



# GLENN DUHIGG COACHING

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## 6 Stage Framework For Goal Attainment

This straightforward, user friendly and evidence based framework will help you to set goals that matter, develop an action plan, manage obstacles, deal with relapses and most importantly reach your goal. Each stage contains focused questions for you to work through and information on what works in attaining goals. Whether your focus is on work or beyond, this tool will support you to reach your goals effectively.

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### Stage 1 - Identify your area of focus

What exactly do you want to focus on? Take a moment to reflect. Now write it here:

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|----------------|
| Area of focus: |
|                |
|                |

## Stage 2 - Set the right goals

It is important to set goals that are **aligned with your personal values, that can realistically be attained with effort and that matter to you**. Self-concordant goals such as these are engaging, energizing and lead to greater effort to achieve them.<sup>1</sup>

If the goal has been hoisted onto you, say at work by your boss, then search for ways to link the goal to your values. Maybe reaching *their* goal will in fact help you to realize *your* goal. The challenge is to somehow link the external goal with your intrinsic motivation. An example might be if your boss wants you to lead a new project, but you are already spread thin. Initially this task might be perceived as onerous and cause an increase in stress. **What is useful is to ask how can I link my boss' goal to what matters most to me?** If your goal is a promotion, consider that leading and delivering the project will in fact raise your visibility across the business and influence decision makers to consider a promotion favourably at the next review cycle. The project might just be the means to achieve your goal of a promotion. Win/Win.

**So what is your goal? What will success look like? How will you feel to achieve it?** Does the goal really matter to you? Is it attainable with effort, a plan, and support? Is it aligned with your values? Use SMART goals if they work for you. **Write your goal here, make it as specific as you can, list what success will look like, describe how it will feel to reach your goal, and frame it positively:**

|          |
|----------|
| Goal:    |
| Success: |
| Feeling: |

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## Stage 3 - Develop a plan

Developing an effective plan is crucial to attaining goals. One technique called **If/Then Planning** has been shown to increase the chances of success by up to 300%.<sup>2</sup> I share it with my coaching clients. If/Then Plans take the straightforward form of - If X happens, then I will do Y.

### What steps will you take to reach your goal?

Write out the specific steps you will take to reach your goal below. Then write the steps as If-Then Plans. That is if X happens / then I'll do Y.

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<sup>1</sup> Grant, A. (2006) An Integrative Goal-Focused Approach to Executive Coaching. In D. Stober and A. Grant (Eds), *Evidence Based Coaching Handbook* (p165). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

<sup>2</sup> Grant Halvorson, H. (2012) *9 Things Successful People Do Differently*. (p16) Boston: Harvard Business Review Press.

Here is an example of an if-then plan a client of mine created:

**Steps** I will let my direct reports finish speaking before I speak to meet my goal of encouraging open communication and problem-solving.

**If** my direct reports are speaking

**Then** I will let them finish before I have my say. I will use open questions to better understand their perspectives.

Another example of an if-then plan is the one I use to maintain a regular running schedule.

**Steps** I will exercise regularly to meet my goal of staying in a healthy weight range as I age and for managing stress.

**If** it's Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday & Sunday

**Then** I will run first thing in the morning (after coffee and yes I do lay out my running gear next to the bed as a **cue** so I can't get distracted!)

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| Steps: |
| If:    |
| Then:  |

Think about who you can rely on for support and accountability to maximize your success rate. List your support team members here and note what type of support you will request from them:

|            |
|------------|
| Supporter: |
| Support:   |

Now focus on how good it will feel to achieve your goals. Draw upon this positive emotion to move you forward into action.

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|---|
| How will you feel when you achieve your goal? |
| How will you use this energy to move forward? |

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#### Stage 4 - Manage obstacles

Obstacles are bound to arise. Expect them and plan your response in advance. Name the obstacles that might derail you in reaching your goals. Develop a strategy to address each obstacle in turn. List an obstacle and your strategy here. Try using the if/then format. For example - **If** finance push back on budget for an additional role **then** I will call a meeting to

present data on how another role will increase sales by X%. Another example - **If** my colleague continues to argue with me in meetings **then** I will raise the issue with them in private after the meeting.

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| Obstacle: |
| Strategy: |

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### Stage 5 - Dealing with a relapse

Sometimes we get derailed or stuck and our default thinking might be that we have failed, so we give up. Don't fall into this unhelpful thinking trap. Messing up, making mistakes or relapsing is actually a vital part of the change process. Reframe this experience as part of the journey to goal attainment. What can you learn here? What can you do differently next time? **What unhelpful thoughts or behaviors can you replace?** Your capacity to learn, grow and develop is not fixed. We are all a work in progress. Remember how good it will feel to achieve your goal. Now draw upon that energy to restart your plan and challenge any default thoughts that hold you back. **Commit to improvement and eventually to mastery, not to the unrealistic desire for perfection.**

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| What can I learn here?                             |
| What unhelpful thoughts can I challenge & reframe? |
| What can I do differently next time?               |
| How will it feel to obtain my goal?                |

Now return to action by integrating these learnings into your plan.

Build upon your progress. Incremental change is powerful. We build capacity each time we move forward into action or tackle another obstacle. Perseverance is key here. Make it easy to succeed by adapting your plan as necessary. **Cues** were mentioned earlier in my if/then plan to run in the mornings. My cue is to lay out my running gear the night before. What cue might you add to bolster your plan? Some people set an alarm before a meeting as a cue to implement their if/then plan. For example, a client set an alarm 10 minutes before his weekly 1:1 with his boss. The alarm functioned as a **cue** to remind him that **if** he was meeting with his manager **then** he would take a moment to do a mindfulness meditation and check that he had emailed the meeting agenda.

What cues can you structure into your plan? List your cue here and the if/then plan it relates to. Now move back into action and focus on what is left to do to reach your goal. Draw upon your internal resources and your support network to move forward.

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| Cue:     |
| If/then: |

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### Stage 6 - Goal Attainment

Congratulations! Time to celebrate your win. If the goal was aligned with your values then you should be feeling a sense of satisfaction about now. Reflect on your achievement. Answer these questions to embed learnings from the experience that you can draw upon next time round.

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|--|
| How will you acknowledge/celebrate your progress?                    |
| Did you attain your goal?  |
| How do you feel with the outcome achieved?                           |
| What strategies & strengths got you there?                           |
| What did you learn from the obstacles you encountered along the way? |
| What worked well for you and what might you change next time?        |

I hope you found this Framework For Goal Attainment to be practical and effective. Let me know how it worked for you. You can reach me at: [contact@glennduhiggcoaching.com](mailto:contact@glennduhiggcoaching.com)



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