Want to Achieve Your Biggest Long-Term Goals? Science Says Avoid the Dreaded Negative Lumping Effect

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Imagine you want to increase sales by 70 percent this quarter. Big jump, sure, but you think you can do it. Instead, you finish the quarter up 67 percent.

How do you feel? According to research recently published in Psychological Science, you definitely feel disappointed.

Worse, you’re a lot less likely to work to match — much less increase — those results next quarter.

Even though a 67 percent increase was a huge gain in sales and revenue.

The reason? We tend to think of progress that doesn’t reach our expectations — no matter how significant that progress may have been — as total failure. Psychologists call that the negative lumping effect, which dismisses achievement when it falls short of categorical reform — despite distinctions in improvement.

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