

Quick Guide: Achieving Personal Objectives

Do you need to stretch yourself more in terms of development? Do you wish you could achieve more? Do you sometimes feel stuck in a rut? Set yourself some personal objectives to achieve. To help you achieve them, here are the top ten tips, including the **SMART** model:

- 1. Specific** Make sure the objective you want to achieve is as specific as possible. It will then be easier to break down into stages. It also needs to be something you want to achieve or are interested in. For example, learn to play the piano or rearrange your manager's email filing system.
- 2. Measurable** Once you have specified your objective decide how to measure you have achieved it. Sounds obvious, I know, but it is often a point missed. So, you could learn to play the piano to take your first exam in 6 months' time or you could rearrange your manager's email filing system to reduce the emails in the in-box to one screen.
- 3. Attainable** Your objective must be attainable in the time you've allowed and within the other resources available to you. Using the above examples, it would be possible to sit your piano exam in six months but to do it in a week would not. With the email filing system, you know your manager's capabilities so you would design the system so they could use it easily; otherwise they won't!
- 4. Realistic** Your objective must be realistic to help you achieve it. You should also consider stretching yourself as this will challenge you and keep you motivated. To become a proficient pianist in a year is realistic but to perform at the last night of the proms at the Royal Albert Hall may be an unrealistic objective.
- 5. Timebound** Objectives need a time limit to reinforce the urgency of taking action. Set time limits that are realistic in relation to other tasks you have to complete.
- 6.** Jot down any **barriers** that you feel are obstacles to stopping you achieving your objectives.
- 7.** Decide **solutions** to overcome these barriers. By doing this, you may need to adjust your objective in terms of being attainable, realistic and timebound.
- 8.** Break down your objective into **smaller stepping stones**. Set times to achieve each of these. As you achieve each step you will feel a sense of achievement and this will encourage you to the next stepping stone. Draw up an **action plan** of the stepping stones with dates to achieve each by.
- 9. Approach positively.** If you think you can you will, if you think you can't you won't! List the **WIIFMs** (what's in it for me?). These are the benefits that you will gain once you have achieved your objective and they will also help you focus.
- 10.** As Nike says **JDI: Just do it!** No amount of thinking and planning is any good unless you action it, and immediately is best. So put your plan for success into action to achieve your personal objectives. Good luck with the piano playing and email filing system!

Compiled by Judith Di-Castri