

## How to use starts and stops to reset your development

September often feels like a reset. It's a good time to think about the work changes you want to make.

Spotting small starts can build momentum, and having clear stops helps you step away from what's getting in the way. Together, they create the space to focus on what matters most.

### Coach yourself questions

What's one thing I want to start this September?

What's one thing I want to stop this September?



### Ideas for action



#### September starts

##### 1. Weekly borrowed brilliance

Learning from others sparks fresh thinking and new connections:

- 📌 Pick one book/article/newsletter each week and note your key takeaway. Share it with your team or post about it on LinkedIn.

##### 2. Build something with AI

Creating with AI builds confidence and helps you see what's possible:

- 📌 Use AI to create a resource, process, or visual. Share the "rough draft" with colleagues or your community and learn from their feedback.

##### 3. Parallel learning

Pairing learning with everyday routines creates progress without needing extra time:

- 📌 Listen to a podcast on a run, an audiobook while cooking, or watch a short video on your commute. Capture one takeaway so it sticks.

##### 4. Monthly mentor moments

Short, focused conversations can give you fresh perspective & practical advice.

- 📌 Each month, choose one topic you want to learn about and ask someone with experience for a 20-minute chat.

#### September stops

##### 1. Waiting too long to respond

Waiting for the perfect moment to reply can lead to guilt & wasted energy:

- 📌 Send a quick acknowledgement e.g. "Thanks, I'll come back to this." Most replies take less than 5 minutes - it doesn't need to be perfect.

##### 2. Carrying your phone everywhere

Constant connection makes it harder to be present and recharge:

- 📌 Leave your phone in another room after a set time. Use that time to read, relax, or focus fully on family/friends. What do you notice?

##### 3. Writing actions on post-its

Scattered notes create clutter and things get missed:

- 📌 Keep all actions in one place - a planner, notebook, or app. Use post-its only for ideas, and check weekly that actions are captured.

##### 4. Moaning about Mondays

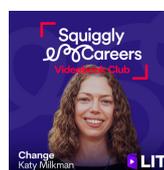
A negative start can carry the wrong energy into your week:

- 📌 Map your current Monday ("as is") and sketch an ideal version ("to be"). Share it with your team so they can help you make changes that stick.

### Recommended resources



**How to Kickstart Your Post-Summer Career Development**  
Read our HBR article



Sarah talks to Katy Milkman on the fresh start effect in episode **#450** of the Squiggly Careers podcast.