

TRAINING GOAL SABOTAGES

Avoiding common gray areas that undermine hitting your training goals

SABOTAGE 1: Reckless goal-setting



The Gray:

Many training goals are doomed from the start due to a lack of perspective, and are too convoluted to achieve.

The Fix:

Reflect back to the last training goal you made, but ultimately fell short. Even though you fell short, reflect on any knowledge or skills you picked up. Was it the wrong goal, or did it simply lack execution?

Reflect forward: Imagine yourself in 6 months by performing a “failure pre-mortem”, thinking of things like possible barriers and regrets that you can work on addressing now (this technique borrowed from James Clear in his book “Atomic Habits”).

Reflect on your physical environment: is it set up to make reaching your goals easier or harder? What are ways you are a slave or master to your environment?

Perform a splash analysis: Reflect on the downstream effects of working on your goal. To what extent does it have positive crossover to other areas of your life?

SABOTAGE 2: Combining weight loss and strength/muscle gain in the same goal

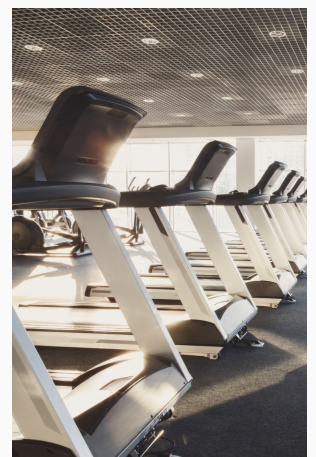
The Gray:

These two goals are physiologically opposed to each other, and expecting significant results in both can lead to burnout and frustration.

Weight loss demands a calorie deficit, while strength and muscle gains demand a surplus. The opposing signals can confuse the body. There may be progress for a little while on both fronts, but they will not be commensurate with the time and effort invested.

The Fix:

If weight loss and strength gain are important, choose one as a primary goal, and train the other if it plays a supporting role and if you have extra time. If balanced and programmed correctly, you will see better results on the primary goal, and modest improvements on the secondary.



SABOTAGE 3: Failing to apply “sport specificity”



The Gray:

See sabotage #2! The term "sport" is loose, and refers to any training goal. For instance, strength and endurance goals are not fully compatible. Further, intensity and volume can be physiologically opposed to each other, even within the same sport (running, biking, cross country skiing, etc).

Muscles optimize to the forces and the type of intensity load put on them, and can adapt quickly to one type of training.

The Fix:

As with Sabotage 2: It is best to choose one specific goal, and train the others only as much as it helps your primary goal.

For endurance training: Adopt Zone Training, where you split your intensity into 5 heart rate zones. The vast majority of training should be done in zones 1-2 and 4-5, avoiding zone 3. Support with strengthening exercises that are functional to your sport

For optimizing strength and muscle gain: Perform multiple sets of up to 8 reps for the big lifts (squat, deadlift, bench press, and some kind of pull), 3x per week. Support with endurance training that does not take away from strength performance.

Metabolic conditioning: HIIT, and “muscle confusion”, are training adaptations that try to blur the lines of energy pathways and muscle physiology. Due to it’s high intensity and calorie-burn, HIIT has tremendous value, and is a viable addition to ANY training program if done properly.

BROAD SCOPE, NARROW FOCUS

Want to learn more? For a deep dive into each of these points and more, be sure to follow **Coach Tim DeBoer’s** 5-part blog series “Training Goal Sabotage” to prevent undermining your efforts and success in training!

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