

Create an Inspiring Vision

The 5-3-1 PLAN

At any stage of your life it's important to have a clear idea of where you want to go. A powerful vision will inspire, motivate and pull you towards it.

For this exercise, give some thought to how you want your life to look, firstly in five years, then in three years, then in one year. This description should contain all aspects of your life (consider all the different roles you play) and be as specific as possible. For example, how many days a week are you working? How much are you making? What are you doing? Who are you doing it with? Where are you living? How about your relationships? What hobbies are you pursuing? And so on.

You can create your plan any way you like. Either as a flowing piece of prose – a set of bullet points – or in a mind map format. Or you could get creative and put together a collage with pictures and words.

Remember: this is just a first draft – to get some initial thoughts down on paper. You don't have to get it 'right'.

Some important notes

- ◆ Even though you're looking ahead to the future, please write your description in the Present Tense. Eg: *"I am living in a beautiful house in Tuscany and working four days a week."*
- ◆ When you've finished the 5-year plan, bring it back to 3 years, and think about what would need to be in place in three years for the 5-year plan to succeed. Same again for the one year plan. You can then chunk it down even further, to six months and then three months, so that eventually you should end up with a clear plan of what you need to achieve in the next month to make your 5-year plan a reality.

- ◆ THINK BIG!!!! Don't be restrained. Don't be cautious! Have fun with this – be outrageous. Allow yourself to think really big. You can always rein it in later if you want to.
- ◆ Take care not to include things that you think other people might want you to include. This is your plan for *your* life. If the word 'should' creeps into your mind while you're doing this, pay good attention to it and ask yourself if this is what someone else might want for you rather than what you want for yourself.

You don't have to do this exercise on your own. If it works for you, you may want to design your plan with your husband or partner, members of your family, friends or anyone else who is likely to participate in your future in a significant way.

(Based on "Take Yourself to the Top" by Laura Berman-Fortgang)