

## Setting goals

Whether the goal you identified in ***Arriving at your decision'*** was to:

- apply to your chosen specialty or specialties;
- explore the clinical options for working and volunteering abroad;
- apply for a clinical related course
- apply for a clinical, teaching or leadership fellowship;
- consider other opportunities outside of clinical practice.

the following exercises will help you plan how the NEXT STEPs to help you achieve these goals.

### Setting your Goals – Step 1

To help you set these goals it is a good idea to set out what your future career pathway might look like. One way you can do this is to construct your own **future lifeline**. This will help you highlight your goal which can be scheduled for a date, a few months, a few years or even much further ahead and then identify the steps you need to take to reach that goal. Be careful of setting a goal too far ahead as the landscape can change in the meantime and you need to be flexible enough to respond to these changes and to take advantage of the opportunities which result.

#### Constructing YOUR future lifeline

- With a large sheet of paper in landscape form draw a line from left to right about half way down the page
- On the left hand end of this line mark today's date; on the right hand end of the line mark the time you have identified in the future for your goal.
- Working back from that goal mark the stages that you will have had to achieve in order to reach that goal. For example, if you had set yourself the goal of becoming a specialty consultant in 7 years time what would the stage just before that be that you would have to achieve to make the goal realistic?
- Keep moving back from this point to today's date putting in the intermediate goals that you need to meet in order to achieve your main goal.
- At each stage ask yourself the following questions:
  - Mark above the line the actions and factors that are needed to make this intermediate goal possible
  - Mark below the line the following scores:
    - ❖ How much do I want to achieve this? (*award yourself a score between 1-10*)
    - ❖ How realistic is it for me to achieve this? (*award yourself a score between 1-10*)

10 = very much/1 = not very much

- If your scores fall **below** 8 out of 10 you might wish to:
  - go back to the **Self-awareness** session and check out your values – in what way would your values be impacted by working towards your chosen goal?
  - go back to the **Career Exploration** session – is there some further information needed which may help you feel more comfortable about this goal?
  - Revisit the **Arriving at Your decision** session - check whether you feel the same way about the decision which you have made?
  
- If your scores fall **above** 8 out of 10 you may wish to:
  - reaffirm your reasons for your interest in this goal
  - set out some SMART actions to help ensure that you will achieve this goal.
  - set some intermediate actions if the end goal takes a number of steps to achieve.