

Future vision

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Purpose

This exercise is introduced to the client in a coaching session but is best completed away from the coaching as a creative writing homework activity. The exercise encourages visualization techniques to encourage the client to look into the future – say, 10 years ahead or a meaningful timescale for the individual – and to retrospectively review their most notable achievements and contributions. What is their legacy?

Description

This exercise encourages the client to create a written legacy as if they were a third party. It taps into their creativity and can be done either in a coaching session or as homework.

Process

The process provides clarity through the creative writing process and can provide some real insights to support the client in assessing and designing their future professional role. The piece is written by the client in the role of a third person, say a journalist in a relevant professional publication, who writes a professional profile of the client's achievements 10 years from now.

Encourage the client to prepare a relaxing and uninterrupted environment to write the piece (phones off!), giving the instructions/asking the questions that follow:

- Play your favourite music, relax, and design the writing environment to help you to feel at one with yourself.
- Consider your future vision of your ideal career path, where would you like to be and what would you like to achieve in 5/10 years' time.
- How will you have made a difference? What are the key events?
- Take some time to visualize this. What will you look like? What will it feel like? What will be around you? What will you be doing?
- Be careful not to be judgemental while visualizing your future self.
- If appropriate for you, consider your family, important others and life-balance issues. Start writing – get into the flow and let your creative juices form the story. Do not judge or moderate the content of the piece.

The client should then bring the article to the next coaching session and the coach's role is to draw out key insights revealed in the writing and to provide reflective space:

- How important is this to you?
- How would you feel/what would you think if you were to achieve this accolade?
- How serious are you about this?
- What actions can you take to start moving forward?

Pitfalls

Not all individuals will feel comfortable with this exercise and may be unable or unwilling to harness their internal creativity for this purpose.