
How to plan my journey towards a goal?

(Vertical planning)

Point 26 should make it clearer what it means to plan your vertical journey (especially as it is my own term). Then make your vertical plan using points 27, 28 and 30. You can put deadlines to some milestones in that plan but go into horizontal planning once you finished the vertical one. Time allocation may sober you up and make you come back to your vertical plan and that's ok. It is perfect when you loop vertical and horizontal planning.

26 TWOFOLD PLANNING

When we talk about planning we actually think about two different types of planning. This distinction is shown in a clear fashion below. Note that we usually plan using the first method before the second, but the order is arbitrary. However note, that you should use the two methods simultaneously and complementarily to get the best results.

Ⓐ Vertical planning

Steps on the goal-directed axis. Connecting where you are to where you want to be

Ⓑ Horizontal planning

Steps on the temporal axis. In other words time management. This includes things outside of your goals that help you function better overall (and this obviously transfers to your creativity and ability to reach your goals) like going to the gym.

27 LABIRINTH-LIKE PLANNING

Solving a maze is a perfect analogy to planning and executing. Recall how it was to solve a maze as a child and what worked best.

Ⓐ Keep the end in mind

Start your planning from the other end. You can surely skip some pitfalls (blind alleys) this way.

Ⓑ Plan from a global perspective

We tend to plan the upcoming steps very thoroughly and disregard what comes after them. What it does is make you do a lot of useless (as it becomes clear only later) stuff. And never meet deadlines of course. What are the steps along the whole journey toward the goal that you know you will have to go through? They are like gates. After you plan globally, then and only then, go deeper on near-future tasks.

Expand on it here

Studies: *Big-Picture Perspective: A plan means little if it doesn't get implemented. That's why planners need to take a holistic view of the process.* // Planning Magazine by Jon Kohl, *Beginning with the end in mind: planning pilot projects and other programmatic research for successful scaling up* by WHO

28 HYPERFOCUS BREAK-DOWN designed for executive work

A big goal or a big task can be scary. You might even feel small in comparison to your goal's greatness. Train yourself to break down everything into tasks as small as it is possible. With time you will notice what is the optimal degree of task fragmentation that you need. Most probably you will need to break your tasks into versions as small as 5 - 60 minute ones. Most people work best if they have tasks ranging in length between 15 and 25 minutes. They should be short enough that you could support hyperfocus during this time. You don't necessarily have to work with your higher focus at all times as it is highly draining, but the structure should be hyperfocus-ready.

Expand on it here

Books: *Hyperfocus: How to Work Less to Achieve More* by Chris Bailey, *AlphaBrain: How a Group of Iconoclasts Are Using Cognitive Science to Advance the Business of Alpha Generation* by Stephen Duneier, *Getting Things Done* by David Allen

29 DEEP WORK

designed for exploratory work

Sometimes it's uneasy to find specific tasks and divide your bigger goals into small sections. Even then you should try and do it, but after it's done you may realize that this line of action is very uncertain and your goal here is more exploratory than executive. You want to investigate something. Then the concept of having long periods of working in a deliberately isolated manner may be helpful. You can also switch towards posing subsequent questions rather than tasks. Make them as specific as you can and remember that they are just some questions, you can always leave some unanswered and go to the next one that you just thought of. This way of work may happen to be more freeing and you may realize your mind flows better working with questions.

Expand on it here

Books: Deep Work by Cal Newport, The Obstacle is The Way by Ryan Holiday

30 BALANCING COGNITIVE STRAIN FRONTLOADING WITH SIMPLIFICATION

Napoleon Bonaparte was famous for his in-depth planning. There was a situation where he was on his knees planning for hours. He would spread plans on the ground and plan for every eventuality ahead of a battle. Should you plan that deeply? Yes. No. Ok, yes and no.

- Frontload planning when you know you won't have time or the right mental state for that later.
- Plan generally the whole path, but specifically only the immediate future otherwise.

How to employ those principles? I can propose the following structure

① Have your global/general plan ready.

① Identify when on this plan time may be of the essence. Then when you will be under stress. Stress severely reduces our creativity. That's why politicians don't tend to be overly creative. Know that ahead of time.

② Plan ahead at the points when time-shortage or stress-abundance may occur.

Remember to do it algorithmically. If something doesn't work out, then what will you do? If this plan B won't either, then what?

You do not have to plan for every single such point if between now and then you know you should have time to wind down and relax.

And keep in mind that there will always be some occurrences left with no plan – but in this method, we focus on the best preparation possible. Just do not let excessive preparation stop you from starting.

Expand on it here

Books: AlphaBrain: How a Group of Iconoclasts Are Using Cognitive Science to Advance the Business of Alpha Generation by Stephen Duneier, Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less by Greg McKeown, The ONE Thing by Gary Keller and Jay Papasan

How to start?

(Both in general and every day)

Any method will take some of your effort. Perhaps more than some as you may need to willingly face your fears. Fortunately there are some tools that will let you control the effort you put in and use it most efficiently. Go for points 31 and 32. 31 is more about doing what needs to be done in the moment and 32 is to ease going forward every day.

31 5-SECOND RULE

This guide is about what works and not about what is easy, right? It will not be easy for you to implement it. In fact, you will live in constant uncertainty about whether you will have to do something unpleasant in just a moment. But when the need arises stuff will get done and you will feel the full satisfaction of it. This guide doesn't give you the osmosis with this method, so feel free to go for the book. Especially if you are not a particularly disciplined person. But ok, what is it all about? You have to act within 5 seconds when the need for something arises. You can count 5-4-3-2-1- and instead of 0, you act. Easy to say, I know. But works.

Let's take an example. A pretty girl on the other side of the street. You see her, will you be scared to introduce yourself nicely to her? Doesn't matter. 5-4-3-2-1....

Expand on it here

Books: The 5 Second Rule by Mel Robbins, Rejection Proof by Jia Jiang