

Sometimes we look back and wonder where the time went. We told ourselves, maybe told a friend or proclaimed to the world that we were going to accomplish a large goal (pilot certificate or rating) by a certain date.

We started with boundless energy, determination and went headlong towards our commitment. Before we knew it time passed and we hadn't made the finish line. We knew what we wanted to accomplish and knew what we had to do to meet the goal. We had a plan all laid out. We worked hard but maybe other things started to interfere. Maybe some of the motivation and enthusiasm started to wane along the way. This is a common occurrence that happens time and again. What the heck happened and most of all why did it happen? Having a plan is a great idea. Most plans focus on the end game and have a few milestones along the way. Most of the focus is on how we will finish. This is where it usually is left and really is where the problems begins whether we recognize it or not. The problem begins because the milestones are set too far apart. We loose our way and get bogged down without a plan that lays out the smaller steps to a bigger goal.

The road to a major accomplishment is a long one. It takes perseverance, patience and careful planning. Knowing the goal and what we need to make the goal a reality isn't enough. Knowing that we have to fly a certain number of hours, learn specified subjects and take a written and practical test sounds like we know what we have to do. The secret to getting to our goal while maintaining our enthusiasm will require that we break each of these steps down in to smaller attainable goals. Each of the smaller steps will need a time frame to shoot for. Have a plan that will keep you motivated and on track by setting weekly goals to accomplish. Write these steps down so you can check them off as you accomplish them.

Getting to a large goal is like trying to swim across a large body of water. Sometimes we can't see the other side but we are full of energy

and charge in to the water. After we are swimming for a while we look ahead and it seems like we aren't getting closer to the other side. We keep trying but at times we feel like not only are we not making progress but we may have lost our way a little bit. Having the smaller steps and by continually meeting the smaller goals allows us to confirm that we are on a direct path to our goal and gives us the ability to look back and see how far we have come and that we truly are getting to the other side.

To do this we will need the input from many people. Start by discussing your plan and goals with your flight instructor. Talk to family and come up with an amount of time each week that you can commit to your training. Remember that not only will you be flying but you will need time to study all of the ground material as well. Make sure you have all of the resources needed to meet each step ready in advance. Have all of the books and reading assignments for each lesson. Get all of the handouts from your instructor. Have an open book test or check ride question list before studying each subject so you know what to emphasize in your studies. Come to your flight lesson knowing what maneuvers you will be doing and think about them on the way in. Using some of these tips will cut down on the time and expense of your training. Best of all it will help you stay on track and attain your goal on time!