

## Why You'll Never Have Enough Willpower to Lose Weight

*New study shows those who leverage six behavioral strategies are 10 times more likely to lose weight*

Provo, UT – November 9, 2010 – Every Monday for five years, Natalie Luke looked in the mirror and said, “I’ve got a fresh start, this week will be different; I will lose those pesky pounds.”

However, week after week, diet after diet, nothing changed. Natalie figured she simply didn’t have sufficient willpower to succeed.

New research from the bestselling authors of *Influencer* reveals why people like Natalie fail to lose weight, and it’s not due to lack of willpower.

According to the online poll of 988 people attempting to lose weight, using six different behavioral strategies in combination increases your chances of losing weight by 10 times. However, most people fail because they rely on one source of influence alone. For example, some may only join a gym, read a book or download a smart phone app. These tools are helpful, but not enough to create lasting behavior change if used in isolation. In fact, of those who didn’t use six strategies in combination, only one in five lost more than five pounds in the preceding three months and more than half actually gained weight.

The poll was conducted by the authors of the *New York Times* bestseller *Influencer: The Power to Change Anything*, which outlines the six sources of influence aimed at creating lasting behavior change. In Spring 2011, the authors will release their fourth book, *Change Anything: The New Science of Personal Success*, as well as launch [www.ChangeAnything.com](http://www.ChangeAnything.com), a website that uses the principles of influence to help people accomplish a variety of personal change goals.

Joseph Grenny, author of *Influencer*, says despite popular opinion, lack of willpower is not the No. 1 reason people struggle to lose weight.

“When we fail to change our behavior, we assume it’s because we’re weak willed,” says Grenny. “However, the real reason we fail at changing our behavior is that we are blind and outnumbered to six sources of influence that shape our choices and habits. Our willpower doesn’t stand a chance against these deeply-engrained behaviors.”

One Monday at age 45, Natalie performed her weekly ritual and realized “vowing” to change was not enough, she needed to get serious about changing her behavior if she wanted to look in the mirror and feel good about the reflection. It was then that she created a change plan that leveraged the six sources of influence aimed at behavior change. Now, two months later, Natalie is more than half-way to reaching her goal of losing 25 pounds by the end of the year.

“Creating a change plan that included the six sources of influence gave me greater confidence and the tools needed for success,” she said. “I now understand the psyche behind behavior change—specifically for weight loss—and feel confident I’ll be able to keep the pounds off once I reach my goal.”

Grenny outlines strategies in the six sources of influence guaranteed to help people achieve their weight loss goals. The key to success is using at least one strategy from each of the six sources of influence:

- 1. Personal Motivation: Love what you hate.** Motivate yourself to get healthy by changing the way you think about your health and weight. Natalie uses daily visualization exercises and listens to a popular podcast to change her negative perceptions about her ability to lose weight.
- 2. Personal Ability: Do what you can’t.** Learn the weight loss skills you lack. Natalie uses a popular workout program that teaches her how to perform exercises that use muscle confusion to increase calorie burning.

3. **Social Motivation: Turn accomplices into friends.** Find out if your friends are helping or hurting your progress. Natalie lets others know about her weight loss goals so they are conscious and respectful of her exercise time.

4. **Social Ability: Enlist coaches.** Often, changing habits requires help. Natalie's coach is the winner of The Biggest Loser season 4. He coaches Natalie to make changes that not only help her succeed but also maintain her weight loss.

5. **Structural Motivation: Invert the economy.** Motivate yourself to stay on track by planning rewards for small successes. Natalie selects a new outfit she wants to buy and shows her coaches so they can encourage her to earn that reward for meeting short-term goals.

6. **Structural Ability: Control your space.** Don't underestimate the power of your environment. Because one of the largest barriers to Natalie's success is the extra time she spends at work, she keeps a clock in plain view in order to leave the office early enough to exercise.

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**Note to editor:** Author Joseph Grenny and Natalie Luke are available for interview. Copies of *Influencer* and additional weight loss tips from Grenny are available upon request.

**About the research:** Responses collected via an online survey from 988 book readers in June of 2010. Margin of error is approximately 3%. Full survey results available upon request.

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