

# A Useful Guide to Goal Setting

Bryan Leslie

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# A Useful Guide to Goal Setting

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Written by Bryan Leslie

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## Goal Setting

*"The majority of people are ready to throw their aims and purposes overboard, and give up at the first sign of opposition or misfortune. A few carry on DESPITE all opposition, until they attain their goal. These few are the Fords, Carnegies, Rockefellers, and Edisons. There may be no heroic connotation to the word 'persistence', but the quality is to the character of man what carbon is to steel."*

Napoleon Hill (1883–1970 American author who was one of the earliest producers of the modern genre of personal-success literature. His most famous work, *Think and Grow Rich*, is one of the best-selling books of all time.

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Want more help? – contact us on the number below!

## Introduction

This interactive e Book will help you:

- Really think about what you want to achieve in the future
- Write/document and plan your goals so you will achieve them
- Become motivated to follow through on your plan and achieve your goals.

All the Tools you'll need are provided in the zip file you can download here:

[http://www.pansophix.com/resources/a\\_useful\\_guide\\_to\\_goal\\_setting\\_toolkit.zip](http://www.pansophix.com/resources/a_useful_guide_to_goal_setting_toolkit.zip)

In the toolkit you will find both PDF and Word formats of the tools. If you have Microsoft Word you will be able to complete the documentation on your PC. If you don't have Microsoft Word or would prefer to print out the tools and write your responses please use the PDF versions.

### **Welcome to this tutorial on Goal Setting.**

It will take you an hour or two to complete the exercises and get you moving toward all of your goals.

You can print out or save the toolkit to your PC to record your responses to the exercises.

You'll start by looking at how to structure your thinking so you know, with certainty, what your goals are.

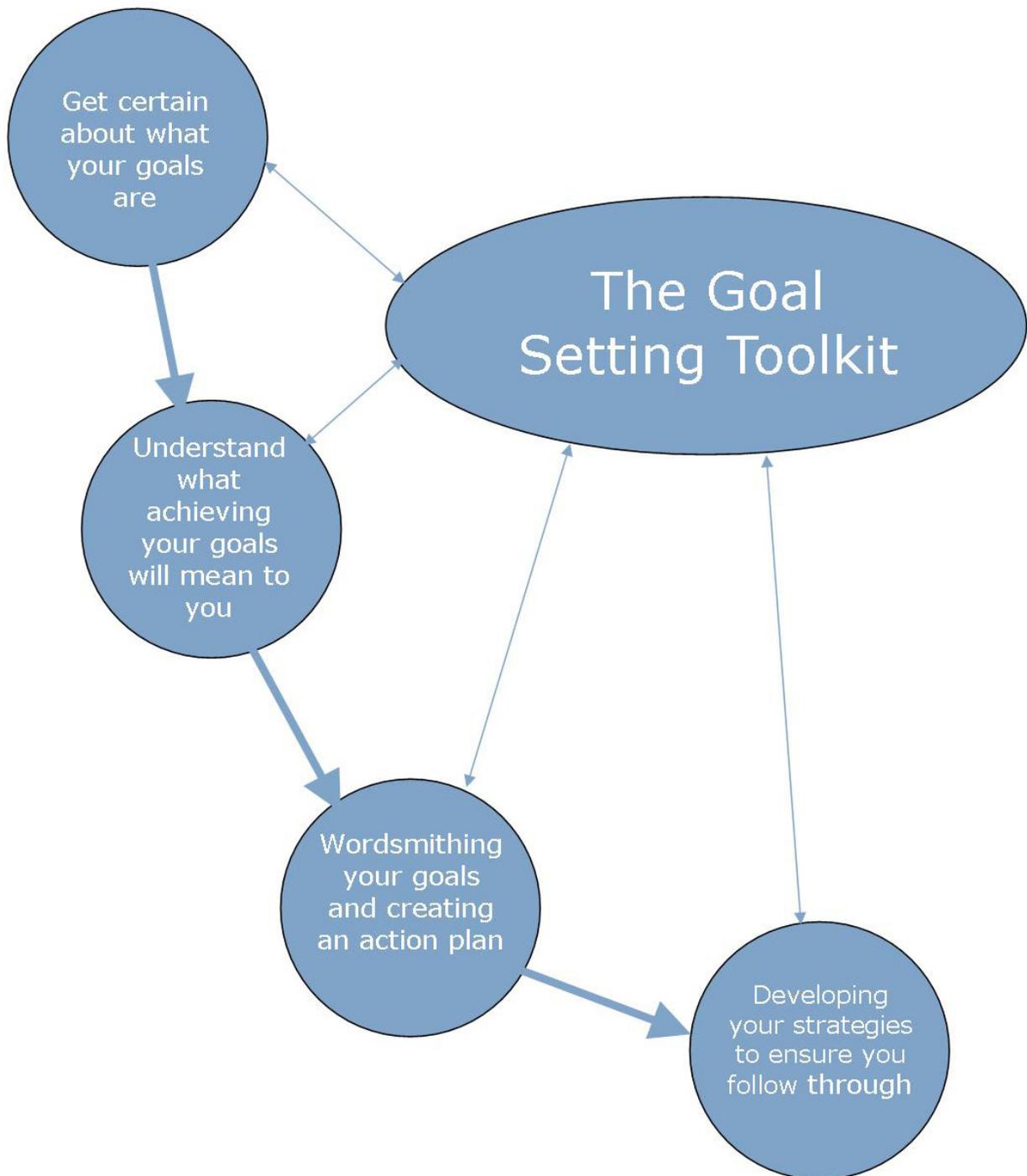
Next, you'll explore and understand what achieving your goals will mean to you.

Then you'll work on how to "wordsmith" the goals and create an effective plan for achieving them.

From here you'll explore your preferred motivation strategy so you ensure you follow through on the things you said you would do.

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## The Process



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## The Power of Setting Goals

The power of setting goals is shown in the study undertaken by a prestigious American university. In 1953 the final year students of Yale University were asked to complete a questionnaire.

One question asked of them was "Do you set clear specific goals?" 1 in 10 replied "YES".

A second question asked was "If you set goals, do you write them down?" 4 out of 10 who set goals replied "YES".

Only 4% of the students who completed the survey set goals and wrote them down.

### So what happened?

In 1973, the University re-contacted the students of 1953 to see what they had achieved and where they were with their lives.

The 4% who had said they set goals and wrote them down were ahead of the other 96% on a range of indicators such as relationships and health.

The most striking indicator was "financial". All of the 4% claimed to be financially independent; in fact they had a total financial wealth greater than the total wealth of the 96% who didn't set goals and/or write them down combined.

Goal setting is perhaps the most vital achievement skill of all.

Any individual can become a high achiever, or an even higher achiever, by setting goals and writing, talking and thinking about them on an ongoing basis.

Goal setting is a common denominator of successful individuals and organisations.

### Goal Setting – Some Quotes on Goals

*"I've dreamt about winning the Olympic Gold medal all of my life."* – Dame Kelly Holmes. 2004 Olympic Gold 800m; 2004 Olympic Gold 1500m; 2004 New British record 1500m; 2004 1st World Athletics Final - 1500m

*"The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them." - Denis Waitley. Best-selling author, speaker, poet and lyricist.*

*"We find no real satisfaction or happiness in life without obstacles to conquer and goals to achieve." - Maxwell Maltz, Communication Bulletin for Managers & Supervisors, June 2004.*

*"In the absence of clearly defined goals, we become strangely loyal to performing daily acts of trivia." - Unknown.*

*"Your mind, while blessed with permanent memory, is cursed with lousy recall. Written goals provide clarity. By documenting your dreams, you must think about the process of achieving them." - Unknown.*

*"If you don't set goals for yourself, you may be doomed to work to achieve the goals of someone else" - Unknown.*

*"You must accept that you might fail; then, if you do your best and still don't win, at least you can be satisfied that you've tried. If you don't accept failure as a possibility, you don't set high goals, you don't branch out, you don't try - you don't take the risk." - Rosalynn Smith Carter. First Lady of the United States 1977 to 1981.*

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OK, so let's get started on YOUR goals.....

## Getting clear about what you want

The following process will walk you through how to get started with goal setting: understanding what you want to be, do, achieve and have.

By doing this you will gain clarity about where you've been, where you are now and where you want to go.

Even if you feel you are already clear about your goals, please complete the exercises. They will reinforce your thinking and help you focus on the most important goals.

To begin, you must get clear about where you really are now. To help you do this we will ask you some questions about the last twelve months.

We'll start with what you loved about the last year, then look at what may not have left such pleasant memories and finish with a review of the decisions that you made.

Before you go to the next page open up the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part One** included in the Zip toolkit file. You can then print it out.

If you haven't already downloaded the toolkit you can download it from ...

[http://www.pansophix.com/resources/a\\_useful\\_guide\\_to\\_goal\\_setting\\_toolkit.zip](http://www.pansophix.com/resources/a_useful_guide_to_goal_setting_toolkit.zip)

In the toolkit you will find both PDF and Word formats of the tools. If you have Microsoft Word you will be able to complete the documentation on your PC. If you don't have Microsoft Word or would prefer to print out the tools and write your responses please use the PDF versions.

## Step 1 – Where are you now?

Use the toolkit you have just printed out to record your answers to the following questions.

- Thinking about the last twelve months ...
- What were some of your magic moments?
- What was magical and extraordinary?
- What have you accomplished in the past year?
- What are some of the things from the past year that you want to duplicate in the next twelve months?
- What was challenging?
- What do you not want to have happen again?
- What did you learn by going through these experiences?
- What were some of the most important decisions of this year for you?
- What decisions might you make over the next twelve months as a result?

## Step 2 – What are you capable of?

Now you know where you are, you need to believe you are capable of doing anything you dream about.

Use your toolkit to write down anything in your life that was once just a dream or desire

What are some of the large and small things you have achieved or acquired, that at one time seemed extremely difficult or impossible to achieve or acquire?

### Action!

Circle the two or three items on your list that, on reflection, seemed the most difficult or impossible to achieve.

For the two or three items you circled, write down the steps you went through to turn each of them into reality.

You may not have done it consciously, but it's likely something motivated you to want and achieve each item. How often did you focus on it? How passionate did you become? Did you create a plan for achieving it? What steps did you go through?

### Step 3 – What do you want?

Now you know where you are, and you know you have the capability to achieve what you have already achieved, it's time to decide what it is you want now.

For this exercise it is important you are in a positive, motivated state. Here are some ways for you to achieve this state ...

- Put a huge smile on your face
- Put some uplifting music on
- Punch the air shouting, "YES, YES, YES"!!!

In the **Goal Setting Toolkit Part One**, under Step 3, write down every goal you think you'd like to accomplish in the next 20 years.

Make sure you include everything you want to do, be, share, create, have, give, etc.

Include financial goals, personal development goals, physical goals, relationship goals – anything you'd like to learn, enjoy and do.

No matter how silly or outrageous it may seem, this is your chance to dream without limits!

Write for at least ten minutes; be sure to keep your pen moving as fast as possible.

When you have finished, go through your list, and next to each item, write down the number of years you want it to take (or believe it will take) to achieve this goal. Will it take up to ...

1 year, 2 years, 3 years, 5 years, 10 years, 20 years?

Look at the goals that you have put a time of at least "up to" 3 years for.

Are there any interim goals that you would like to achieve within the next 12 months? E.g. you may have a goal to be financially independent within 10 years. In this instance your interim goal may be to have paid an extra £5k off your mortgage within a year.

Add all of your 1 year interim goals to your goal list and put the number 1 next to them.

## Step 4 – What's most important?

Your goal setting plan starts with your key/most important goals that you can start work on now.

It is important to move a small number of goals forward at speed, rather than a large number of goals so slowly you become demotivated and stop.

Therefore let's start with your top five goals from the list you have just created.

Out of your list of goals from the previous step, what are your top five?

### What do you want most?

What are the top five goals that, if you could achieve them or make significant noticeable progress in the next twelve months, you'd get up early and stay up late for and be consumed with excitement?

Circle these five goals from your list.

You now have your top five goals.

In the next section, **Understanding why you want your goals**, you'll explore and understand what achieving these goals will mean to you.

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## Understanding why you want your goals

Before you continue please open the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part Two** included in the zipped file pack and then print it out.

Whenever we have something to do, we are far more motivated to do it when we know why we are doing it.

So, the next part of this guide will clarify your reasons for wanting your goals. These reasons will drive you onward as you work to achieve your goals.

### Step 5 – Why are your goals a must?

#### Action!

For each of your top five goals, write a paragraph about why they are absolute "musts" for you to achieve them.

- What are the reasons you absolutely will achieve each goal, no matter what?
- What will it mean to you to achieve each of them?
- What are the consequences of not achieving each of them?
- Who will benefit when you achieve each goal?
- How will you feel?
- How will your family and work colleagues feel?

Whenever we have something to do, we are far more motivated to do it when we know why we are doing it.

"Things" will always seem to get in your way as you work toward your goals. If you have enough passion, you can get yourself to do anything, but first you must be certain what "anything" might entail.

Let's look the issue in the eye!

What are some of the things that you may need to do to achieve each goal that you may not want to do?

Examples of these "things" may include ...

- Making changes to your lifestyle
- Speak openly and honestly to people in your personal and professional lives
- Keep going even when you are tired

Write your "things" in your toolkit.

So you now know what your key goals are, why you want to achieve them, and some of the things you will need to do to achieve them.

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Now let's move on to writing your goals down and creating a plan for achieving them ...

## Writing Goals and Planning

We saw earlier, in the Yale University study, the importance of writing your goals down.

You know what your key goals are and what you want to achieve.

How you write your goals is crucial.

The next step will take you through a process for wordsmithing your goals to give you the best opportunity to succeed. You will then start to take action.

Your goals need to be "SMART". SMART is an acronym that has been used for a number of years and can be found in most books on goal setting ...

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**ction-oriented
- **R**ealistic
- **T**ime-bound

Let's take each of these in turn ...

### **SPECIFIC**

Your goals have to be as specific as possible. The clearer you are about what you want the better.

For example, "to lose some weight" is nowhere near specific enough.

More specific wording would be "to lose 10lbs".

Even better would be "to lose 10lbs in weight and 2 inches from my waist".

When you write your goals make them as **SPECIFIC** as you can.

## MEASURABLE

You must be able to track your progress and measure whether you have been successful.

Each goal must have success criteria that you can check progress against, and also check when you have succeeded.

When you have written your goals - look at them. Ask yourself ...

- Can I measure each of them?
- Have I been clear what success means?

Ensure all of your goals have clear measures of success.

Relationship goals can be difficult to measure (e.g. "to improve my relationship with my spouse/partner/children").

In these cases, you can use a scale of 1-10:

Give yourself a score between 1 and 10 (with 1 low) for where you are now. For example, maybe you feel your relationship with your children is currently 4 out of 10.

Now decide where you want the relationship to go to. For example, you want your relationship with your children to go to 10 out of 10.

## **ACTION-ORIENTED**

Your goals have to make you take action.

Passive goals that don't require you to actually do anything are not good goals.

For example ...

- "to get my finances in shape" is not action-oriented; a better wording would be "to save 10% of my income every month"
- "to be physically fit" is not action-oriented; a better wording would be "to run four miles, three times a week"
- "to learn a language" could be re-worded as "to enrol and attend a Spanish course at the ABC college"

When you have written your goals ask yourself, "Are they action-oriented?" If not, what can you do to make them so?

## REALISTIC

Now let's be clear here, "Realistic" does NOT mean "easy". It means that it is within your span of influence to achieve.

There has to be some stretch for you to achieve the goal, but not something that is impossible.

For example, a man having a goal of physically giving birth, or someone wanting to see the sun rise in the west are setting themselves up for failure!

Another way of looking at the R in SMART is to change the word to Ridiculous.

A Ridiculous goal is one that at first glance seems impossible but isn't really – it will just take a lot of work!

For example, a goal of "to earn £100k per annum" may be Realistic if you currently earn £90k pa. It will seem Ridiculous if you currently earn £20k pa.

Yet isn't it true that everyone earning £20k pa could earn £100k pa? Yes they could, if they take the right actions.

So, give yourself Realistic targets that are, of course, Specific and Measurable; at the same time, give yourself a Ridiculous target as well.

The likelihood is that you will exceed your Realistic goal, and by striving for the Ridiculous goal as well, you'll achieve even more, and a lot quicker.

## TIME-BOUND

Each goal you have must have a time or deadline that you want to have achieved it by.

For example ...

- "next month" becomes "by 5pm on 30th of September 2007"
- "this year" becomes "by 9am on 31st December 2007"
- "by the time I go on holiday" becomes "by 8am on 13 July 2007"

You've already given your own goals a general time scale in the number of years you think it will take.

When you write them down make sure each of them has a specific deadline you want to achieve them by.

Now, let's have a look at some SMART examples ...

### Example 1

#### Poor Example

"to lose some weight."

#### SMART Example

"I will weigh 10lbs less on 1st December than I did on 1st June. My ridiculous goal is to weigh 10lbs less on 1st October. I will achieve this by going to the gym twice a week and eliminating snacks."

### Example 2

#### Poor Example

"to have a better relationship with my son."

#### SMART Example

"By the end of 2007 my relationship with James will be 8/10. On 1st June, James scored the relationship as 3/10, I scored it as 2/10. My Ridiculous goal is for James and me to score it 10/10 by the end of the year."

### Example 3

#### Poor Example

"to save more money."

#### SMART Example

"By the end of 2007 I will have no overdraft, personal loan or credit card debts and will have £5,000 in my savings account. As at July 1st 2007 I had £1,000 in savings and a total of £4,500 in overdraft and credit card debts. My Ridiculous goal is to have also paid an extra £5,000 off my mortgage by the end of 2007."

OK, enough of examples, now it's your turn ...

## Step 6 – Write Your Goals Down

Please open the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part Three** included in the zipped file pack and then print it out.

Now you can use the toolkit to commit your key goals to paper, making sure they are SMART.

## Step 7 – Taking Action

Let's get some momentum.

Think of two things that you can do NOW to start your progress to each goal. And write them into the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part Three**.

One **small** thing.

One **big** thing.

A small thing may be to book a meeting with someone; a big thing may be to go to the gym and have a two-hour workout.

Now, write them down in your toolkit and - GO AND DO THEM!

Now you've started moving toward your goals, you need to do a detailed plan for the next twelve months or the timescale you have given the goal.

Using the toolkit provided, plan a set of milestones (interim measures) for you to achieve.

As you move toward your goals, keep a record of what you have actually achieved and compare it to your plan.

Now you need to make sure you continue taking action.

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## Following Through

In **Understanding why you want your goals** you wrote down why you wanted each goal in the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part Two** included in the zipped file pack.

Go back and review this now. Get totally associated with why each goal is a must.

When you have done this, we'll start **Step 8 ...**

## Step 8 – Postcard Your Goals

It helps to be reminded of your goals continuously. Most people who set New Year Resolutions only remember them the next New Year!

We need to set-up a system that means you are reminded of your goals several times a day.

Write each goal and the reasons it is a must on a postcard (or preferably more than one postcard).

We also respond well to pictures and visual stimulation.

On your postcard either draw a picture that shows success, or use a photograph.

If your goal is to own a red BMW 530i with rear spoiler and fluffy dice, get a photograph of exactly the vehicle you want and add it to your goal postcards.

You can add a photo of anyone linked to your goal. If your goal is to improve a relationship, get a photo (or draw a picture) of the people involved; if the photo/drawing shows them being happy all the better!

Place the postcard(s) in places you will regularly see them, for example ...

- Back of the bathroom door
- In your daily planner
- On your car's steering wheel
- On the fridge door
- Take the postcard to the gym and when the going gets tough, look at it to give you the power to follow-through.

The more postcards you can create and see during the day the better.

## Step 9 – Seven Follow Through Strategies

We are all motivated by different things.

In general, we are motivated by one of two things ...

- Avoiding negative consequences (pain)
- Getting positive consequences (pleasure)

The next pages detail seven strategies that you can use to make sure you follow-through on your intentions.

Look through them and decide which two or three you believe would work best for you in following through on the actions you need to take to successfully achieve your goals.

Before you continue open the **Goal Setting Toolkit – Part Four** included in the zipped file pack and then print it out.

## Follow Through Strategy No 1 – “Act or Forfeit”

This strategy focuses on our fear of negative consequences!

When you have an action to take, ask yourself, "If I don't follow-through and complete it, what forfeit will I have to do?"

Forfeits could include eating something you don't like, writing a cheque to someone you dislike, running naked around your office, whatever makes you think the pain of the forfeit is bigger than the pain of not acting!

### Action!

Write in this toolkit some of the potential forfeits that you believe would force you to act.

## Follow Through Strategy No 2 – “Fly on the Wall”

This strategy focuses on our fear of being publicly shamed because we have not followed through.

First of all, imagine that you have been selected to appear in a Reality TV programme. The programme follows the most successful people in the world and shows the secret to their success.

So, from now on, everything you do is being recorded for a TV Programme. Every time you fail to follow-through the entire nation will find out.

### Action!

What are some of your behaviours you don't want the nation to see? (e.g. watching TV instead of working on your goals). Imagine you're on TV and you will follow-through.

## Follow Through Strategy No 3 – “Live Like a Werewolf”

In the Harry Potter books, one of the characters knows he will turn into a werewolf. Being a werewolf he will attack people even though he doesn't want to.

So each month, at the full moon, he locks himself away in the "Shrieking Shack", thereby making it impossible to harm anyone.

For each of your goals, consider how can you make it impossible to do the things you don't want to do?

For example, if your goal is related to weight/size, make sure you don't have any tempting food in the house. Also, get someone to hide your car keys so, even if you are tempted to drive to the supermarket to buy some tempting treats, you can't!

### Action!

What can you do to make it impossible to act in a way you don't want to? Write your answers in this toolkit.

## Follow Through Strategy No 4 – “Lead the Horse to Water”

There is a saying that although you can lead a horse to water you cannot make it drink. This may well be true, but what is also true is that if a horse is thirsty it is better for it to be beside water.

This strategy works with goals by putting you in a position that if you did want to act, you could.

For example, your action may be to run two miles and you may not feel like running. Using this strategy, you'd still get changed into your running kit (it's unlikely to be the getting changed you don't want to do) and step outside the house.

If you still feel like not running that's fine, but most people will think, "I'm already changed, I might as well go for that run".

### Action!

How can you use this strategy to follow-through on your planned actions and help you achieve your goals?

## Follow through Strategy No 5 – “It’s Now or Never”

This strategy works by helping you overcome procrastination by committing to do something now, and if you don't do it now, never doing it again!

Procrastination is caused when you believe it is OK to put off until tomorrow something that you really should do today.

Well, what if there wasn't a tomorrow?

What if you had to do it today, or you wouldn't be able to do it at all?

For example, if your goal involves an action such as going to the gym, if you didn't go, you'd never be able to go to the gym again. The fear of never being able to do something drives you to do it NOW.

### Action!

Which actions do you have to take now that the fear of never being able to take them would drive you to follow-through now?

## Follow Through Strategy No 6 – “Go Too Far”

This strategy works best for "giving up" goals and actions (cigarettes, snacks, drinking, etc).

Although our intentions may be to abstain, it is easy to believe that, "It's OK to just have one".

With this strategy you identify where you may struggle to abstain and, if you do slip up, you slip up big time.

For example, some people are trying to lose weight and they commit to having no more Jaffa cakes. If they slip up and decide to have a Jaffa cake, they can't just have one, they have to eat the whole packet.

The thought of having to go too far, and eat more than they want, is enough to stop them having just one.

### Action!

Which of your actions can you use this strategy for?

## Follow Through Strategy No 7 – “Right Before Wrong”

Strategy No 6, "Go Too Far", takes a hard line on not following through.

This strategy is a bit softer, but is still very effective.

Here, when you want to do something that you know you shouldn't, you decide to do something good first. Then if you still feel like doing the bad thing you can! For example ...

- If you are trying to lose weight and you want to eat a chocolate bar, you'd eat some fruit first. Then if you still feel like the chocolate bar after you've eaten the fruit you can have it. A lot of the time, eating the fruit will satisfy your hunger.
- If your goal relates to spending less money (and saving more), then every time you decide to buy something, you would first put an equivalent amount in a savings account.

### Action!

Which of your actions and goals could you use this strategy for? Write your answers in your toolkit.

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## SUMMARY

Get clear about what you want **then ...**

Understand why you want it **then ...**

Write SMART Goals **then ...**

Place Goal Cards where you will see them **then ...**

Prepare and Action Plan and take Action Now! **then ...**

Choose Follow Through Strategies that work for YOU

Now, for each goal, fill-in a **Summary Goal Sheet** (included in your **Goal Setting Toolkit**) and use them to track your progress.

Good luck!

Best wishes

Bryan Leslie

Pansophix Limited

**Tel:** 0845 260 2820.

**Email:** [bryan@pansophix.com](mailto:bryan@pansophix.com)

**Web:** [www.pansophix.com](http://www.pansophix.com)

**Online Store:** [www.pansophix.co.uk](http://www.pansophix.co.uk)

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## Biography



Bryan is an associate of Pansophix and is a highly experienced Coach, Leader and Motivator specialising in Leadership, Management and Team Working coaching and training. He enjoys working with individual and corporate clients who set "impossible" goals, because he believes that by aiming for the impossible you achieve the improbable.

Bryan founded "Abacus Coaching Ltd" which specialises in Personal and Corporate Development through Coaching and Training. His background combines fourteen years of line management with a blend of Operational Management, Consultancy and Human Resources experience in the Standard Life Assurance Company, Standard Life Bank and Royal Bank of Scotland plc.

He is accredited by the:

- Corporate and Executive Coaching Company as an Executive Coach
- Coaching Academy as a Life Coach

He is also certified by the University of Strathclyde in Coach Training and Performance Coaching.

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If we use your feedback to improve A Useful Guide to Goal Setting we will email you a copy of the updated version.

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