

# DESIGNING AND EXECUTING YOUR PERSONAL STRATEGY

3-7 initiatives/  
projects/  
areas

Initiative	Year-end Goals	Status*	Right goal? (Y/N)	Right approach? (Y/N)
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Conclusions:

- Summarize key conclusions here

\* On track ("OK", ahead ("+"), or behind ("-")

# INSTRUCTIONS

**First: orient.** Review your annual goals and for each assess whether you are:

1. On track
2. Ahead
3. Behind

This helps suck out that distracting chatter from your mind. You stop justifying, explaining, avoiding the truth. You are where you are and there is nothing wrong with that. John Boyd ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Boyd\\_\(military\\_strategist\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boyd_(military_strategist))), a famous fighter pilot who I consider the Sun Tzu of modern times, identified that this ability to orient ourselves to what is going on quickly, honestly, coldly is essential to winning.

**Second: assess.** There are two reasons why you might want to change your plan – either your goal is wrong or your strategy for achieving the goal is wrong. You’ve learned something new over the last six months, so now is the time to incorporate that knowledge into your plan. For each goal answer two questions:

1. Is this the wrong goal? When you look at the end goal, does it still excite and inspire you? When I did this for myself I realized that my goal of having my own TV show still makes my heart race, so I’m keeping it, but my goal of teaching at a top school (after I earn my PhD) is not exactly right. By December 2012, I probably won’t already be teaching. It’s enough for me just to have secured a teaching position and to know I’ll be starting soon.
2. Is this the wrong strategy? Maybe your goal is still a good one, but how you achieve the goal is wrong. For example, I am behind in my goals of building my speaking business, but I think the strategy is still right (get more training, get a speakers bureau). I don’t need to change my strategy; I just need to invest more time there. In the area of building a private equity fund, what I’ve come to realize is that I was thinking too narrowly. What I want is access to \$100M so that I can invest in some of these great Outthinkers that I come across. My strategy of building a traditional private equity fund is one way to achieve this but it’s not the only way. I’ve learned of other structures I could pursue.

**Third: reset and recommit.** Now you step back and look at your goals. Some you want to change because they are no longer inspiring. Some you want to raise. Some you want to lower. Probably you will find many that you want to keep. For example, I changed “raise \$100M” to “gain access to \$100M” for my fund. I changed “teach at top school” to “sign on to teach at top school” under my PhD line. Finally, recommit to your new goals and start passing up those tired souls huffing and puffing into July.