



# Tool

## Track Back

**PURPOSE:** This exercise encourages you to focus on two areas of your life in the future where you want to make change and to identify the critical actions 'or stepping stones' along the way to achieving.

**SOURCE:** Adapted from RD1st Track Back exercise (with thanks to Deb Barnard).

### HOW TO DO THE EXERCISE:

1. Select two areas of your life on which to focus – for example career, creativity, learning, family, relationships, health, confidence etc
2. Select a specific date in the future – for example 21 June 2024, 1 January 2021 – and imagine that by this date you have achieved your goals in this area of your life.
3. For each area, describe what success looks like to you:
  - Write in the emotionally-positive (e.g. what it is, rather than what it is not) and in the present tense ('I am working a 3-day week and have time for socialising with most evenings).
  - Check you focus on what is within your control ('I won the lottery' is not!)
  - Is it something you really, really want – not just what you think is possible?

### Example: Work/Life Balance

I'm managing a stimulating and rewarding portfolio career with plenty of time for my family and friends. Each project has plenty of space around it to plan and prepare in advance. Sailing close to deadlines is a thing of the past. My partner appreciates seeing more of me and we socialise at least twice a week and I swim with the kids every weekend.

- Once you've pinned down your version of success, it's now time to 'tract back' what steps took you there using the blank table overleaf.

Example below:

	Work/life balance	Date
Description of success	I have a mixed portfolio of work including training; teaching and some consultancy. I'm earning enough to save into a pension scheme £100 per month. My work is always delivered to high quality and I'm learning new things through work. I am home by 5:30 four nights a week and only travelling overnight once a month.	By 21 March 2021
Critical Action 1	Draft a list of services and prices and circulate to potential clients via email	By early Oct 20
Critical Action 2	Promote myself to new clients via writing an article in Arts Professional or speaking at a conference	Autumn 2020
Critical Action 3	Secure a major project that has learning opportunities for me	Spring 2021
First Step	Do a draft budget for 2020/21 to reflect pension contribution and new prices	August 2020
What do you already have now?	Regular clients for training; good testimonials from previous participants; opportunity to speak at X conference	
What could stop you?	Taking on work that involves too much travel. Taking on work I'm not fully qualified to do and will struggle to do well.	
What resources do you need?	Subscription to new software. Fee to attend training in Autumn.	

	1.	2.	Date
Description of success			
Critical Action 1			
Critical Action 2			
Critical Action 3			
First Step			
What do you already have now?			
What could stop you?			
What resources do you need?			