

# Niche Success Blueprint

## “Start to Profit” Training Course

### Module 16: Productivity & Strategic Planning

In [Module 14](#) and [15](#) you worked on goal setting, organizing & prioritizing tasks, and creating structure/routine for your business. I trust you gained a lot from the “Brain Dump” and “Time Log” exercises. They’re very beneficial for productivity & efficiency!

I also shared some tips for staying focused, disciplined and productive as you work on your online business. I hope you’re *putting those into practice* and finding them useful for staying on track toward your goals. :-)

This week we’ll focus on improving productivity even more, and also “strategic planning”.

You already have your task lists & checklists, and you’ve been establishing a good work routine that fits your schedule. Now we’ll work on things like setting SMART goals, dealing with procrastination, what to do when “you’re just not feeling it”, and other things that may be holding you back from moving forward as fast as you would like.

These are the core elements that will keep your business growing, your profit increasing, and your motivation strong! They’re what I still use in my own business every day...



# Strategic Planning Begins With A Clear Vision

It's easy to get preoccupied with the tasks at hand, or to get distracted with new things constantly crossing your screen, to the point of losing sight of your objectives. Having a clear vision of your goals, *knowing* your objectives, and planning *strategically* are critical to your success! This is what will keep you moving forward (in the *right* direction) and keep you motivated and inspired to keep "doing the work" as you go. ;-)

***Successful people are big dreamers. They imagine what their future could be, ideal in every respect, and then they work every day toward their distant vision, that goal or purpose. -Brian Tracy***

When I started my first business I was married and we had four children between us. We were broke and living in a small space (literally, a family of six in an 800 square foot home!). I worked all the time, staying late for overtime.

I worked up until one week before my daughter was born, and only took off two weeks total - because we couldn't afford to be without my (our only) paycheck. I rarely got to spend any time with my family and was always stressed.

What made me want to work *even harder*, up to 18 hours a day 7 days a week, for the first year or so of starting my business? *Hope!* I knew things would actually change, versus being stuck in a cycle in my previous situation. I had this vision of a home with a big porch, a huge yard, and a happy family with lots of fun times together. I wanted it so bad that I was willing to do anything to make it happen. That vision was stuck in my head and it was a driving force that fueled my motivation and determination.

That was almost 18 years ago. In hindsight, I can tell you it was ALL worth it. I am now living the life I strategically created for myself, from a vision in my mind. That vision changed over the years of course, and now I'm traveling the world and enjoying life in different ways - but always on my own terms. *I worked hard to be this "lucky". :-)*

Figure out exactly what you want your life to look like a year from now, then five years from now, and even ten years from now. Get that vision FIRM in your mind (or create a "vision board"). *If you want change bad enough*, there's nothing that can stop you from making it happen! It all starts from a place of **strong** desire and positive aspiration...

## About Lynn Terry

Best known for ClickNewz, Lynn works online full-time as a Professional Blogger and Super Affiliate. She has 17 years experience in a variety of online business models, and a passion for helping others achieve the same success & lifestyle.

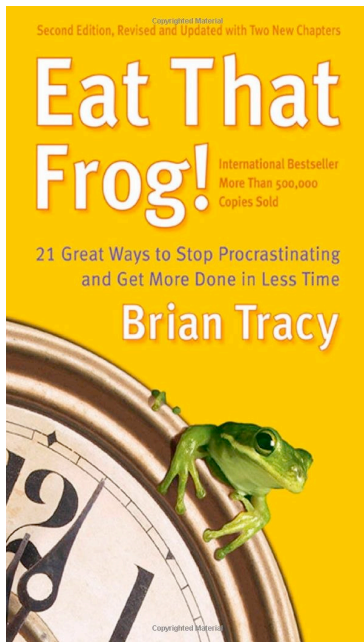
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# Start Your Day With A Sense Of Achievement!



You've likely heard the term "*Eat That Frog*" which is also the title of [a book by Brian Tracy](#) on productivity.

The phrase is originally credited to Mark Twain from the quote below. It basically means to get your biggest (ugliest, most daunting) task out of the way first - *instead of putting it off*.

By starting each day "eating that frog", or getting your biggest task (or your Money Task) **DONE** and out of the way, you're setting your day up for success and productivity. You'll feel amazing! You'll feel *relieved*. And the sense of accomplishment will fuel you through the rest of your work day.

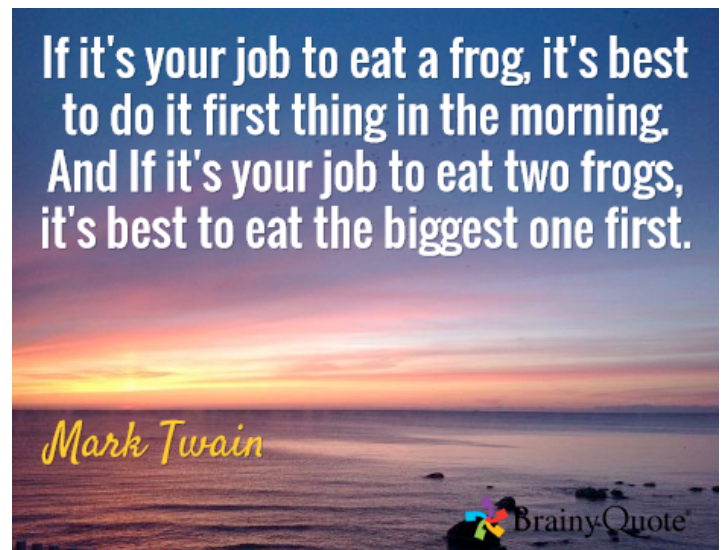
Otherwise you'll end up **dragging your feet** ALL DAY LONG with that ONE task weighing on your mind. Not ideal. ;-)

This is one of the "secrets" of the most successful and most productive people. They start their day tending the absolute most important task...

Your "frog" is the one task that will have the great impact on your business or on your bottom line. It's also the one you're most likely to put off or procrastinate on starting. Start every day analyzing what ONE thing you can do to move closer to your goal, and just **get it done** - *first*.

Discipline yourself to address your priority task and see it through to completion. Force yourself to stay on it until it is finished. Don't spend excessive time planning, analyzing, etc - simply do the task and knock it out so you can move on.

This "sense of accomplishment" is addictive! Develop a habit of achieving priority goals, and notice how it affects your confidence, confidence, productivity, and even your mood!



# Creating A Vision Statement & Mission Statement

Strategic planning requires knowing your end goal, or your ultimate objective. While this includes your lifestyle and financial goals, it also includes your contribution to the world - or at least to your market. How can you improve lives, or make a difference?

Once you have a clear vision of your goals & objectives, and create a Vision Statement and a Mission Statement, you'll have a solid frame for all of your strategic planning.

The main difference between the two is that a Mission Statement is for the public, and a Vision Statement is not - *it's for your benefit only*. A Vision Statement is similar to a vision board, condensed into a few short sentences. It's basically the end result you most want to achieve in life/business. It will be the source for your inspiration and drive.

## Creating A Vision Statement

Your objective should go deeper than "to make money". It should also be *believable* and *achievable*. Imagine yourself in an ideal future. What does that look like to you? Where are you? How do you FEEL? What are you doing? Take your time on this, but make it a priority. Without a clear result in mind, you'll end up working in aimless directions.

## Creating A Mission Statement

Your Mission Statement should define the purpose of your business, and explain why it exists - and why people should care. When creating a Mission Statement, refer back to your [Objectives Worksheet](#), as many of your answers there will work their way into your Mission Statement. The basics of your statement will include Who, What and Why: who it's for, what you offer and/or what message you want to convey, and a reason why.

A great Mission Statement will communicate the purpose of your business or blog.

It also lets readers (*and potential advertisers or sponsors*) know what to expect, why they should pay attention or get involved, and gets them excited about being there!

Your Mission Statement doesn't necessarily have to be labeled as such, but it should be added to your About Page, which should also contain your contact information and a clear call-to-action.

See [How To Write Your Mission Statement](#) on Entrepreneur.com for a helpful outline.

# How To Implement Strategic Planning

Knowing what YOU want to achieve (Vision) and what you want *your business* to achieve (Mission) will help you create short-term and long-term goals in your business planning.

A “strategic plan” is basically a road map that will get you from where you are now, to where you ultimately want to be as an end result.

Since you can’t possibly foresee all the things that may happen or change along the way, your planning is meant purely for guidance and direction, and should be dynamic. You’ll want to continually review and evaluate your plans for change, growth and improvement.



There is no right or wrong way to create a plan.

You basically want to create a clear timeline with quantifiable goals, to the best of your ability - given what you know now - and then plan to adjust and improve along the way.

When creating a plan or strategy to achieve your goals, here are some important points to consider and/or questions to address:

- Fill out or Revise your [Objectives Worksheet](#)
- What are my current short-term goals for my blog, business or niche site?
- What are my long-term goals for my blog, business or niche site?
- Which physical/digital/virtual resources do I need to be more successful?
- What ideas would I like to implement, in which order? (*Prioritize!*)
- What problems, issues or roadblocks do I need to overcome in my business?
- What problems do I want to solve for my target market?
- How can I make a difference, or contribute to / add value to my market?
- How should I allocate my resources (time, money, energy)?
- What do I most want to achieve this month / quarter / before year-end?



# Creating SMART Short & Long-Term Goals

As you are creating a Strategic Plan to get ahead in your business, keep the questions on Page 5 in front of you as a constant reminder and revisit them often for potential revisions or updates. Add the list to your Monthly Task Checklist (Module 15, Page 6).

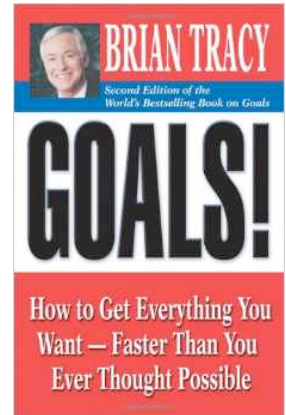
Creating **actionable goals** will give you clear direction, a working plan, and also the motivation to achieve them. When creating short-term and long-term goals for your business, it's ideal to use the "SMART" approach/outline to goal-setting:

- **Specific**  
Unclear goals will bring unclear results. Get super-specific with each goal!
- **Measurable**  
Larger goals need to be broken down into smaller goals, or a set of very specific tasks, so you can easily measure your progress. Then you can stay on track with a clear plan.
- **Achievable**  
A good goal should definitely challenge you, and your limits, but it needs to be realistic and believable. Breaking it down and making it Measurable (above) will help you stay focused, motivated and even excited about working toward and achieving your goal!
- **Relevant**  
Random goals with no real personal meaning, or no attachment to your core values and your personal vision, will not be exciting to work on. Make your goals relevant to your long-term vision, and in line with your "life purpose" or your greatest desires.
- **Timed**  
Setting deadlines, and quantifying your goals, gives you motivation and a compelling reason to focus on & achieve your goals. Example: "Create and launch a product by May 1st to pay for a fun summer vacation with my family." Another example: "Secure three new clients this month to reach my immediate financial goals." A third example: "Double my social media reach across each network this month."

**Tips:** Goals should be framed positively so you can get excited about achieving them. Also make them personal so they reflect your deepest values and desires. Your goals should be "possible" too - within your reasonable reach - so it may take smaller more reasonable goals (stepping stones) to work your way up to your more long-term goals.

According to Brian Tracy's book [Goals](#), fewer than 3% of people have clear (written) goals and a solid plan for achieving them. Just setting goals alone puts you in the top tier of achievers! It's one of the most important life skills you can master, to achieve success in any area.

Setting goals, and giving those goals top priority, gives you full control over the direction of your life and business. It empowers you, giving you full responsibility, versus being subject to other people's priorities or situations and events that will inevitably come up in life.



## Prioritizing Your Goals

Last week we talked about prioritizing your tasks. It's important to prioritize your goals as well. Achieving challenging goals requires self-discipline, desire, and mental energy. Ideally you will focus on one primary goal at a time, instead of spreading yourself too thin trying to focus on or accomplish too much at once.

Achieving great goals is about identifying what you want, and being willing to do what it takes to make it happen. But it may also mean making sacrifices, or identifying those things you need to give up (or set aside) in order to achieve your goals.

Most people are simply unwilling to make personal sacrifices in order to achieve their biggest dreams in life. That's the difference between "wanting" and "having". Sometimes you have to give up small things (temporarily) to accomplish big things - meaningful, positive, BIG life change. If your vision is strong, your desire will be strong as well, and that will motivate and inspire you to do whatever it takes to succeed. This is why a clear Vision Statement and a vivid image of your ideal life is so important!

To properly prioritize your goals, first determine your main long-term goals. Start at the end result, ie your Vision Statement or your image of your ideal self / life / business. With that image in mind, jot down a description of what that looks like ten years from now, then five years from now, and finally one year from now. Working backward from your desired end result, what do the steps look like?

Getting from Point A (where you are now) to Point B (where you want to be) is a step by step process with many mini-goals in between each major goal. Start a base outline, and fill in the gaps with the smaller goals it will take to reach each critical stage of growth in your overall plan. It doesn't have to be perfect, and you'll most likely make changes and adjustments along the way. That's okay! At least nail down an outline. :)

# Evaluating Progress and Adapting As You Go

In last week's Training Module (15, Page 7), I suggested this exercise:

Set up a Time Block once a week to spend an hour or two evaluating your progress and your priorities. Use that time for brainstorming and planning, and to map out the week ahead. Scheduling in this time consistently (every week) will help you stay on track with your priorities and objectives. I do this on Friday mornings simply because that's when I have more free time and less on my mind & schedule.

It's important to schedule your planning/brainstorming when you have a block of free time where you're not rushed or stressed. While you have long-term goals, and it may take years to achieve your ideal lifestyle and see the level of success you're after, you have to stay grounded in the short term goals and the consistent daily tasks in order to make it happen. Setting aside time each week to keep yourself on the right track is key!

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Get in the habit of reviewing your goals monthly, or at least quarterly. It's important to keep those goals fresh in your mind so you don't get distracted by the daily tasks and interruptions, to the point of losing sight of your vision for your life and business.

## **Create a "status report" or scorecard to evaluate your progress. Example:**

- Did I achieve my goals for this month/quarter?
- If not, what held me back from achieving \_\_\_ goal?
- What can I do differently next month/quarter to better achieve my goals?
- Are these goals still relevant? Does anything need to be modified?
- If goals *were* achieved, celebrate!! Note what worked well, for continued success.

## **Also ask yourself:**

- Given my progress (or lack of) what did I learn in the process?
- How can I improve my goals, or my plan for achieving goals?
- What can I do differently, or what can I change, for better/faster results?
- What is the next step in my business now?
- What new goals should I set and/or which goals should I change?

Keep in mind that your goals are just guidelines. Be open to new trends and/or new opportunities that arise. Be flexible - and prepared to change and adjust as you go!



# Productivity Tips For A “Fast Action” Routine

We’ve talked already about using a Time Log and Micro-Tasking to improve productivity and efficiency. In Module 15 I also gave you daily, weekly and monthly checklists to help you organize tasks and stay on track. As you work through these things to establish a work routine that suits your schedule, keep in mind that it’s not set in stone. It can, and should be!, modified as you go - as you determine what works best for you personally.

Make sure you have a system in place for tracking tasks & goals too. As I mentioned in previous Modules, I use [Evernote](#) to organize both. It’s very efficient!

If you approach your day without a solid plan, you’re likely to get lost in a sea of ideas and distractions. Just being *busy* is not the same as being *productive*. Doing random tasks is not the same as focusing on specific goals with a specific result. Create a plan!

## Simple Productivity Tips To Dramatically Improve Your Routine:

### • Only have a few short minutes? Don’t waste them!

There are many tasks you can do in short time while waiting on a meeting to start, waiting for water to boil, waiting on someone to show up, etc including: a quick email reply, responding to new Twitter replies, sharing a quote or tip via social media, jotting down a quick outline for a great product idea, drafting a quick idea for a blog post in Wordpress, etc. You’ll find you have “white space” when you’re out and about too, so mobile apps can come in very handy for some of these tasks. ;-)

### • Feeling Stuck? Try Micro-Tasking!

If you’re having a hard time getting focused on a task, or just can’t seem to see it through to completion, try setting aside small time blocks to micro-task the project. For example, you might set aside five minutes each hour to make progress on it. Some ideas for implementing this rule include:

- Work space cluttered? Take five minutes at the end of each hour to organize/clean.
- Stuck writing a report? Spend just five minutes each hour or so writing a small piece.
- Is your Inbox overflowing? Set aside five minutes each hour to tackle your email.

### • Don’t let things pile up. Take definitive action!

As soon as you land on a blog post, read it and respond or implement. Buy a product? Put it into action, or implement what it teaches. Open an email? Respond, delete or file it right then and there. Get in the habit of dealing with, completing, or implementing on the go - then delete, close tabs, file, or otherwise remove it from your space.

# Beating Procrastination: The Productivity Killer!

Everyone deals with procrastination. I often joke that “I get more done when I’m procrastinating than any other time!” If I have a big project in front of me that I’m procrastinating on (*usually just a mental block*) I can sweep the entire basement and mop the whole house just avoiding getting started on it (lol).



There are many reasons we procrastinate. Not having clearly defined goals, a strong vision, or quantifiable deadlines are a major factor. This module should prove helpful in getting you on a roll!

Other issues include: overwhelm, lack of passion or motivation, fear of failure/success, unsure where to start, not having the right resources, lack of time, etc. When you find yourself procrastinating on a task or project, stop and ask yourself why...

- If it’s a lack of time to really dig in and complete it, micro-task it (Page 9).
- Feel overwhelmed? Break bigger tasks down into smaller more manageable tasks.
- If you feel unsure where to start or what to do, take a moment to prioritize your tasks and goals and create a list of micro-tasks... start at the top and work through them.
- Feeling hesitant, have some resistance, afraid of failure? Force yourself through the motions of doing the tasks. If you need to, stop and journal out what you feel and why. Try a “worst case scenario exercise” - journaling out the absolute worst that could possibly happen. (I assure you it’s never as bad on paper as it is in your mind!)
- If you’re just not into the project/task, and have zero passion for it, evaluate the task or goal and determine if it’s a priority. Are there consequences to ditching this one? If not, remove it from your list OR put it on the back burner for now. If it IS important, force yourself through the motions and get it off your plate - or outsource it.

When you sit down to complete a task, remove all distractions. Turn off notifications, close your email, close social media channels, mute your phone, etc.

Still stuck? Ask for advice/feedback! Go to your favorite mentor, group, forum, etc and get insight from others on how best to tackle or complete a specific task.

Your ability to identify the highest priority task at any given moment, and complete it efficiently, will have the greatest impact on your success than any other skill you develop! Get in the habit of setting goals, creating manageable micro-tasks that achieve those goals, and evaluating your short-term and long-term progress on a regular basis.

As you work through the concepts in these last few modules, make it a point to identify “time wasters” and also to identify your most (and least) productive hours throughout the week. Always analyze your productivity, your routine and your habits for potential improvements - and take action on what you discover! Create habits, change patterns, adjust your routine, and constantly improve as you go.

Becoming a top-performing, super-productive, highly efficient and successful entrepreneur is not going to happen overnight. Don't be hard on yourself, but DO push yourself. Challenge yourself to consistently improve!

### **When All Else Fails...**

There will be days when you struggle. It's not necessarily lack of passion for the project, or even procrastination. Sometimes you simply need to take a break, step back from the task or the project or the pressure, and come back to it refreshed the next day - or later that day. :-)

### **Your Homework:**

- Get a clear visual of what you want for your future. Journal it out, then write a simplified Vision Statement.
- “Eat Your Frog” every day. (Page 3)
- Write Your Mission Statement. (Page 4)
- Outline a Strategic Plan with SMART Goals. (Pages 5-7)
- Evaluate your progress & improve productivity. (8-10)

Your vision/mission statement is going to be important for next week's task, as we're going to start working on your Media Kit! Be sure to get this task completed before next week's Training Module arrives. :-)

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**If you have questions about this week's tasks you can reach me on [Facebook](#) or at my [Forum](#). Otherwise I'll see you next week in Module 17. \*cheers\***

### **Have Questions?**

If you have questions, join us on the ClickNewz Forum:

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If you would like hands-on help brainstorming your business or setting up your website, contact Lynn at: [AskLynnTerry@gmail.com](mailto:AskLynnTerry@gmail.com) to discuss low cost private or group coaching options.