

Sprint After Your Goals at Cheetah Speed

By Michelle LaBrosse, PMP®, Chief Cheetah and Founder of Cheetah Learning, and Kristen Medina, CAPM®, Co-Author

Imagine yourself at the starting line, stretching and flexing and making sure that your shoes are tied tight and that your winning bib number is securely fastened. This is you, at the gate, achieving your wildest dreams. As the starting gun sounds, you sprint into action, with every muscle in your being toned and prepared to get you to your end goal. As you race across the finish line, the crowd, full of your friends and family, go wild, yelling your name and congratulating you for your race of a lifetime.

Now, come back to reality. How did that scenario make you feel? You just completed an amazing accomplishment with the support of friends and family; an accomplishment you were so passionate about that it compelled you to perform at your very best. Now imagine if every goal you went after ended this way. It can happen when you pursue your goals vigorously and passionately. Here are 10 ways to help you sprint towards your goals at Cheetah Speed.

- 1. Make sure your goals are SMART.** You have a big, hairy, audacious goal—that is fantastic. Now how will you know when you've reached that goal? When making a goal, ensure that it's SMART, which means: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely. When your goal is measurable, you can be held accountable for your goal, and will be more likely to achieve it.
- 2. Don't Limit Yourself with Limiting Beliefs.** What are your limiting beliefs? If you've ever thought to yourself: "I'm unlucky," or "I'm not the running type," or "I'm a bad negotiator," these are limiting beliefs, and they just aren't true. Take a moment to take inventory of any limiting beliefs that may be holding you back from going after your goals. When you get rid of your limiting beliefs, you get rid of your limits.
- 3. Visualize Your Goal.** Just as you visualized finishing the sprint just a few minutes ago—practice visualizing how you will feel when you have accomplished your goal. See it in your mind—that is, see yourself achieving the dream, whatever it is. Like passing the PMP exam, or having happy children, a very successful career, your dream house, a very in-shape body—whatever your dream is. Think and feel how awesome it is you achieved your dream for a few seconds... (1,2,3)... Amazing right?
- 4. Take Small Steps.** One of the biggest things that can stop us in our tracks is when the enormity of our goal paralyzes us. To prevent that, break your goal down into bite-size deliverables that can be accomplished every week, and decide when and where you will make time to accomplish that weekly goal.

5. **Make the Time.** When is the last time that you sat down and focused on your goal, and only your goal, for 30 minutes straight without interruption? This is called timeboxing. Like a sprint, timeboxing will help you cover a lot of ground in a short amount of time. Set a timebox for yourself today, and sprint towards your goal.
6. **Write it Down.** You write out your grocery list, your “to do” list, your guest list—what about your GOAL list? According to a study done by Dave Kohl, a Virginia Tech professor, people who regularly write down their goals earn nine times as much over their lifetime as people who don't. What goals can you put on your goal list today?
7. **Learn to say “NO.”** Say it with me: “NO!” Now get used to saying this word over and over again. Why is the word “No” so important? If you always say “Yes” when asked to do something, you are giving away your time, your resources, and your talents. Say “No” in order to create the time and space you need to go for your goals.
8. **Get Psyched.** Napoleon Hill, in his book “Think and Grow Rich,” said: “The starting point of all achievement is desire. Keep this constantly in mind. Weak desires bring weak results, just as a small amount of fire makes a small amount of heat.” What goal ignites your desire? What gets you over-the-top psyched? Get that feeling towards achieving your goals and watch how fast you can turn your dreams into reality.
9. **Get in the Driver’s Seat.** YOU are the driving force in reaching your goals. While others can help you, no one can do it for you. This means that you cannot live in your circle of concern and worry about what you can’t control and how that is preventing you from achieving your dreams. Focus on what you CAN control, and steer yourself in the direction that you need to go to successfully complete your goal. No one will do it for you—embrace the driving force inside you so you can race towards your goal today.
10. **Today is the Day.** There is a wise Chinese Proverb that says, “The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The next best time is today.” Do you have a tree you've been meaning to plant, but stop yourself because you are “too late”? The power of the present should not be underrated. Plant your tree today and watch your dreams grow, and do it TODAY.

We hope you are excited as we are about you racing towards your goals today. On your mark, get set... GO!!!

About the Author:



Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is an entrepreneurial powerhouse with a penchant for making success easy, fun, and fast. She is the founder of [Cheetah Learning](#), the [author](#) of the [Cheetah Success Series](#), and a prolific [blogger](#) whose mission is to bring Project Management to the masses.

Cheetah Learning is a virtual company with 100 employees, contractors, and licensees worldwide. To date, more than 50,000 people have become “Cheetahs” using Cheetah Learning’s innovative Project Management and accelerated learning techniques.

Recently honored by the Project Management Institute (PMI®), Cheetah Learning was named Professional Development Provider of the Year at the 2008 PMI® Global Congress. A dynamic keynote speaker and industry thought leader, Michelle was previously recognized by PMI as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world.

Michelle’s articles have appeared in more than 100 publications and websites around the world. Her monthly column, the [Know How Network](#), is carried by over 400 publications.

She is a graduate of the Harvard Business School’s Owner President Manager’s (OPM) program and also holds engineering degrees from Syracuse University and the University of Dayton.