

CLIENT ADVICE SHEET



Identifying Your Fears & Getting Unstuck

We are hardwired to feel fear after all it's what keeps us safe but most of us are prone to inappropriate fears; fear of failure fear of speaking in public, fear of leaving a bad situation (whether personal or professional). Fears come in different shapes and sizes - from paralysing terror to a simple disinclination to choose a course of action which would involve facing a low-level fear. The point is that these inappropriate fears have no positive purpose. They don't keep us safe; they don't protect us. In fact, they rob us of opportunities and render life dull.



Feel Your Fears

The first step to overcoming them is to know what they are. Make a list of everything you're afraid of and, as you name your fears, think about how they make you feel. The process of setting down your fears on paper will help clarify your thinking and allow you to look at them more objectively almost as if those fears belong to someone else.

Don't rush on. Take a moment to pause, reflect and make a note of things you are afraid of, along with how those things make you feel. Use your phone's notes app if you don't have a pen and pencil to hand.

If you were advising someone else who had those fears, what advice would you give them to begin to overcome them?



What Is Stopping You?

Fears and mental blocks can hold us back from doing the things that we really want to do. Replacing "I know I can't" with "perhaps I can" is a good way of clearing those blocks and allowing a more positive mindset to take hold.

Write down 5 things that you think you can't do along with the reasons why.

Now rewrite the list swapping the negative words for positive ones for example:

"I can't apply for that job because I don't meet all the criteria" becomes "I can apply for that job because I have most of the skills they ask for"

Do this for the items you put on your list. Read through the positive statements and see how you feel.



Decide on Your Next Steps

You've got 2 lists in front of you - your fears and how they make you feel, plus your list of positive statements about things your really want to do. It's time to plan some simple actions to get unstuck. What do you need to do this week to move beyond these fears and mental blocks?

Write those actions down and schedule time in your diary to do them. You won't conquer fear overnight, but you are back in the game and fear has no longer conquered you.



Using This Learning

Understanding the nature and the impact of your own fears and mental blocks helps you master yourself and brings clarity to personal, team and organisational problems. Leaders who don't recognise their own worries and fears when analysing a problem, fail to understand how they personally impact their organisation. Your teams follow you. If you choose or avoid particular paths because of your worries, the direction of the whole organisations is affected.

Use the techniques outlines above and the hand grid overleaf to identify issues impacting on decisions, situations or problems your team is facing



Obstacles and Issues

- List all the things that are a problem in connection with the issue you are facing
- Include things that are in your head (or your team's heads) such as self-doubt, worries, fears. If appropriate, get people to complete the Feel Your Fears & What's Stopping You? exercises to identify these things.

Resources/Sources of Help/Self-Talk Needed

- ☒ List things that will help get this task done
- ☒ Include people you can go to for advice & support
- ☒ Note the positive self-talk messages you and your team need to remind yourselves of.

Actions to Overcome Obstacles and Issues

- List the next thing(s) you need to do to get going with this task, issue, decision, opportunity, etc.
- Make sure you identify specific next actions rather than general goals. This is about doing something specific to bring you one step closer to your intended outcome.

Further Support

None of us can overcome our deep-seated anxieties overnight. We all need support and encouragement. If you'd like an external perspective on your concerns and help identifying the resources you already have to tackle them, my team at Mastery | Clarity | Wisdom can help.

We offer problem solving sessions, and long-term coaching for board chairs, CEOs and governance professionals. We also offer wider board development sessions, independent governance reviews and interim leadership support.

Matthew

Matthew Clements-Wheeler
Founder & CEO, **Mastery | Clarity | Wisdom**
<http://www.mcw.org.uk>
01643 689 680

