

# Goal-setting activity: How to set strategies to achieve your goals

Written on the 25 May 2012 by Janet Langley

You have a goal in mind, perhaps many, and aren't sure exactly how to achieve it. It might be a habit you want to change, a new skill you want to incorporate into how you do business or a personal or professional objective. Studies show that focussing on one goal at a time and setting a concrete plan in motion will help ensure you reach your target.

## Goal-setting activity

Here's a simple exercise I recommend to people I coach to design goal-setting strategies. Strategies are those broad steps that lead you towards action on your goal. They break your goal down into smaller bite sized pieces.

**Step 1.** Connect with your goal. What do you feel about your goal? Take a moment to recognise and write down your feelings.

**Step 2.** Lock in your goal. It's important to really understand your goal and what it really means to you. Find a visual that represents your goal. This could be a vision statement, board or collage or a photograph, picture or creation that means something to you. This locks your goal into your memory, igniting your Reticular Activating System. This area of the brain filters the 10,000 bits of information around you in any one moment to pick up what's a threat or what is important to you so you don't get completely overwhelmed.

**Step 3.** Brainstorm strategies. Ask yourself these questions to begin to formulate your strategies:

- Imagine it is 6 months from now and you have reached your goal, what did you do?
- Still imagining, what was the first step you took? What happened next? And then...?
- Think outside the square, what else needs to happen to reach this goal?

The intention is to come up with 5-8 broad steps to achieve the goal. Be specific so you are absolutely certain what it mean to achieve each strategy.

**Step 4.** Decide on a celebration. How will you reward yourself when you achieve your goal?

**Step 5.** Plan your strategies. Look at your notes and ensure you understand your steps and the logical order they need to be reached. Note any actions that have popped into your mind.

These are the kind of activities you can explore in our [guided coaching programmes](#). The Goal-Setting Programme takes you through the whole process of setting inspiring goals and defining all the steps to achieve them. We also have guided coaching programmes for improving your communication effectiveness and building resilience. With each programme guides you through structured activities with the aid of a self-coaching workbook and support of a real live coach by phone and email. They offer an opportunity for you to allow time for yourself, focus your mind, and strengthen your capacity for personal insight and courageous action.

Alternately you might want to work more intensively with a [performance or executive coach](#) who can help get you to the next level. Either way coaching is a fantastic way to get on track with your goals.

*Janet Langley is an executive coach and people development consultant with a particular passion in helping people perform at their optimal level. Director of coaching at EIW, Janet builds emotional intelligence (EI) and positive psychology tools into EIW's results-oriented coaching and leadership development programmes.*

**Author:** Janet Langley