

How to avoid going to hell

This is not a post about religion or morality. It's a post about how to get things done. It's the "secret" to accomplishing your 2014 goals and resolutions.

I am sure you know the expression "the road to hell is paved with good intentions." What that means, quite simply, is that having a good intentions is not enough to keep you from perdition. You have to act. You have to behave differently, not just think about it.



Bonfire by CP
Sutcliffe via Flickr

This is the time of the year we are busy setting resolutions and goals for the year ahead. I think this is a great exercise. Certainly, if we take a good look at what we did in 2013, we can see what worked and what didn't. We can decide to change course or stay the course, depending on how things worked out.

But to accomplish our resolutions and goals, just having the intent to do so is not enough. What you need is an action plan.

I have a friend who has the best of intentions to get together

and do a “girl’s night out.” I know she has the intent because she tells me we need to do this every single time we have a phone conversation. But she never actually sets aside the time and chooses a date for this mythical get-together. Without an actual plan to go out, it is all just talk. It is meaningless. Bottom line is it ain’t gonna happen.

The same thing happens with your communications goals. You want to blog but you “don’t have the time.” You want to increase your newsletter subscriptions, but you don’t add a subscription button to your website or think about how to incentivize people to sign up. You want to get more publicity for your event, but you don’t contact any media outlets. You want to re-do your website, but you don’t conduct a survey of your current users/audience.

In other words, you have the best intentions in the world, but you are not acting. You are paving the way to get nothing accomplished.

As you survey the year ahead and you formulate your goals and resolutions, avoid having it all go to hell, and develop some action plans. Set deadlines, make dates, gather information, put things in motion.

What are you resolving to do in 2014 and how do you plan to get there?