



**Your Momentum Turnaround
(Part 4)**

**Creating Your
Next Action Plan**

Creating Your Next Action Plan

Hello, and welcome. This is Naomi from IttyBiz, and you're listening to the Momentum Turnaround track, part 4, called Creating Your Next Action Plan.

Before we begin, I just want to tell you that you're doing great because you've taken the time to listen all the way through to the end of the momentum track. That shows that you're serious about turning around your ittybiz, because you're already following through. I know you can do this, and you're proving me right already. So congrats.

Now, let's get started.

The Promises You Make To Yourself

First, let's talk about what creates momentum, and what kills it, because we tend to have a pretty skewed idea of how it all works out. We use words like "motivated" or "lazy" like they're some sort of genetic personality trait, when they're really not. Motivated people don't do more because they've got the magical motivation gene, and lazy people don't slack off because they've got a chronic laziness disorder.

When you look at your life and realize you're not really getting a whole lot done, it's not because you're lazy – it's because you're honest. You're honest about the fact that you tend towards breaking the promises you make to yourself.

You know, the promises. You tell yourself you're going to get up early, and you don't. You broke a promise – not to the world, just to yourself. You tell yourself that you'll get those emails answered, and you don't. You've broken another promise. You tell yourself you'll make those new products, you'll get your paperwork organized, you'll get your oil changed this week – and you don't.

And one after another, you begin to recognize a pattern – probably subconsciously – that you can't trust yourself to get the work done. You know you're breaking the promises that you make to yourself. They're little promises, but there's a lot of them and they add up. And so your motivation drops through the floor.

You probably know that one person who talks about all the things they're going to do, and you know they won't do them. So they're all excited about how "this time it will

be different,” and you know it won’t. So you can’t get excited for them, can you? Deep down you know they’ll never do what they’re promising. And so you just don’t get that charged up by their goals.

Well, the same thing happens to you. When you’re sitting there saying to yourself, “I’m going to get all this great stuff done,” and you can’t get motivated and excited, it’s probably because your brain is gently saying “Don’t get too charged up over this – you’re probably not going to follow through.”

And when the alarm clock goes off, you hit the snooze button. When you plan to get to those emails today, you find something else to get distracted by. And while you feel a twinge of sadness at not getting things done, your brain is working hard to keep you from thinking about it too much. Your brain wants to protect you from the pain of future failure, and so it keeps you from getting your hopes up about getting things done. It’s afraid you won’t finish what you started.

Well, that’s very kind of your brain – it is just looking out for you – but there’s another way to protect you from the pain of breaking those little promises you make to yourself.

Today we’re going to work on making sure you keep those promises, because that’s a whole lot better for you and your ittybiz. We’re going to teach you how to get a whole lot more done, so your brain will finally let you get charged up about taking action.

Momentum comes from keeping promises. Let’s get that happening.

Salamitizing!

So, how do we get you to start keeping those promises you make to yourself? Well, it’s actually pretty simple – you start by making every single promise as small and easy to keep as possible.

This is going to sound obvious. It’s going to sound like something you tell your kids. But there’s a reason it’s obvious – because it works. And it’s a well-established fact of human psychology that we don’t do the simple things we know we should do, because they look too obvious. We seem to love the complicated stuff.

But we're not going for complicated here, we're going for simple. Simple, easy steps so that you can re-train that brain of yours to be confident that when you say you're going to do something, you actually will. And here's how we're going to do it.

To begin, we're going to introduce the concept of slicing up your projects, tasks, whatever into small pieces, like the guy at the deli slicing up some salami. In fact, we'll call it "salamitizing," just to make it ridiculous and fun, which is a really good thing to do when you're trying to change a habit. The more ridiculous it sounds, the less history your brain has with coming up with reasons it won't work. It's kind of like the shovels game we talked about in the Money Turnaround track, except with salami.

And if that last sentence wasn't the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard, than you need to listen to it again. Seriously.

Now, the way salamitizing works is, well, obvious. You take a big task and you slice it up into little tasks. If you're writing a book, you slice it up into chapters and pages. If you're running a promotion, you slice it up into emails and blog posts and selling pages. There's no such thing as a big project anymore, just a bunch of smaller slices for your project sandwich.

Again, this is obvious. You probably do a lot of this anyway. But here's what you're probably not doing. You're probably not giving yourself a high-five after you take care of each little slice. You're probably not giving yourself credit for the individual tasks you complete.

And this, my friend, is a big part of why you don't feel motivated some days. You're forgetting that you're actually accomplishing quite a bit as you work on your ittybiz, and you're moving closer and closer to getting each big wonderful thing taken care of.

And because you're forgetting that, you don't remember the promises you keep, and you tend to only remember the promises you broke. That's very, very bad for momentum and we need to change that.

The goal of salamitizing isn't to become more productive – again, you already know that it's easier to break up a big thing to do into littler, more manageable things to do. The point of salamatizing is to give you the opportunity to notice when you're keeping promises to yourself. It's a follow-up to an earlier part of this class when we talked about seeing yourself as someone who follows through.

Salamitizing will give you a built-in process for making yourself feel good every single day you work on your ittybiz. You get small tasks done, you feel really good about yourself. You realize you're keeping your promises. Some days you don't get all your to-dos done, but you get a bunch. And you're constantly reinforcing that idea in your head that you keep your promises and you can be trusted to get excited and motivated about building your ittybiz.

Which means that when you start coming up with new ideas and new things to do, you'll be able to have more motivation to actually follow through and make them happen. Your brain will say "Oh, that new big thing you want to do? It's not so big. It's just a lot of little slices, and I've seen you take care of the slices over and over again." And you stop the self-sabotage.

Big projects can be scary; small slices not so much. So whatever you're working on, slice it up so you can tackle smaller, less scary things and make absolutely sure you remind yourself when you've finished each one that you kept your promise.

This could be the most important thing you'll learn in this course. Teach your brain that you keep the promises you make to yourself, and you'll be able to accomplish more than you've ever experienced before. Trusting yourself is your number one personal asset. It's what gets you off your ass, so make sure you're building and reinforcing that trust every chance you get.

Salamitizing and Momentum

One other thing I want to talk about when it comes to salamitizing is that it turns projects into processes. Projects can be scary. They're scary to me. I hate the word. I hear "project" and I imagine boring corporate people doing soul-sucking corporate things, or I imagine construction workers building a giant shopping center, knee-deep in concrete dust and surrounded by big scary machines that look like they will eat me.

"Projects" is not a well-loved word at IttyBiz HQ. I imagine it may scare you a little, too.

So let's not talk about projects – let's talk about the process. You see, here's the thing: if every big thing you're working on can get sliced up into little steps, then you're not facing a big project anymore. You're simply in the process of moving from one little slice

to the next. It's really no different than driving from one end of town to the other; first you take this street, then turn on that street, then turn on another street, and so on.

The reason I'm using the driving example is that when you're driving, you're in process and you know it. You know when you're halfway across town, and three-quarters of the way across town, and when you're two blocks away. You can see progress the whole time, and you get some satisfaction from that.

Imagine if you got in the car and you couldn't see progress, like when you miss your exit on a lonely highway and you just keep driving, with no idea how many miles you have to go before you can turn around. That happened to me not too long ago – we missed an exit and had to go eleven miles before we came across to another exit. At midnight. In the snow. After just getting off a transatlantic flight.

Not knowing how far away the exit was at any given time was excruciating. Thanks for nothing, New Jersey.

The funny thing is, your projects work the same way. If you say to yourself, "I've got to write this book," for example, and the end goal is "the book," you have no road markers. All you have is the finish line. So there you go, plodding along, writing your 1000 words a day, and it feels like it's never going to end.

Except you don't even write your 1000 words a day, because you feel like it's never going to end. It feels like this big scary thing that you'll never finish, and so you don't start. Or maybe you do start, but you just quit part way through. You don't even know what part you quit at, and that's a tragedy.

It's a tragedy because it's 100% avoidable, if you slice up your projects so you can see the process. A book becomes outlining, then writing the first chapter, the second, and so on. It becomes editing and writing query letters and lots of other little bits. And even if the process is 50 or 100 little steps, you can at least know that you're at step 15 or 20 at any given time, and you can understand that even though the end is not quite in sight, you've actually been getting a lot of stuff done.

And when you know you've already got a lot of stuff done, it's a lot easier to keep going. Just like driving across town, you get a sense that you're always moving forward, and that feels really, really good.

Next Action Plan

Now, we're going to wrap up by talking about one last part of salamitizing, and that's putting the blinders on. If you're not familiar with that expression, blinders are these little flaps that a horse can wear on either side of his head so that the only thing he can see is what's directly in front of him. And since that's all he can see, he goes forward without getting distracted.

This is what we want for you. Except you're not a horse, so we won't call it blinders. We'll call it a Next Action Plan. Basically, this is where you get a piece of paper, look at the different projects you've salamitized, and you write down the next thing – and only the next thing – you have to work on for each of them.

So if you have 5 big things you're working on, you have 5 next actions. Five little slices of salami that await your attention. And this is important.

If you have to work on 5 big projects, that activates the scary in your brain. If you have 5 little slices, you have 5 little things to do. So you're much more likely to do them. And when you do do them, your brain gets five little spikes of happy chemicals that say "Hooray, you actually made progress on 5 different projects! We are moving!" And you never have to see all the other slices, so you don't get overwhelmed.

This is really important, because we get overwhelmed when we see a big to do list. If you're writing a book and you see "Write Chapter One," and "Write Chapter Two," all the way to chapter thirty-five, you will be completely intimidated. You'll feel like you can't work on anything else because you're always behind.

But with your Next Action Plan, you'll see "Write Chapter One," and "Send an email to the list" and "Outline a new blog post" and "Call Mom" and it will seem much, much more doable. You'll be able to tackle each item one by one and feel really good about getting things done in a balanced way.

And then tomorrow's list just has a few items on it as well, so every day feels the same in a good way. Take care of next action, feel good. Lather, rinse, repeat. And you won't get overwhelmed by all the to-do lists anymore.

So what you need to do is take your big things you're working on, slice them up salami style, and then put that list to the side and just work off of a short list of your very next actions. It sounds obvious, but my God, does it work. So do it. Seriously.

And that covers the final part of the Momentum Turnaround track. It's all about the salamitizing. Take the stress off, cut your projects into little slices, and retrain your brain to believe you'll keep the little promises you make to yourself. So work on your Next Action Plan, and let's get your ittybiz turned around speedy quick, shall we?

Thanks for listening to part four of the Momentum Turnaround track, called "Creating Your Next Action Plan." I'm Naomi from IttyBiz, and I'll talk to you very soon.