

Goals versus Actions – the GvA Index



If we want to understand our motivation in life, first we must consider what actually motivates us, and how successful we are at striving to achieve that. This exercise helps you to establish what aspects you need to work on, and which areas may require some attention.

Here's how it works. Firstly, ask yourself, on a scale of 1 to 10, how clearly you can visualise your goals in life. If they are absolutely crystal clear – so much so that you can almost taste them, score yourself a 10 out of 10. If you have no idea, or haven't even thought about having goals right now, then your score will be closer to 1.

Think about:

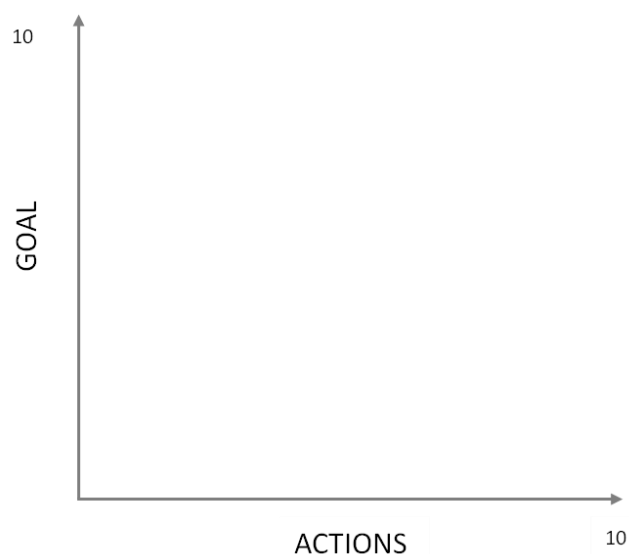
- how well you visualise them; what they sound like to you & how they make you feel
- how you have captured these goals and ambitions – are they written down or documented in any way?
- who else knows about them?

Now do the same for your action planning on a scale of 1 to 10. If you are extremely action oriented; always on the go and forever ticking off items on your To Do List, then you'll be a 10 out of 10. If, however, you lack any sense of momentum, and struggle to work out your priorities on life, then your score will be nearer to 1.

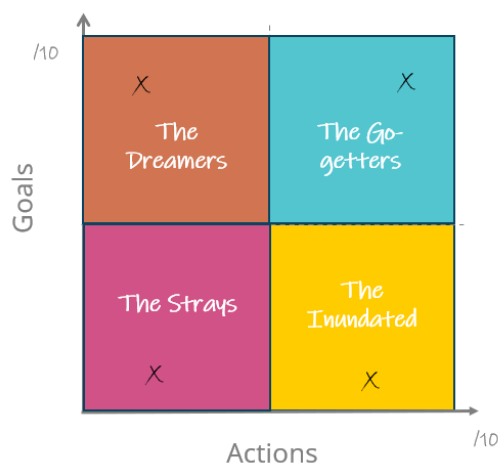
This time, think about:

- how effectively you plan your actions
- how easy you find starting on a plan and taking that first step
- how good you are at completing a course of action

You now have your Goals versus Actions score as a set of coordinates. On the graph below, plot your Goal vs Action score.



Now ask yourself where your plot corresponds with the following chart:



X marks the spot...

The Strays:

Strays are those who have no real goal in mind, and who tend to live very much in the “here and now”. Their actions are limited and often directionless; and they may be influenced by what is going on around them, or by other people’s demands.

For some **Strays**, this is very much their “Comfort Zone” and they may be disinclined to upset the status quo. However, other **Strays** feel frustrated by their lack of progress or goals. They are often the individuals who seem undisciplined or are lacking in organisation skills. There will appear to be no sense of urgency or priority in their lives, although the reality for them may feel totally different.

What is certainly lacking for these people is a sense of control or the ability to motivate themselves to change.

What you can do: the key focus for **Strays** would be to spend quality time considering some exciting and challenging goals for themselves. Understanding how they measure success is often useful for them to explore. They need to understand what motivates them, and be certain that any goals they set for themselves are congruent with their own values and belief systems. This starting point then provides ample opportunity to develop some key actions that they can then undertake to work towards these goals.

The Inundated:

People whose scores place them in this zone are very action oriented and may appear to be “on the go” all the time. They are often described as “launching many ships”, but may not necessarily see their actions through to any logical conclusion. These are the people who are quick to volunteer for tasks or projects and will be happiest when busy or fully occupied. They are interested in people and may find themselves distracted by other people’s journeys rather than their own. They will have very full To Do Lists and are very proud of the number of tasks they get through every day.

Many of **The Inundated** will constantly seek out new actions or opportunities purely to see where they will take them. It is as if the journey is driving the destination. Others from **The Inundated** tribe enjoy being led by others and will follow a path regardless of where it may take them. The key issue is the sense of direction – many completed tasks do not a journey make...

What you can do: these are energetic and enthusiastic people, and the key for them is to channel their energies more effectively. Having clearly defined goals to work towards will help to ensure that their actions have a distinct conclusion with positive outcomes for them. The energy associated with the “pull” of a positive goal is far stronger than the “push away” from a negative place, so identifying what or where this positive place is for them is really important.

The Dreamers:

Dreamers have goals, there’s no doubting that. They think about them often, will discuss them with friends and family, and spend much of their time wondering how they will feel when they have achieved them. They have a clear sense that something needs to change in their lives, but have never actually started any distinct course of action to do something about it.

Being a **Dreamer** can have any number of impacts on a person. Some describe the sense of contentment they have that there is something to aim for, even if they do not start the journey. Others would describe themselves as feeling constantly frustrated by their lack of progress. Sadly, there are those who just have a sense of acceptance that they never get what they want; those things just happen to other people.

What you can do: there are a number of aspects that need to be considered for **Dreamers**. Firstly, how specific is their goal? Is it something in which they truly believe and to which they are totally committed? Once a clear and positive outcome has been established, then the steps towards this can be identified, with clear starting times and end dates. Sometimes the hardest step to take is the first one, particularly for **Dreamers**. They need to be realistic, and set themselves lots of smaller milestones rather than one big leap to the end goal.

The Go-getters:

Arguably, this quadrant is the best position to which we should aspire. Individuals whose scores place them in this zone have clear goals with defined actions that will move them towards their destination. As their name suggests, **Go-getters** will regularly seek out new territories and make the most of the opportunities that these present. They plan and undertake their journeys successfully and are clear about what they hope to achieve.

It is possible that some individuals are **Go-getters** without even realising it. If they have never analysed why they seem so lucky or successful in life, then they may not realise the key to their own success. It is important for all **Go-getters** to ensure that they check their goals regularly to ensure they are still exciting, relevant and achievable; and keep a watchful eye on their progress.

What you can do: one of the key issues that can face **Go-getters** is remaining motivated and “on-track”. **Go-getters** do not necessarily see themselves as successful, and are often weighed down by doubt or a lack of self-confidence or esteem. They may appear to be ahead of the game, but how resilient are they feeling? How brave and courageous do they really feel deep down? And how do

they maintain their energy and motivation? Part of their development can be to understand their true sense of worth and purpose; how they can live comfortably alongside their vulnerability and yet remain strong on their own personal journey.

Understanding which of these individuals most closely represents you is very useful as part of your development in self-leadership. It will help you to focus on what needs to be addressed in the early stages and provide you with some insight into how you intrinsically plan your life. Whether you are a Stray or a Dreamer; one of The Inundated or a Go-getter, you should feel excited about the journey on which you are about to embark, and feel sufficiently inspired and motivated to get you through the ups and downs along the way.