

FEBRUARY

INNER  CIRCLE

02

THIS MONTH
UTTER LANGUAGE
LEARNING FAILURE &
HOW TO BOUNCE BACK

What if you completely fail the language goal you've set for the month?



Welcome to the Inner Circle, listeners.

Last time, you learned how to boost your motivation by creating connections with a language. Befriending native speakers. Watching movies in your target language. Listening to music. Buying and reading books. Things like that.

All so you can guarantee your success, get motivated and start learning.

But, what if you set a goal but you never start?

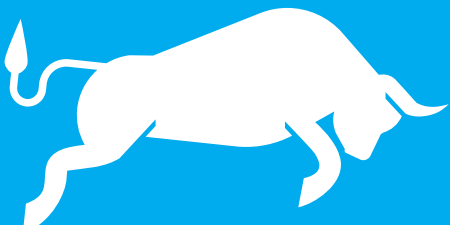
Or you start but get off track after a period of time?

In other words, what if you completely fail the language goal you've set for the month? Well, here's some good news! In this Inner Circle, we're talking about the one topic nobody wants to talk about – failure. Not just missing a goal by a bit but complete and utter inability to start, continue and actually get things done.

You set a goal. You're excited. You're finally going to do it.

AND...IT NEVER HAPPENS.

This is incredibly common among beginners. Experienced learners get a taste of it as well. That's why today we're addressing failure head-on. In this Inner Circle, you're going to learn...



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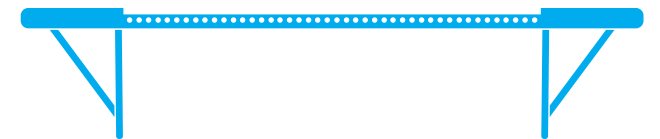
Why people fail at the goals they want so bad

2

The #1 mistake learners make when they try to bounce back

3

How you can keep going despite completely failing on your first try



So, why failure?

Well, I'll be honest. I completely failed my monthly goal for February. Last month, I outlined the following 3 small, measurable goals I wanted to achieve by February 28th:



Have 3 minutes of Conversation in spanish



Write a 1-page self-introduction



Find a Spanish Skype tutor

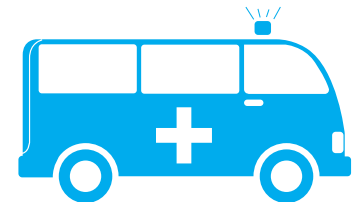
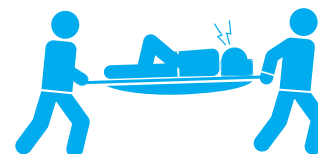
My results?

0 minutes of Spanish
No introduction
No Spanish Skype Tutor

I knew what I had to do. I had a clear road map. I was pretty excited.

I fantasized about improving my Spanish as fast as I did my Italian. But it didn't happen. What went wrong?

Why did I fail before I even started? And why do many language learners fail in a similar fashion? Let's get into the first point.





Why do people fail at the goals they want so bad?

HERE'S A QUESTION FOR YOU:

Have you ever signed up for something only to not go through with it? Or developed an interest, gave it a good week or two and ended up quitting?

This is very common among first-time gym-goers, for example. And among people who decide they want to wake up earlier. And of course, among language learners.

But why does this happen?

In last year's Inner Circle, we talked about New Year's resolutions failing because people set big, vague goals like "I want to be fluent" without really knowing how to get there.

And the same rings true here.

We tend to be too ambitious and put too much on our plates. Now, is that a bad thing? **Not at all. However, the failure comes simply because of life.** Our everyday lives, habits, needs and responsibilities get in the way.

What do I mean by putting too much on our plates?

Here's an example:

I love making lists to get things done. When I started, every morning I'd make a list of 30 to 40 things I wanted to do. At the end of the day, I'd only get 4-5 things done.

Looking at the long list of things I didn't complete was actually discouraging. And why couldn't I get them done? Well, my reasons were work, family, kids, commute – you name it. Life in general.

So I made a change. My average was 4 or 5 things a day, so I limited my tasks to 5 things maximum.

Imagine if you had a list of 4 or 5 things to do and a list of 30 things – which list would you want to get done?

Well, the same thing happened with my Spanish goal for this month.

I couldn't fit it into my schedule.

When you can't get something done, oftentimes, it's your life telling you **there's no room for that.** Listen to what your life says.

But, of course, that doesn't mean that language learning is impossible.

Or that you need to fail.

There is a way to bounce back. Before we get into that, let's take a look at how most learners try to bounce back.





What's the #1 mistake learners make when they try to bounce back?

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU MISS A GOAL?
OR WHEN YOU MISS HOMEWORK?

Most of us have been trained to make it up and put in double the effort. If it's with homework, school requires you to make up the old work on top of the new work.

Or, double the effort. And if you fail on a personal goal, you feel guilt and motivation to come back stronger. Again, you add on the workload.

Adding on more work is the #1 mistake learners make when they try to bounce back. Why?

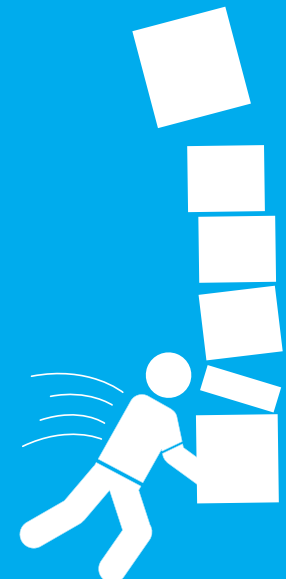
Well, if I couldn't do 3 minutes of Spanish conversation this past month, am I likely to try and reach it again next month, given my current schedule and lifestyle? Probably not. We know how that worked out!

Now, if I were to double my goal to 6 minutes of conversation, I'm making my goal that much more difficult to accomplish.

If you failed your own personal language goal, making up for lost work will set you up for more failure. You failed once. You're low on confidence. You're high on guilt. This is a recipe for disaster that leads to quitting.

AS A GENERAL RULE:

The harder you make something out to be, the less likely you'll get it done.





How can you keep going despite completely failing on your first try?

HERE'S SOME ADVICE THAT SCHOOLS WON'T GIVE YOU.

The way to bounce back from a failure is pretty easy. Remember: if you make it hard to get something done, it's less likely that you'll get it done. So, what do you do?

Do the opposite.

The best way to bounce back from a language learning failure is...



Make your goal smaller and easier.

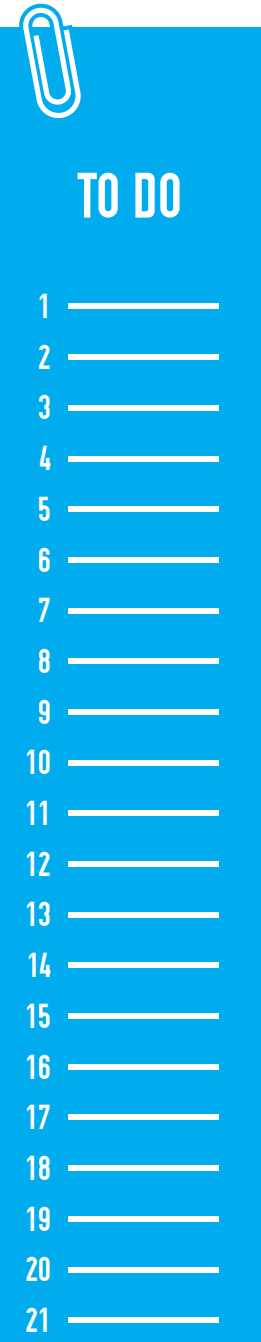
REMEMBER MY TO-DO LIST? THAT LIST OF 30 OR 40 THINGS DIDN'T WORK?

So, I started dividing it down to 4-5 items a day. And believe it or not, I'd finish most of those tasks.

And if you had a list of 40 things and a list of 5 things to do for today...

Which would you want to do? Which list of tasks would more likely get done?
The list of 4-5 things, because it's easier.

And this works as a great feedback loop. The easier your goal is, the more likely you'll get it done. If you get it done, you'll have more motivation. If you have more motivation, you'll tackle the next goal successfully. And so on.



What's my monthly goal for March?

I'll be putting my own advice to the test.

My goal of 3 minutes of Spanish conversation is now 1 minute of Spanish conversation. My 1-page written introduction is now a 1-paragraph introduction. And I still have to find a tutor.

What's your monthly goal? Be sure to set it and stick to it. Also, let me know - have you ever completely failed a goal or a New Year's resolution? Were you able to bounce back? If not, what do you think stopped you?

Shoot me an email at:

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To your fluency,

Peter Galante

Founder, InnovativeLanguage.com

Remember, if you completely fail your first goal, aim for a much smaller goal.

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