



## TOOLKIT 1 – HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR PERSONAL GOALS

- ❖ **Achieve your hopes and aspirations.**
- ❖ **Learn from high performing people.**
- ❖ **Get real focus and direction in your life.**

This is a very personal toolkit – it's about you and your future. It's the first toolkit because it helps you create your personal vision and therefore the context for everything else you do.

Achieving personal goals is usually part of most people's dreams. However, in practice we can also create our own barriers to our success.

The good news is that we can also choose to remove the same barriers and that is what this toolkit is about.

So let's get started.

## STORY – A YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR

'Get a trade' was the well-meaning advice from a mother to her son. So together with his mates he became an apprentice builder earning £2.50 per week. He hated every minute of it because he didn't seem to have the necessary skills to build things; walls fell down, pipes leaked, his boss got angry ...

One day another well-meaning person, the company training manager, sent the young man for a vocational guidance assessment where he was told that he had the personality and skills to become a 'lawyer, a journalist or a management consultant' – jobs that require the ability to persuade people verbally or in writing.

This seemed a million miles away to a 23 year old with no qualifications, a mortgage and two children. 'You should get a degree' was a further wake up call.

The young man began to dream dreams about becoming a consultant, building a business, writing books and may be even starring in a TV series ... The dream became clearer, choices were made and a clear focus emerged. He would become a management consultant, build a business and become famous ...

One 'O' level by correspondence then 5 'O' levels at night school, followed by a Diploma in Management Studies and a Masters Degree in management led to the assertion by his wife that he had become 'over-developed from the neck upwards.'

A second apprenticeship was served on evenings and weekends. 'My day job and the night job,' he called it. The night job involved learning to become a consultant by doing market research, and cost studies which trainee consultants have to do to earn their spurs.

In 1982 he quit his full-time job in business development with Steetley Plc and set up as a management consultant from his dining table at home.

The dream began to turn into reality, 'My vision enabled me to keep going, putting in the hours believing that one day I would get there.'

He built a £5m business employing 120 people from 14 offices in the UK and sold it as a management buy out in 1996. In 1992 the young entrepreneur wrote an award winning TV business series for the BBC 'Winning'.

'I achieved my dream by staying focused and believing that I could be successful and taking the breaks when they came along. The drive came from being poor and not wanting to be poor again and somebody helping me to raise my aspirations in order to become the best that I could be.'

The young entrepreneur is an older entrepreneur now... and still dreaming ...

Achieving our goals often means changing the way we do things, but change can be very difficult and can be traumatic for people depending upon how they perceive it.

Most change is perceived as discretionary – 'I have a choice' - so we often decide not to change. Non-discretionary change on the other hand normally does lead to change and therefore success.

Non-discretionary change is normally driven by pain or discomfort with the present situation so you want to change things in order to relieve the discomfort.

Your ability to change depends on this time-tested formula.

$$C = P \times V \times A$$

Where change (C) is driven by:

**P** = your level of pain, e.g., 'We just failed to land a really big critical order we desperately needed ...'

**V** = vision or objectives. e.g., 'To be the market leader in our sector.'

**A** = action – do something! e.g., 'I've joined a health club to get fit in body and mind.'

***Here is how to apply this change formula in order to remove the barriers to the achievement of your vision. There are 5 steps. At the end of this toolkit is a template for you to use to record your answers to each of the 5 steps.***

## **STEP 1      CREATE THE PAIN**

Thinking about your life generally, ask yourself these two very tough questions:

Q1. In my life right now **WHY** am I doing what I am doing?

Be really honest with yourself, try to stop faking it.

We only get one life and this is it.

This is not a dress rehearsal ...

Very often the answer eventually is ... 'I'm not sure ...'

This is a good answer because as a wise mentor of mine says, 'At the moment of uncertainty we often get our biggest insights and breakthroughs.'

Q2. Ask yourself **WHO** am I doing this for?

Another tough question.

Many people go through their lives trying to please everybody but themselves and end up miserable as a result. So stop faking it ...

Who are you really doing it for? Go on, try being brutally honest ...

**TIP:** This might be one of the barriers to your personal success and happiness.

Hopefully, answering these questions may have helped you to identify what you don't want and may even have been painful – facing an unpleasant truth can be difficult. That's the bad news, but you will now be ready to take step 2 – WHAT do you want – the start of the new you, and that's the good news.

**TIP:** This is a personal process, not one to share with lots of people, regardless of how close they may be to you. This is about you.

## **STEP 2**     **ASK YOURSELF: WHAT DO I REALLY WANT?**

- Write your answers down.
- Go for quantity at this stage; write down as many as possible.
- Keep a notebook and write down your thoughts as they come to you, this maybe over a period of time, e.g. be rich, travel extensively, see more of the kids, be famous, have a TV series, be healthy, own a £100m business, retire at 50 etc. etc.

Asking the following questions can help with your goal generation process:

- What am I really good at?
- What would I like to get really good at?
- What part of my life/job do I really enjoy?
- When time flies what have I usually been doing?

- What footprint do I want to leave in the sand when I am gone?
- What would I like to see on my gravestone?
- What would I like to be remembered for?

Answer these questions seriously, remember it's you you are sorting out and you are important. As the advert says 'I'm worth it.'

### **STEP 3      PRIORITISE YOUR LIST TO IDENTIFY YOUR REAL GOALS**

There are many ways of prioritising:

- You can rate each of your thoughts in step 2 out of 100 (1 = low, 100 = perfect).

OR

- You can rate each idea against each other until you get down to one or two real goals i.e.,

Want to be rich

Vs

Want to be healthy

I decided I wanted to be healthy so I eliminated being rich.

Carry on comparing and eliminating until you end up with one or two goals.

This again is a tough task – eliminating goals. One of the biggest blockages to success however is having too many priorities – 'I have 20 goals'. This inevitably dissipates energy so you are in grave danger of doing 20 things to a poor or average standard.

The secret of high performance people is one word – **FOCUS**.

Great sports stars, film stars, politicians and business people usually have a clear vision, which helps them:

- Focus their energies upon it.
- Make choices – 'I will do that if it helps me move towards my goals.'
- Decide how to spend their time.

- Gather all sorts of information in order to achieve their goal – obsessive commitment. It brings a new perspective to what they notice and think about.

Here are some example goals from friends who have completed this exercise:

- 'To be as good as I can possibly be at what I do.'
- 'To love and cherish my children.'
- 'To contribute to a stable, progressive and modern society.'
- 'To achieve a successful balance between work, family and interests.'
- 'To be happy and enjoy myself.'

Write your goal(s) here, maximum two, preferably one.

My goal is

.....

.....

#### **STEP 4 TAKE ACTION**

Once you have established your goals, most planning processes would now say make a detailed plan ...

But detailed plans don't fire the imagination, actions do. If a journey of a 1,000 miles starts with one step then what is the first step (action) you need to take right now in order to move you closer to your goal?

After you take the first step the second, third and fourth will become obvious – you don't need to write them down, but you will need to think them through.

However if you like making detailed plans then do it, but don't confuse this with action taking.

**TIP:** What you should write down on a card is your goals and the actions you want to take.

Read the card regularly to put your vision into your subconscious mind so it can help you achieve your goals.

## EXAMPLES

- Goal: 'Make work fun'

1<sup>st</sup> action: Eliminate some of the tasks I hate by delegating them to more competent people than me.

- Goal: 'Spend time with children'

1<sup>st</sup> action: Put birthdays and the important family dates in my diary, underline them in red and make them non-negotiable.

## STEP 5 ANALYSE YOUR PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND TURN THEM INTO MOTIVATORS

Ask:

- Q. What am I really really good at? Then use this to motivate you to achieve your goal.

For example, a friend of mine, Gerard Egan, wants to 'leave an imprint in the sand' with his original work on counselling and management models. One strength is that he is a brilliant and inspiring conference speaker. He therefore uses conference platforms around the world to get his message across about his models. Consequently his books have now been translated in fourteen different languages.

## SUMMARY

The road to achieving your personal goals starts with being dissatisfied with the way things are now, creating a clear focus for change, and taking action. Now you have identified what you want to achieve and why, the other toolkits will help you achieve your aspirations.

<p><b>STEP 1</b>  Why am I doing what I am doing?   Who am I doing that for?</p>	
<p><b>STEP 2</b>  What am I really good at?   What would I like to get really good at?   What part of my life/job do I really enjoy?   When time flies what have I usually been doing?   What footprint do I want to leave in the sand when I am gone?   What would I like to see on my gravestone?   What would I like to be remembered for?</p>	
<p><b>STEP 3</b>  What are my priorities from Step 2?</p>	
<p><b>STEP 4</b>  Actions required to achieve my personal goals</p>	
<p><b>STEP 5</b>  I can achieve my goals by using my following strengths</p>	