

New Year's Resolutions for Bowlers

How to make them and how to use them

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As we embark into 2015 with enthusiasm, hope, and aspirations, the transition from 2014 to 2015 presents an opportunity to reflect on our actions, achievements, and disappointments from last year. Formally making a list of resolutions may have become cliché for some, but the process of reflection and evaluation is essential to becoming a better player. I encourage you to conduct a deep and thorough self-evaluation on an annual basis with check-ins on a quarterly basis.

Here's a self-reflection blueprint to facilitate the development of resolutions. It targets areas of weakness while strategically working you toward your goals. It is intended to guide self-evaluation

and act as a catalyst for adding more customized areas for reflection.

Let's make 2015 a great bowling year for you by formally reflecting on the past year, revisiting your goals, and setting a resolutions list to be the best bowler you can become. [Print this article out](#) and work through the questions.

Step #1: Restate or reformulate your long-term goals

Resolutions and specific action plans for 2015 should always be considered within the context of reaching your long-term goals. Accordingly, begin this process by reviewing, reevaluating, and restating your long-term goals.

Goal #1:

Why this goal? What short-term goals must be met to reach it? What skills must improve? What knowledge do you need? Is your current level of training commitment adequate to meet this goal?

Goal #2:

Why this goal? What short-term goals must be met to reach it? What skills must improve? What knowledge do you need? Is your current level of training commitment adequate to meet this goal?

Goal #3:

Why this goal? What short-term goals must be met to reach it? What skills must improve? What knowledge do you need? Is your current level of training commitment adequate to meet this goal?

Goal #4:

Why this goal? What short-term goals must be met to reach it? What skills must improve? What knowledge do you need? Is your current level of training commitment adequate to meet this goal?

Goal #5:

Why this goal? What short-term goals must be met to reach it? What skills must improve? What knowledge do you need? Is your current level of training commitment adequate to meet this goal?

Step #2: Reflection on 2014

In order to build a new commitment plan and build a set of specific actions to reach your goals, a

review of 2014 will set the stage to develop a more thorough and accurate plan for 2015:

- What were the biggest performance highlights for 2014?
- Were your short-term goals for 2014 aligned to meet your long-term goals? How did these goals contribute to the long-term goals you set at the start of 2014? Were some short-term goals unrealistic? Were some short-term goals misaligned with your long-term goals?
- What was your weekly practice commitment in 2014? Was this enough?
- Which practice activities helped you improve? Which activities were less effective? Was this adequate to meet your short-term and long-term goals?
- Looking back, how would you have changed your practice commitment in regard to time or focus areas?
- Where did you overachieve in 2014?
- Where did you underachieve in 2014?
- Were your long-term goals different at the start of 2014?

Step #3: Skill and knowledge self-evaluation

Now that you have reviewed last year, evaluate yourself in the following areas to formally help define your strengths and weaknesses. The areas of weakness will be targeted for improvement in 2015 and help define resolutions to take your performance to a higher level.

Mental game assessment

As a bowler improves in skill and knowledge, performance can be hampered due to a weak mental game. Reflect on each of these areas to determine focus areas for 2015.

AREA	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
Pre-tournament anxiety	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Fear of failure in competition	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Negative self-talk	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Underperformance at key moments	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Belief about ability higher than actual performance	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Self-doubt about ability inconsistent with actual performance	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Pressure to perform for others (coach, partner, teammate)	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	

What does this reveal about you?

Physical game assessment

Which physical game issues are preventing you from reaching your full potential?

AREA	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
Setup	👍😊😐😞👎	
Body position	👍😊😐😞👎	
Timing	👍😊😐😞👎	
Swing start	👍😊😐😞👎	
Swing direction	👍😊😐😞👎	
Upper body movement	👍😊😐😞👎	
Release	👍😊😐😞👎	
Footwork	👍😊😐😞👎	

What does this reveal about you?

Lane play assessment

Evaluate your abilities within the context of pattern type and phase of transition. This will define your assets and liabilities when bowling in competition. How good are you on these pattern types?

PATTERN (Right)	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
TRANSITION (Below)	EVALUATION	EVALUATION	EVALUATION
Fresh	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Early	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Middle	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Late	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Burn	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎

What does this reveal about you?

Arsenal mapping assessment

Review your competition experience from 2014 in regard to equipment. On what pattern type and during which phases of transition did you have the most problems? Visit an IBPSIA certified pro shop professional or a certified coach to discuss your current arsenal within your lane play problem areas to determine any arsenal gaps.

PATTERN (Right)	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
TRANSITION (Below)	EVALUATION	EVALUATION	EVALUATION
Fresh			
Early			
Middle			
Late			
Burn			

What does this reveal about you?

Lane play zone comfort assessment

To determine important practice focus points, determine your level of comfort playing these zones in the front part of the lane. Add specific comments to discuss frequency of practice time to play these zones or competition experiences.

ARROW ZONE	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
<5		
5-10		
10-15		
15-20		
20-25		
>25		

To determine important practice focus points, determine your level of comfort playing these breakpoint zones. Add specific comments to discuss frequency of practice time to play these zones or competition experiences.

BREAKPOINT ZONE	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
2-4	👍😊😐😞👎	
5-7	👍😊😐😞👎	
8-10	👍😊😐😞👎	
11-13	👍😊😐😞👎	
14-16	👍😊😐😞👎	

What does this reveal about you?

Ball motion variation assessment

What are your current skills to manipulate ball motion?

SKILL SET	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
	EVALUATION	EVALUATION	EVALUATION
Axis Rotation Angle	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Ball Speed	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎
Rev Rate	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎	👍😊😐😞👎

What does this reveal about you?

Knowledge set assessment

What is your competence in these knowledge areas?

DOMAIN	EVALUATION	COMMENTS
Core (RG, Differential, Intermediate Differential)	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Dual Angle Layout	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Surface Changes and Ball Motion	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Fresh Lane Play	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Transition Lane Play	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Lane Conditioners	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Lane Surfaces	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Axis Rotation Angle	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	
Axis Tilt	👍 😊 😐 😞 👎	

What does this reveal about you?

Reflection on specific patterns and transition phases

How would you approach playing specific conditions and phases of transition based on your experience? This will provide insight for your coach or pro shop professional and identify knowledge areas to focus on during 2015.

PATTERN (Right)	SHORT			MEDIUM			LONG		
TRANSITION (Below)	SPEED	AXIS	REVS	SPEED	AXIS	REVS	SPEED	AXIS	REVS
Fresh									
Early									
Middle									
Late									
Burn									

Common spare shooting proficiency assessment

From your competition experience, identify spare shooting strengths and weaknesses. Reflect on why you are missing spares within the context of a specific condition or phase of transition.

PATTERN (Right)	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
SPARE (Below)	EVALUATION	EVALUATION	EVALUATION
10 (RH) 7 (LH)			
9 (RH) 8 (LH)			
6-10 (RH) 4-7 (LH)			
3-6-10 (RH) 2-4-7 (LH)			
3-10 (RH) 2-7 (LH)			
3-6-9-10 (RH) 2-4-7-8 (LH)			
8 (RH) 9 (LH)			
2-8 (RH) 3-9 (LH)			
2-4-5 (RH) 3-5-6 (LH)			
1-2-4 (RH) 1-3-6 (LH)			

Any trends?

Step #4: Resolutions

Work through the information revealed in your self-evaluation to determine the biggest areas of weakness in skill, knowledge, lane play, mental game, arsenal, etc. From the self-evaluation, what are your biggest areas of weakness?

What skills do you want to improve in 2015?

What do you want to learn more about in 2015?

Step #5: Create a training schedule to match your resolutions

From the process of self-reflection and self-evaluation, build a training schedule to address your areas of weakness as well as focus on the areas in which you want to learn more. Your resolutions to improve in these areas can be guided by dividing your time according to specific focus points. I recommend spending the following percentages on identified areas:

- 35% on the weakest areas
- 25% on areas identified as average or mediocre
- 20% on your strongest areas
- 20% on specific competition preparation (lane play, arsenal preparation)

How many leagues will you bowl in 2015?

How many hours per week can you train on the lanes?

How many major tournaments are you planning?

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Competition or League							
Training Focus	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses	Physical Game Weaknesses
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
	Strengths	Strengths	Strengths	Strengths	Strengths	Strengths	Strengths
	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep	Tournament Prep
	Mental Game	Mental Game	Mental Game	Mental Game	Mental Game	Mental Game	Mental Game
	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness	Fitness
	Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge	Knowledge
Hours and Minutes							
Location							
Format							
How it Fits Into Achieving Your Goals							

Conclusions

To create a more accurate list, have your coach and pro shop operator also complete the assessment of your skills and knowledge. This comparison will reveal specific areas in which your self-perception does not match reality. Comparing evaluations will provide more clarity. Most importantly, the differences in the evaluation between your perception and the coach's will provide a great opportunity for discussion.

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About Joe Slowinski

Joe Slowinski, a USBC Gold Coach, is currently on assignment in Europe. The Portland Maine native served as the Administrative and Men's Head Coach at Webber International University and served for four years as a Master Teaching Professional at the Kegel Training Center. Slowinski is the former Director of Coaching and Coach Certification for the National Sports Council of Malaysia. Joe's personal coaching website is www.bowlingknowledge.info.