

# How to Plan

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

The good news is, there *is* a productive way to think about projects, situations and topics that creates maximum value with minimal expenditure of time and effort. It happens to be the way we *naturally* think and plan, though not necessarily the way we *normally* plan when we consciously try to get a project under control. In my experience, when people do more planning, more informally and naturally, they relieve a great deal of stress *and* obtain better results (pp. 55-56)

### 1. DEFINE PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

- Defines success
- Creates decision-making criteria
- Aligns resources
- Motivates
- Clarifies focus
- Expands options

### 2. VISUALISE THE OUTCOME

- View the project from beyond the completion date
- Envision wild success
- Capture features, aspects, qualities you imagine in place

### 3. BRAINSTORM

- Don't judge, challenge, evaluate or criticise
- Go for quantity not quality
- Put analysis and organisation in the background

### 4. ORGANISE

- Identify the significant pieces
- Sort (by components and/or sequences and/or priorities)

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<sup>1</sup> D. Allen, *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity* (New York: 2003), pp. 54-81.

- Details to the required degree

## **5. IDENTIFY NEXT ACTIONS**

- Decide on next actions for each of the current moving parts of the project
- Decide on the next action in the planning process, if necessary

## **CONCLUSION**

- Need more clarity – move up the planning scale (eg. to purpose)
- Need more action – move down the planning scale (e.g. to organising)