

FROM RESOLUTIONS TO RESULTS

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It's that time of year again! You've vowed to make a fresh start in the New Year. Whether you have formal New Year's Resolutions or not, most of us feel moved to at least consider what we want this new year to bring.

But how do you move from those resolutions to real results?

Most of us don't know how, which is why so many resolutions fail. In order to succeed with the "New Year, New You," you need to start with *one* very powerful question.

What is the one thing you could do that would have the greatest impact on your vision?

The answer is your *catalyst*. In the sciences, a catalyst is a substance that increases the rate of a chemical reaction without being consumed in the process. For you, a catalyst is an action that dramatically increases the rate at which you achieve your vision, without consuming *you*.

To take effective action, you can get the potency of a catalyst by using an action plan appropriately called the CATA List. The CATA List is a chart divided into four categories:

1. Catalysts
2. Achievements
3. Tasks
4. Avoidances.

These categories help you sort interminable lists of To Dos to find the ones that pack the biggest punch. Then you trim away the rest.

"C" IS FOR CATALYSTS

To find your catalysts, ask yourself, "What is the one thing you could do that would have the greatest impact on your vision?"

Any item you call a "catalyst" must be an action that drives all the rest, either because it causes the rest of the actions to happen; it frees you to put your time where you want it; or it unlocks a barrier to action. The main criterion for your catalyst is that you know this one piece will do more than any other to advance you in the direction of your vision. If you're writing a speech, a catalyst might be to stand up and practice. If you're leading a company, a catalyst might be to communicate the strategic

direction. If you're trying to lose fifty pounds, a catalyst might be to go running or give up sugar. Looking at these examples, you can see how easily catalysts get crowded out by more pressing issues. Indeed, even though your catalysts have the most value, if you're not careful they can easily get pushed aside.

To find your catalysts, think about what action you would take if you could find uninterrupted quality time because you know it would make the biggest difference in your ability to attain your vision.

“A” IS FOR ACHIEVEMENTS

The next category includes actions you classify as important. *Really* important. They may not have the transformational effect of your catalysts, but they are the kinds of achievements that matter on a day to day basis. These achievements typically take center stage in your life. They tend to be:

- daily actions
- key relationships
- priority projects
- deadlines.

As a rule, working on achievements makes for a very productive day.

“T” IS FOR TASKS

You use the “tasks” category for the actions you'd like to take but can't justify as truly critical. Yes, they are things that may have to get done, but they don't have nearly the impact as your catalysts and achievements.

Tasks are big time consumers. Long meetings. Some networking. Obsessive perfecting of non-essential details. You might feel a little twinge when you admit these tasks are less-than-important, because you may want to do them. And you may get to. But only after the more valuable things are done.

“A” IS FOR AVOIDANCES

Many leaders find the “avoidances” category the hardest to fill. The items in this category take more energy than they deserve. When you're trying to rid your action plan of excess, cut the fat by forcing yourself to put at least 25 percent of your To Dos onto this list. To find actions avoid, look for the ones that take a lot of time with little return. The “avoidances” list is a place to throw off extra baggage. Letting some actions go – undone - lets you to be lighter, more nimble, and available for the things that really matter.

As a whole, the CATA List takes the commitments that emerge from your focus areas and marries them in a single-page, concrete list of actions that ultimately lead to your vision for living and leading well.

When you create a CATA List, you have a quick categorization of everything you need to do, organized in order of value. As you think about all the actions on your To Do list now, can you see how categorizing your tasks in order of value might help you make room for working on your goals? Suddenly the most important thing you need to do isn't just the most pressing; it's the one that fits with your focus and leads to your vision.

To create your own CATA List, use the free worksheet available at www.TheInnerEdge.com.

Please join us for The Inner Edge Book Club! This month we will be using the CATA List to break through to greater, more effective action. For more information, [click here](#) or email info@TheInnerEdge.com.

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