

Conquering the Fear of Moving Forward



Many individuals have a fear of moving forward, a fear that they will fail. However, the main reason people fail is because they do not know where to begin. They lack a process for starting on the road to change. Studies have shown that many fail for similar reasons. They do not plan properly, they do not have a solid decision making process, or they fall short in implementing the plans they have put down. In this session, we will give you some tips on a simple process to start yourself and your team along the right path in planning and setting goals. Start the process of establishing and executing objectives by asking a series of questions:

- 1) **What do I want to accomplish?** Determine what it is you wish to achieve. Call this your desired or future state. Be clear about what the result would look like. This first step will be the basis for the other questions, so make certain you give it adequate thought. Now that you have the answer to this question, move on to the next.
- 2) **Will my results be worth my efforts?** Weigh the risks and opportunities, and look at the pitfalls and rewards. Allocate resources and modify efforts according to the findings of your Ben Franklin T-Diagrams, SWOT analysis, threat mitigation plan, and opportunity capture analysis.
- 3) **How can I go about effectively completing my objective?** Make a list of action steps. Be sure to delegate tasks throughout the levels of the organization as much as possible, so that your management ranks at any level do not become overwhelmed. Make certain that you use a model like the RA² Interface alignment model so that responsibility, accountability, and authority guidelines are captured and understood.
- 4) **How will I be certain to achieve my objectives in a timely manner?** Set reasonable deadlines for yourself and your team members. Be diligent about not straying from these targets. This information should be detailed in the accountability factors of your RA² Interface documents.
- 5) **How well did I do?** Evaluate efforts, both yours and those of others. A solid after action review process will certainly assist you in determining what went well and in providing ideas for how you could improve. To accomplish this, a solid after action review process is essential.

Once you have set goals for the period you are examining, you are ready to take a leap forward into a productive year. Remember, tackling goals means that things will change. Let's go over an inspirational story from the *The Essene Book of Days*, by Danaan Parry, that we hope will encourage you to take that leap:

Transformation of Fear

Sometimes I feel that my life is a series of trapeze swings. I am either hanging on to a trapeze bar swinging along or, for a few moments in my life, I am hurling across space in between trapeze bars.

Most of the time, I spend my life hanging on for dear life to my trapeze-bar-of-the-moment. It carries me along at a certain rate of swing and I have the feeling that I am in control of my life. I know most of the wrong answers and even some of the right answers. Yet once in a while, as I am merrily (or not so merrily) swinging along, I look out ahead of me into the distance, and I see another trapeze bar swinging toward me.

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It's empty, and I know, in that place in me that knows, that this new trapeze bar has my name on it. It is my next step, my growth, my aliveness coming to get me. In my heart of hearts I know that for me to grow, I must release my grip on this present, well-known bar to move to the new one.

Each time it happens to me, I hope (no, I pray) that I will not have to grab the new one. Regrettably, in my knowing place, I know that I must totally release my grasp of my old bar. For some moment in time, I must hurl myself across space before I can grab onto the new bar. Each time at this moment, I am shaking with terror. It does not matter that in all my previous hurtles across the void of unknowing I have always made it. Each time I am afraid that I will miss, that I will be crushed on unseen rocks in the bottomless chasm between the bars. I do it anyway. Perhaps this is the essence of what the mystics call the faith experience. No guarantees, no net, no insurance policy, but I do it anyway because somehow, to keep hanging on to that old bar is no longer on the list of alternatives. So for an eternity that can last a microsecond or a thousand lifetimes, I soar across the dark void of "the past is gone and the future is not yet here."

It's called transition. I have come to believe that it is the only place real change occurs. I mean **real** change, not the pseudo-change that only lasts until the next time my old buttons are punched. I have noticed that, in our culture, this transition zone is looked upon as a "no-thing", a "no-place" between places. Sure, that old trapeze bar was real, and that new one coming toward me, I hope that is real as well. What about the void in the middle? That's just a scary, confusing, disorienting "nowhere" that must be gotten through just as fast and as unconsciously as possible. What a waste! I have a sneaking suspicion that the transition zone is the only real thing. The bars are illusions we dream up to avoid the void, where the real change and real growth occur for us. Whether or not my hunch is true, it remains that the transition zones in our lives are incredibly rich places. They should be honored, even savored. Yes, with all the pain and fears and feelings of being out-of-control that may (but not necessarily) accompany transitions, they are still the most alive, most growth filled, and passionate, expansive moments of our lives.

Thus, transformation of fear may have nothing to do with making fear go away, but rather with giving ourselves permission to "hang-out" in the transition between trapeze bars. Transforming our need to grab that new bar, any bar, is allowing ourselves to dwell in the only place where change really happens.

It can be terrifying. It can be enlightening, in the true sense of the word.

Hurling through the void, we may just learn to fly.