

## When it comes to making New Year's resolutions...

Most of you may or may not know that I write. My primary love is screenwriting, the art of writing for movies. This time of year aspiring writers like myself, and established writers too, resolve to write more. Except like most people, my new year's resolution doesn't always last as long as I'd like it too. Some years back I found this tool to help maintain my goals. It is a technique used by Jerry Seinfeld to keep himself working creatively everyday. I've always felt it can be applied to help anyone reach any goal (read more, write more, exercise more, clean more etc.) Below is the explanation for "Don't Break The Chain" as provided by *THE WRITER'S STORE*. Feel free to print the included PDF of "Don't Break The Chain" and use it as you see fit for yourself or your children.

## Don't Break the Chain - Jerry Seinfeld's Method for Creative Success

By [The Writers Store](#)

***This year, I'm gonna write more.*** It's a popular resolution amongst our crowd. It's a great goal, but it's vague. Then again, maybe some of us promised to write ***every day***. That's even better. But just like hitting a plateau at the gym, we sometimes lose the steam that once powered a new and exciting story idea. We take one day off, which turns into two days off; eventually, we find ourselves opening up a document only to realize it hasn't been touched in two weeks – or more. Let's say you do write most of the time, but you take one or two days off each week for any number of reasons. That's still a lot of writing. But consider this: at the end of the year, that's roughly 10 weeks, or 2.5 months' worth of days that you ***didn't write anything***.

That's where **Jerry Seinfeld's** productivity tip "**Don't Break the Chain**" comes in.

**DON'T BREAK THE CHAIN** The Writers Store

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Years ago, when software developer Brad Isaac was performing stand-up at open mic nights, he received his best advice ever from the already-famous comedian. Seinfeld explained his method for success: each January, he hangs a large year-at-a-glance calendar on his wall and, for every day he wrote new material, he had the exquisite pleasure that can only come from drawing a big red "X" over that day.

Drawing those Xs got to be pretty fun and rewarding, so he kept doing it. Eventually, he began to create a chain of red Xs. The idea was to never break that chain. Not only does this approach program the body and mind to sit down and write daily – it also motivates you to continue that beautiful string of big, red Xs. If you don't write one day, you don't get to draw the X. It doesn't particularly matter what you write. Blogs, articles, scripts, your memoir. It can be anything, as long as you're actively and routinely pushing yourself. But let's say you're a screenwriter, and you take it a step further. You might decide that you only get an X for the days you work on your screenplays.

If you made progress on your scripts every single day for an entire year, how many could you finish? Two? Four? *More?* Now, imagine that you've finally gotten the ear of an agent, producer or director. If you don't break the chain for two or three years, chances are you'll end up with a script to please just about any buyer. Learning from the pros is imperative in this business, but if you don't put their lessons into practice, it won't take you far. And while professional writers offer a wide range of ideas, they will all agree that discipline and determination must come first.

That means writing all the time. It means not believing in writer's block. It means turning off the television, silencing your phone, and finding some Shangri La that somehow does not yet have wireless internet. First and foremost, it means making writing a major part of your life. To do that, you have to make writing a habit, just like going to the gym, eating healthy foods, or flossing...but harder.

There are countless excuses, most of them completely acceptable, which hold us back from writing. More often than not, it's our never-ending To-do lists that take precedence over our passion.

With Don't Break the Chain, writing, too, becomes a daily task that we have to cross off that To-do list. This method is a constant reminder that, if we want to succeed as writers, we must acknowledge our craft and respect the process.

Because the reality is, if you do work at your craft obsessively, you will find success. And if you do become a professional writer, you will need to write every day. Not only that, you'll be expected to prove that you can constantly produce worthwhile material, and the only way any of us can achieve that is to push ourselves tenaciously.

Who else is going to push you? For many, it's going to come down to self-determination. Your partner or parents or kids can encourage you, too. Let them know about the calendar. After you prove you can keep the chain connected for a couple of weeks, they too will motivate you not to miss a single day. Find all the motivation you need to get started, because by teaching yourself to incorporate writing into your daily routine, you'll transform yourself into a professional.

Think of it this way: Your first day at a new job can be stressful. You might feel like you don't know where to park, when to show up, or how to answer your phone. Cut to a few months later. You've gotten into a routine. It's no longer intimidating. It is, simply, what you do.

The same idea applies to writing.

It's no wonder we tell ourselves we have writer's block some days, especially after leaving a story cold and dead for a whole month or more. Think of those big red Xs covering an entire calendar year as a fire stoking your creativity – and your writing career.

Of course, it's up to you whether you want to jump-start your career now rather than a few years down the line. If you want to do it now (a wise choice), Don't Break the Chain will get you moving *right away* – as in, immediately! TODAY!

The Writers Store was launched to provide writers with the tools necessary to help at any stage and in any medium of writing. That's why we're offering a free download of your own [Don't Break the Chain](#) yearly calendar to print out.

Now, all you need is a pen – the color is up to you – and the goal to draw a big X over every single day.

Are you willing to see how much you can create over an entire year? Are you curious to find out what happens when you take a professional's heartfelt advice and put it to good use?

**Don't waste another moment – start building your chain today!**