Action Planning

Bruce Woodcock, University of Kent
bw@kent.ac.uk

Action Planning

Is a process to help you to focus your ideas and to decide what steps you need to take to achieve goals.

Keep a to-do list

These mini action plans will help you to organise your life effectively:
update it every day.
Set up a reminder system.

Avoid procrastination

Start your plan NOW, not in 6 months.
Don't spend too long time planning: this is a way of procrastinating.

Commitment

Tell friends/relatives about your goals to provide support when the going gets tough & you'll feel embarrassed if you have to tell them you've given up!
Mix with positive people who will encourage you to keep going.

Write down your plan

Write down your commitments: you tend to abide more with what you've written down as written commitments require more effort to make than verbal ones.

Prioritise

Do urgent & important tasks first not the easy ones. Efficiency & effectiveness are **not** the same: effective people focus on the important tasks.

Persevere

Consider potential problems & how to overcome these.
Have a contingency plan if things don't work out: map several paths to your goal & build flexibility into your planning.

Goals

Set clearly defined goals which are realistic & achievable.
Break tasks down into steps. Don't worry about the order at this stage.
Arrange the steps in a logical order.
Break down any large steps into smaller components.
Focus on one step at a time.

Rewards

Give yourself a small treat for completing of each step: the bigger the step the bigger the reward!
List the benefits you'll gain by reaching your goal.

Review your progress

Revise plans as appropriate.
Map put several routes to your goal.
Have a contingency plan.