, networking, landing the job, getting really, really focused on at least, if not your dream job, getting the job that's going to take the financial pressure off you so you can focus on resetting the career that you're actually going after.

But for those of you who already have a full-time gig, it's about the small steps. And here's what I mean. A small step is a step that takes you a little bit outside your comfort zone, but not so far outside your comfort zone that it

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freaks you out to the point where you don't do it. It's a little push, but not a huge push because those huge pushes can be really scary.

That's when your brain really starts to kick in so you have to find that sweet spot of small steps that works for you. And those small steps are going to be different kinds of small, depending on the step that you're taking. So you have to find that sweet spot based on what part of your plan you're focused on.

There is only one rule when it comes to taking small steps: **Whatever you decide you're going to do, you have to do it with no excuses.** You have to do whatever it is that you say you're going to do. It's all about integrity here.

This week, you're going to read a couple of articles on LinkedIn profiles. Great, that's a small step. If that's comfortable, if that's just a little uncomfortable for you, then just do that. If you're trying to improve your relationship with your boss and all you can commit to right now is trying to see things her way this week, that's the small step you're taking. Then just do that.

If one of the things that you're going to do is have a feedback session with an influencer and it's freaking you out and you keep putting it off, then your small step this week is to simply focus on putting together a proposed agenda or focus on sending the email and asking for the meeting or just write the email. That's your focus. Don't even press send.

Find the small step that works for you. The only rule is whatever you decide you're going to do, you have to be prepared to do it. No exceptions. That means that you really have to be careful what you choose to do. The minute you start with exceptions, things start to fall apart. At the beginning of the week, when you're planning your *'career time,'* your consistent career time, I also want you to plot out or make a list of what steps you're going to be taking this week toward your career goals.

Whether it's the steps that you want to take that you'll integrate into your day job or the small steps that you intend to take in that incremental 60 minutes that you've put on your calendar, it doesn't matter. Make a list of the small steps that you want to accomplish that week, take a look at that list, and make sure that whatever you decide to keep on that list are things that you are 100% committed to executing. Whatever you put on that list, you're going to get it done, you're going to prioritize it, and you're not going to shy away from it.

Remember, commit wisely. It's okay if, in the first few weeks, you're not pushing yourself too far outside of your comfort zone, that's okay. You will build momentum, you will get stronger, and you will feel more courageous as things go on. The key thing here is consistent prioritization. If you say you're going to do it, you are going to do it so make sure you commit wisely. The beauty part of all of this is you get to decide how much you put on your plate and how far you're going to be pushing yourself.

Don't push yourself too far. I'm a person who always says to think big, push yourself out of your comfort zone, and all of that. I really do subscribe to that. But when you're starting out doing something, the key is consistency. Even if the step is small, take the small step. You're still taking a step, you're still moving forward. You can worry about accelerating your momentum later because you might find in a couple of weeks, your steps are too small and then you can make them slightly bigger or you can make some of them slightly bigger.

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It's up to you, you get to decide you are in control. That's pretty awesome, you are in control. How many things can you actually say that about in your life? You control this so you can make it work. In terms of small steps and thinking about how to choose your small steps or how to accelerate your small steps, there's a little advice to help you keep moving forward and gauging how fast you can go for you.

It's something that I learned from a gentleman named John Betts who was, and actually, I think is still the president of McDonald's Canada. When I worked there, he always used to say, *'Beat yesterday.'* I don't actually think he invented it, but he used to always say it. Beat yesterday. And that always stuck with me, that whole idea of beating yesterday.

If you're trying to be a better listener and you know that's a behavioral blind spot for you and it's something that you're focusing on and you show up today and you're trying to do it, but you blow it six out of six times, no problem. Next time, just try and blow it five out of six times. You don't have to get it perfect. You just need to beat yesterday, so you know you're showing up, you're consistently trying, which means you are doing what you said you were going to do.

But even if you don't get it perfectly, even if you don't make it absolutely the best way every time you do it or the best that you can do every time you do it, that's okay. Just beat yesterday. That's it. That's all you have to do. If you just focus on beating yesterday, six months from now, you are going to be in an entirely different situation than you are right now so plan out your small steps every week. Be 100% committed to the steps you commit to doing and just focus on beating yesterday.

That's what it takes to do the small steps and that's the two first parts of the formula. Small steps plus consistency and just those two things together are really very powerful, but those two things alone are not going to get you to momentum. What you need to do is to put those small steps in consistency together and then you need to multiply it by wins.

You might be thinking winning is just simply a celebration. You hear that all the time. Make time to celebrate. We all hear that, and we nod and we're like, *'Yeah, yeah, yeah, I'm going to celebrate.'* And then we don't. We're onto the next achievement. We're onto the next task on our to-do list. I get that. I'm like that sometimes, but I'm not really actually talking about celebration. Even though I do believe celebration is important, that's not what I'm talking about right now.

I'm talking about recognition. More specifically, I want you to focus on constructive recognition. That's what I mean by winning constructive recognition. What I'm talking about when I say constructive recognition is recognizing and focusing on what you did well. It's as simple as that. Being constructive about what you're recognizing. I want you to focus on what's working. Recognize all the little wins you had in a day, You don't need fanfare. You don't need balloons. You don't need to post about it on your social media if you don't want to.

Certainly, all those things are welcome, but they're not necessary. The part that's necessary is that you need to focus on recognition. Recognition that you achieved what you set out to achieve. Recognition that you beat yesterday or that you at least tried to beat yesterday. Recognition that you're proud of how you showed up, how

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you acted, or how you caught yourself. Or you just notice that you're not doing things the way you intended to do them.

Whatever it is, recognition that you're showing up. Even if something didn't go the way you wanted it to go, even if you prioritized it and you tried to do it and you didn't get the result that you wanted. I want you to recognize the effort and the learning. That's the win. Focus on adopting a what's working attitude versus what most of us do is tend to spend all of our energy focusing on what's missing. Focus on what's working versus focusing on what's missing.

In fact, I don't want you to spend any energy on what's missing, what you did wrong, how much you suck, how inadequate you are. It doesn't help you to focus on those things. Just focus on constructively recognizing your wins and the reason the formula is not momentum equals small steps plus consistency plus wins, but rather multiplied by wins is because when you focus on wins and what's working, it completely multiplies your ability to maintain your momentum.

Think about it. You're rewarding yourself constantly with positive thoughts about yourself. You're making yourself feel awesome constantly. Who doesn't want more of that? Who doesn't find it motivating to hear awesome things about yourself? We want our bosses to say awesome things about us all the time. We love it when people say awesome things about us on social media. It's really about rewarding yourself and making yourself feel awesome about what you're doing at work.

The more you focus on this constructive recognition, the more you focus on that positive energy around wins, and the more you consistently take small steps, your brain starts to learn that by consistently taking these small steps, you feel great. It wants more of this great feeling. It makes those small steps easier and easier. It makes you more comfortable to take slightly smaller steps or slightly bigger steps.

I recommend practicing this constructive recognition every day. Maybe at the end of the day, first thing in the morning, or the previous day. Just run through all of your wins. Don't just do it in your head, you need to get it out of your head. At a minimum, just say them out loud. If you're in your car, that's fine. Whatever. Say them out loud.

Best case scenario, write them down because you're really taking the time to get those thoughts at when you write down. And if you're not a journaler, don't freak out. That's fine. Just write down some bullet points in your notebook at the end of every day. You can put it in the corner, in the margin, or on a note-taking app on your phone while you're on the train home, or just while you're in your car, you could get Siri to open up a recording app and just talk to your recording app. Have a recorded journal, that's fine.

Wherever you can fit it in, just do it every day. That's the magic formula for making your career goals a reality. Consistent prioritization plus small steps taken with integrity multiplied by your daily win recount. Consistency plus small steps multiplied by your wins.

That's it for this episode. It's also a wrap for the four-part series on how to take back control of your career, where we covered things like rediscovering your best self, knowing what you want, and planning for your career success. And of course today, we talked about staying accountable for your success.

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Next week I'm going to dive a little bit into my background and I want to share with you my three biggest career mistakes that I recommend you avoid. I'm so excited about that one. Not.

Thanks for joining me. I hope you're taking away something from this podcast. Leave me some comments in the show notes. Let me know what you think about it and I will talk to you next week.

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