

EXPERIENTIAL PLANNING GUIDE™

FOR TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS

MY TOWN TODAY

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE:

THE EXPERIENTIAL PLANNING GUIDE (EPG) IS A PROCESS OF SEVEN STEPS THAT ARE PART OF THE MY TOWN METHOD. THIS GUIDE PROVIDES A SIMPLE AND LOGICAL APPROACH TO MAKING THOUGHTFUL CHANGE FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION, COMMUNITY, OR AS A TRAVELER OR TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL. THIS IS ACHIEVED THROUGH AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO CREATING THE FIRST STEP OF A TRAVEL-BASED STRATEGIC PLAN, THE EPG.

THE PROMPTS IN THE FOLLOWING STEPS REQUIRE CRITICAL-THINKING AND COGNITIVE SKILLS TO WORK THROUGH THE PSYCHOLOGY & SOCIOLOGY OF TRAVEL. THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. THIS IS A GUIDE MEANT FOR YOU TO BUILD A PATH TO YOUR NEXT STEPS.

WHO IS THIS FOR?

HAVE YOU EVER THOUGHT ABOUT PLANNING YOUR PROFESSIONAL GOALS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF HOW TRAVEL WILL INFLUENCE THEM PERSONALLY?

THIS GUIDE WAS CREATED FOR TODAY'S TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL WHOSE CREATIVE NICHE USES TRAVEL AS PART OF THEIR PROFESSION AND OVERALL PLANNING TO ACHIEVE THEIR ANNUAL GOALS. THIS INCLUDES: TRAVEL WRITERS & BLOGGERS, VISITORS BUREAU, CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, AND TOURISM PROFESSIONALS, AND TRAVEL-BASED INFLUENCERS & CREATORS.

BY GOING THROUGH THIS GUIDE, YOU WILL BE TAKING A PERSONAL APPROACH TO TRAVEL PLANNING, WHICH IN TURN CAN HELP YOU BETTER UNDERSTAND YOUR VISITORS NEEDS, AND HOST EXPECTATIONS. IN THE AGE OF TRAVEL BLOGGERS, RATING SITES, AND INFLUENCERS AS A MEANS FOR TRAVELERS TO GET INFORMATION; EXPECTATIONS ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING, AND ANNUAL PLANNING TO MEET THOSE EXPECTATIONS ARE NOT JUST NEEDED, BUT NECESSARY.

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WHY TAKE THE TIME TO DO THE EPG??

Many of you in the travel industry may have heard the phrase: "travel is lifestyle." If that is true for you, how are you currently planning for that lifestyle?

More and more individuals are starting to choose travel not just for their vacation time, but as part of their lifestyle and overall goals. Yet, while there are endless goal-setting tools on the market today, there's a lack of individualized plans to address the travel lifestyle and/or the travel profession.

Moreover, travel is simply looked at as the part of an individuals annual goals that they may "budget" for, but not to evaluate how the experiences will shape and change their goals, and lifestyle.

Finally, addressing your travel goals as an individual item to work through; may help you, your organization, and visitors, in unexpected ways.

Not just in financial planning, but a greater opportunity; preparing your mind and others, to receive the joys and perspective which travel can bring.



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MY TOWN PHILOSOPHY:

Coming from a non-profit background in addition to travel (you can see my bio on my-town-today.com),

I have time and time again heard and used the phrase “life-changing” in my work. After much evaluation of what this means in my own life; what I have come to be passionate about is this:

“It’s not about an event being life-changing, it’s about incremental steps to change your perspective on life.”

By taking the time to do an introspective version of goal-setting directed toward your travel career, you can help make the change you want to see happen over time.

We all have parts of us we want change, and many of us look to the new year, new quarter, or new month to figure out ways to motivate ourselves to make that change happen. But change does not happen overnight, success is not immediate. These are all things that are true, yet, in our fast-paced world somehow these truths get continually overlooked to find the magic “quick fix.” We’ve all been there!

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MY TOWN GOAL FOR YOU:

Regarding Travel, My Town's EPG, and
long-term Experience Plan Journals
(Coming Fall of 2021):

*My Town's hope is to bring the Passion of
Incremental Change through Travel
Experiences- to change your perspective, which
will help you gain a happier, healthier life in
relation to your travel goals, aspirations, and
lifestyle.*

So Get Comfortable, Get Focused, Keep an Open Mind, Be
Practical, But Leave Room to Dream What Your
Travel-Based Business Will Be.
Let's Start Planning With Step 1!

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STEP 1: KNOW THYSELF

- **First, choose your category: I am using this guide and all prompts in the context of a/an (Circle One)**
*Travel Professional *Tourism Employee or Partner
- **Second: Make sure to print Additional Sheets for Writing attached to guide on P. 13 before you begin, and use Sample Guide from website if needed. Also, if you are an organization we encourage you to have your Leadership each fill out the guide, and meet together to create action steps and evaluations.**
- **Third: Identify what your Current Experiential Planning Looks like by using the Prompts, and then ANALYZE your findings at Bottom of the Page or by using additional writing sheets.**

WHY AM I HERE?

****WHAT PROMPTED YOU TO TAKE THE TIME TO DO THIS EPG? BE HONEST, TAKE TIME TO EVALUATE THIS QUESTION, YOU MAY LEARN SOMETHING ABOUT YOURSELF!**

EXAMPLES: TO BE A BETTER PLANNER. TO BUDGET. TO RELATE BETTER TO VISITORS NEEDS. TO SET 2021 GOALS. TO BEGIN A PROCESS OF GOAL-SETTING AND EVALUATION FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION, ETC.

ANALYSIS/COMMENTS:

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STEP 2: IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS

ASSESS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS. CONSIDER PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. HOW DO YOUR RELATIONSHIPS ADD VALUE TO YOUR LIFE AND WORK?

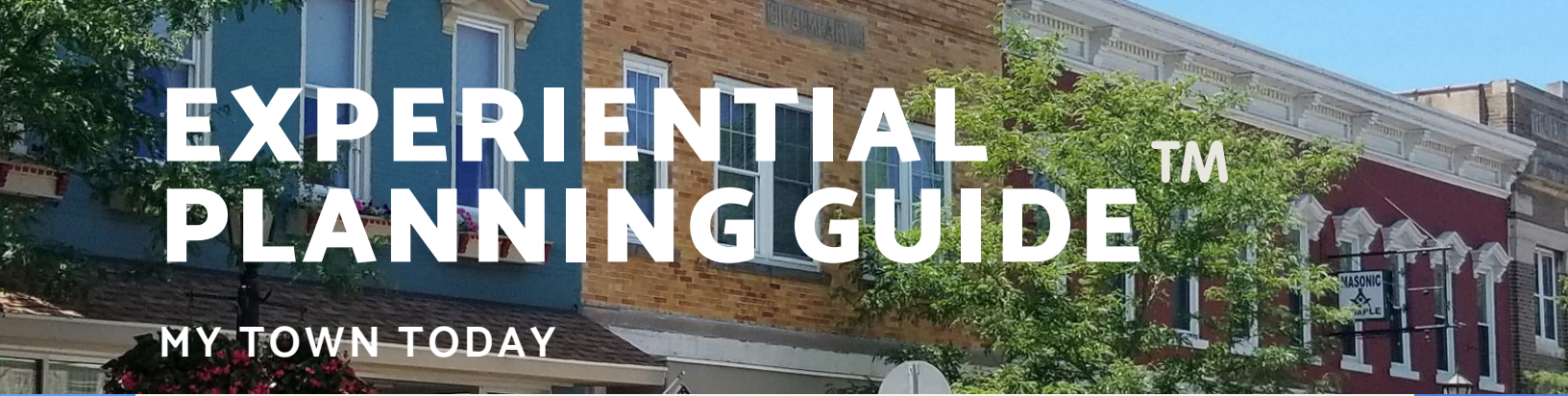
LIST YOUR THREE MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COLUMNS BELOW. THEN CONSIDER HOW THESE PEOPLE ADD VALUE AND CONSIDERATION FOR YOUR PLANNING PROCESS.

PERSONAL

PROFESSIONAL

FAMILY

HOW DO THESE PEOPLE ADD VALUE TO MY LIFE? HOW DO I ADD VALUE TO THEM?



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STEP 3: NEEDS MANAGEMENT

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO OVER THE NEXT 3 MONTHS, 6 MONTHS? THESE SHOULD BE PROFESSIONAL NEEDS/WANTS, BUT CAN BE PERSONAL IF PERTINENT TO PROFESSIONAL GOALS. DON'T CONFUSE NEEDS WITH WANTS.

BELOW, IDENTIFY TOP THREE NEEDS AND WANTS FOR 3 AND 6 MONTHS. THESE CAN BE UNRELATED TO TRAVEL, BUT IMPORTANT TO YOUR OVERALL GOALS. IF HELPFUL, YOU CAN THINK OF A WANT AS A GOAL AND A NEED AS THE MEANS TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL.

NEEDS	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS

HOW DID YOU DECIDE YOUR TOP THREE NEEDS AND WANTS? HOW DO YOUR RELATIONSHIPS AFFECT YOUR WANTS AND NEEDS?
(SEE EXAMPLES IF NEEDED IN EXAMPLE EPG ON WEBSITE)

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STEP 4: YOUR EXPERIENCE CULTURE

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE CULTURE? HOW DO YOU CREATE A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE FOR YOURSELF, FOR GUESTS OR VISITORS-OR CATALOGUE FOR YOUR HOST? USE ADDITONAL SHEETS TO WRITE A SHORT ANALYSIS OF THIS PROCESS.

NEXT, USING YOUR ANALYSIS AS A GUIDE, IDENTIFY THREE PROBLEM OR CHALLENGE AREAS THAT NEED IMPROVED, THE POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS CAUSING THE PROBLEM, AND AT LEAST ONE FLAWED/UNREALISTIC EXPECTATION THAT HAS LET YOU DOWN IN THE PAST.

PROBLEM AREA	SYMPTOMS	FLAWED EXPECTATION

WHAT WAS MOST DIFFICULT IN THIS STEP? IDENTIFICATION OR REALIZING YOUR EXPECTATIONS ARE FLAWED? WHY?

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STEP 5: VALUE PROPOSITION- USE ADDITIONAL SHEETS

A VALUE PROPOSITION IS A STATEMENT THAT SHOWS WHAT YOU DO, WHO YOU DO IT FOR, AND WHY YOU ARE BETTER THAN THE COMPETITION. FOR THIS STEP WRITE IN CLEAR, CONCISE TERMS, WHAT YOU DO, YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE, AND WHY YOU ARE THE BEST CHOICE FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE.

WHAT DO I/WE DO? (AS IN PROFESSION/ DAY TO DAY VALUE/ ORGANIZATIONAL MISSION)

WHO IS MY/OUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

WHY ARE (WE/AM I) THE BEST CHOICE? LIST UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES, NICHE, ETC.

CREATE YOUR VALUE PROPOSITION:

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STEP 6: HAVE, DO, BECOME

NOW THAT YOU HAVE DETERMINED YOUR CURRENT EXPERIENCE PLANNING GUIDE SITUATION, IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIPS, NEEDS, CULTURE, AND VALUES, IT IS TIME TO IMPLEMENT. THIS STEP IS ABOUT ACTION.

GO BACK TO STEP 4: LOOK AT YOUR TOP 3 PROBLEM AREAS AND UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS. NOW CREATE THREE ACTION STEPS TO ADDRESS EACH ISSUE. BE HONEST IN YOUR ASSESSMENT.

ACTION STEP 1

WHO WILL IMPLEMENT?

ACTION STEP 2

ACTION STEP 3

HOW WILL YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

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STEP 7: EVALUATE PART 1

EVALUATION IS INTENTIONAL AND SPECIFIC. JUST AS IN STEP 1, WE HAD TO TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT OURSELVES. WE AGAIN MUST LOOK AT OUR PROGRESS AND SHORTCOMINGS.

HOW TO TRACK AND DETERMINE YOUR PROGRESS

1. CREATE AN *EVALUATION QUESTION* FOR EACH ACTION STEP YOU CREATED IN STEP 6 OF THIS GUIDE(MINIMUM OF 3). USE THE GRID BELOW FOR EACH EVALUATION QUESTION.
2. MAKE A COPY OF PAGE 12 FOR EACH QUESTION AND GRID.
3. FILL OUT YOUR EVALUATION QUESTIONS AND ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IF NEEDED TO EVALUATE.
4. MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR FUTURE DATES TO EVALUATE (3, 6, AND/OR 12 MONTHS) AND FILL IN YOUR RECOMMENDED ACTIONS IF GOALS WERE NOT MET. IF YOU ARE AN ORGANIZATION, MARK YOUR CALENDAR TO EVALUATE PROGRESS AS A TEAM.
5. BIND TOGETHER WHEN FINISHED AND PUT IN FOLDER FOR CONTINUED EVALUATION REMEMBER TO PUT ADDITIONAL SHEETS WITH CORRELATING STEP.

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STEP 7: EVALUATE PART 2

EVALUATION QUESTION #

**INFORMATION
NEEDED**

WERE GOALS MET?

**RECOMMENDED
ACTION(S)**

NOTES: CONSIDER THE AUDIENCE OF THE EVALUATION, WHO SHOULD EVALUATE, AND THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

*****We all set expectations that do not get met, if your first goals need adjusted, that is okay! Constant evaluation will make sure you adjust your actions and timelines. Even in a busy world that demands deadlines, good evaluation can show incremental change that will make the biggest difference!**

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ADDITIONAL SHEETS FOR WRITING

Lined writing area with horizontal lines for text entry.

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ADDITIONAL SHEETS FOR WRITING

Lined writing area with 25 horizontal lines for notes.

