



Making New Year resolutions is an opportunity to chart a new course for the coming year after, inevitably, the ones you made last year were not fulfilled. There's nothing like drawing up a new list to help to erase guilt about the old one.

Whether it's promising to set new goals or ditch old habits, the track record of New Year resolutions is on a par with politicians' promises.

A University of Bristol study involving 3,000 people found that 88% of those who set New Year resolutions fail to achieve them, despite the fact that 52% of the study's participants were confident of success at the beginning.

Men achieved their goal 22% more often when they engaged in goal setting, (a system where small measurable goals are being set, such as losing a kilo a week, instead of saying "lose weight"), while women succeeded 10% more often when they made their goals public and got support from their friends.

But making worthwhile resolutions and sticking to them can make for a more successful and enjoyable 2013, especially if they help make you a better driver. Here are some suggestions:

- Greet every passenger with a friendly smile, and thank them for travelling with your taxi network at the end of the journey. It doesn't take much effort and helps to turn occasional travellers into regular passengers.
- Say positive things about the industry. Talk the industry up, not down, at every opportunity. If those who are part of the industry are positive about it, the sentiment will spread to those outside the industry.
- Carry out the pre-shift inspection thoroughly and check camera operation before every shift. The equipment is there for your safety so make sure it is working properly. It's also going to be a long, hot summer, so for the comfort of you and your passengers, make sure the air conditioning is working properly.
- Update your training and skills. For example, fully funded courses are available for Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) training. Become endorsed to drive a Wheelchair Accessible Taxi or consider operating your own taxi.
- Manage your takings effectively. Get an Activity Statement Payment Card from the Australian Tax Office to make regular payments towards your GST liability, rather than having to make a lump sum payment.

- Keep up-to-date on industry information and subscribe to METER if you haven't already done so. It's free!
- Eat healthier food during your shifts. It's easy to stop and grab a hamburger or kebab but what about all that weight you put on over Christmas? Try a salad and fruit juice and some exercise to offset all that time sitting in your cab.

And what about when you're not driving a cab? Try these handy resolutions:

- Watch less reality TV. The farmer or his big brother may want a wife from the Shire who goes dancing with the stars, but when you hear the voice in your head telling you to switch on a reality TV program, try to block it out and read a book.
- Limit the number of apps on your phone. Do you really need Angry Birds, Angry Birds Season AND Angry Birds Rio as well as Words with Friends, Doodle Jump, Tiny Wings, YouTube and all those other apps on your phone? It would be a lot cheaper if you just did the newspaper crossword and used your phone for actually calling people.
- Ask your kids to show you how Facebook and Twitter really work. You've been patient but you still only have three Facebook Friends while others have hundreds. Did that rude comment you made the other day about an acquaintance only go to one person or did you get the security setting wrong so the whole world could see? And how does everyone know what Lady Gaga said on Twitter yesterday? Time to ask the experts – your children, or anyone under 30, and get your head around this.
- Cut your electricity bills. Whatever happened to opening a window to let the breeze in? Put your foot down this summer and don't allow the family to turn the air conditioner on just because it's over 25 degrees. The bills for the winter months with all those heaters on are bad enough. Break out the cold drinks and damp towels!

Happy New Year!

