

2-3-4 approach to change - info sheet

The 2-3-4 method involves 3 simple steps which explore...

- **2 WHATS:** One direction & One goal
- **3 WHYS:** Motives or reasons why you want it
- **4 HOWS:** Plans and actions for how you'll do it

Let's take a closer look at each step.

Step 1 - Identify 2 WHATS

A GOAL TO GET YOU MOVING AND A DIRECTION TO GUIDE YOUR EFFORTS.

So you want to make a change? The first step is to identify exactly what it is you want to change. The reason for choosing two 'WHATs' is that you can have the best of both worlds, that is both a direction to head in and a goal to aim for. The direction will sustain you in the long term and the goal will get things moving in the short term. The idea is that once you achieve your goal you identify another and so on and so on, all the while heading in your chosen direction.

When identifying your two 'WHATs' start with the direction as this will inform your goal. If you're not sure about the validity of your direction don't worry too much at this stage. If it really isn't what you want to do you'll know during the second step when you are unable to come up with any meaningful reasons for wanting to do it. If this is the case simply return to step 1 before again proceeding to step 2.

To get started consider the following questions.

Your direction (your FIRST 'WHAT')

- Think about your life now... How would you like things to be different?
- Given the things you would like to be different... What direction have you chosen?

Your goal (your SECOND 'WHAT')

Taking into account the things that would specifically help YOU as well as the things that might get in your way.

- What could be the first steps to making these things happen?

After considering the options...

- What is the goal you have decided on?

I will revisit this goal and either alter it or set a new goal...

- After this amount of time...
- Or when this happens...

Step 2 - Identify 3 WHYS

Identify three reasons why you absolutely, positively have to do what you are aiming to do. These reasons or motives will keep you moving when times are good and stop you from quitting when times are tough. This is about what's really motivating you.

It's your motivation in conjunction with the goal setting process that allows you to achieve your goals. The relationship between motivation and goals is hugely important yet is often overlooked by those eager to change. Think of the relationship between motivation and goals as you would a car and fuel. In the same way you need fuel to run a car, you need motivation to achieve your goals and to drive you in the right direction. In both cases having one without the other won't get you from A to B.

The key point is that making a change is not solely about a goal or a direction. What is actually more crucial is the importance you place on achieving a goal or arriving at a certain point. If something is highly important you will be more motivated to achieve it. Without this motivation, without the fuel to drive you, a goal is essentially pointless. You simply won't achieve anything meaningful without it being important, without there being a motive, without there being a clear reason why.

It is ironic that most people spend the majority of their time crafting their goals while neglecting to address the motivation needed to achieve them. This is not to say goal setting isn't a worthwhile exercise. It just means that the reasons why you choose to pursue a goal and not the goal itself is what will sustain your efforts.

To get started consider the following questions. `

- What are some broad reasons that will drive you to towards your direction or goal?

Considering the reasons you listed above...

- What are the top three broad reasons that will drive you towards your direction or goal?

It is useful after establishing your three reasons to expand on each of them. Doing this highlights the flow on effects that each reason might have and in doing so increases the importance of each reason. For each of your three reasons consider the following.

- What are 5 additional benefits that could or would arise as a direct result of achieving each reason?

While five additional reasons sounds like a lot it really isn't. Remember you are trying to come up with as many reasons as possible to make this change. The more compelling reasons you come up with the more the importance of making your change will become. You can even expand on each of these reasons if there are additional benefits. See the '2-3-4 change plan - an example' for how this looks in practice.

Step 3 - Identify 4 HOWS

Now that you know 'WHAT' you want to do, and 'WHY' you want to do it, the next step is to plan 'HOW' you are going to do it.

To do this you need to think about four action steps that will get you started and help you to achieve your goal. Remember you aren't coming up with big action steps for your direction but rather smaller steps for your shorter term goals.

To get started consider the following questions.

- What are 10 to 20 actions you could take to achieve your goal? *Remember to include varied ideas even if they seem a little farfetched or out of your comfort zone.*

Considering your list of possible actions...

- Which of these actions would be realistic for you to follow through with at this time? *Remember to take into account any barriers that may impact on your choice of actions.*

Considering the remaining possible actions...

- What are the four actions you're going to take?

Achieved your goal?

Remember these steps are meant to assist you in achieving your shorter term goal while heading in your ideal direction. Once you achieve your first goal repeat the process again. It should look something like this...

- Review step one again to ensure your direction is still valid. Alter if needed.
- Consider another shorter term goal. This could be similar to your previous goal or totally different as long as it's taking you in the right direction. Go through the 'your second WHAT' process again.
- Review step two or go through the process again if needed. As long as you have strong reasons why you want to achieve your goal proceed to step three.
- Go through the step three process to come up with another four 'HOWS' and continue heading in your chosen direction.

So there it is, the 2-3-4 approach to change. The hope is that after completing these three steps you will have a clear understanding of WHAT you want to do, WHY you want to do it, and HOW you will do it.