

Additional material in support of S.P. Reid's book  
**High Performance Thinking Skills**

**Exercise: Work Life Forces Exercise**

In support of modules 32 and 52

**Use in Practice**

You can map the trends affecting you personally at home and or at work.

Map the amount of time to be spent at work in the next few years (I suggest 5 to 10 years) relative to time at home with people you live with.

Use the trend to show what might happen when you change something such as your job.

Plot various trends such as expectations of other people for something to happen.

Plot the pattern of resource availability.

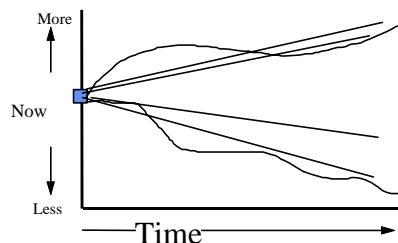
Plot likely stress levels.

Plot timing of house and family moves.

Overlay likely trends of ups and downs in closest relationships. People are born and people do die, we are finite.

Watch out for a trend that looks like the one below. These are very dangerous patterns because the trend is relentlessly demanding - usually the upper line shows rising demand and the lower line depicts falling resource availability. See module 32.

A Typical Scissor Graph



This methodology can also be used in conjunction with a rich picture to help guide your path. See module 5 in the book for an explanation as to how to create a rich picture

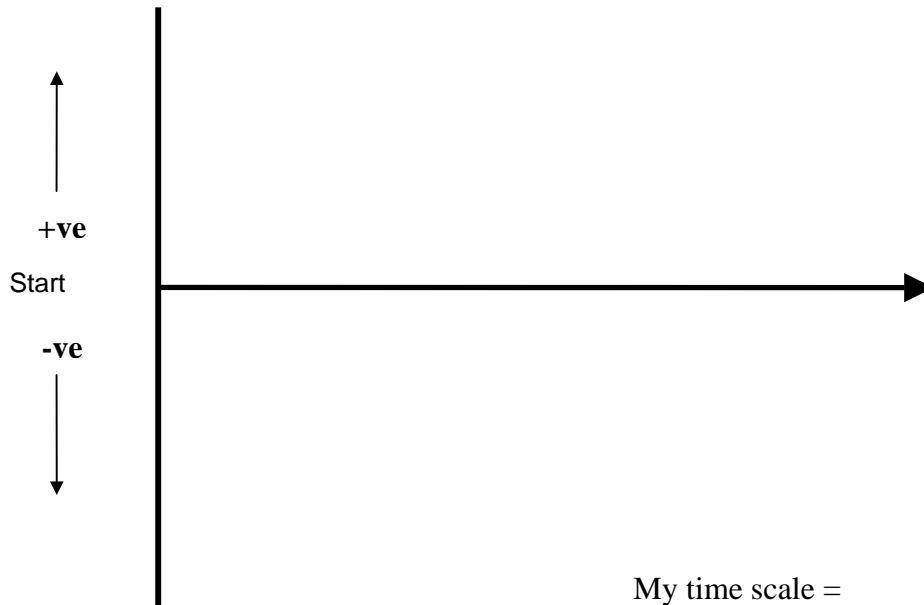
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From --/ --/ ----- to --/ --/ -----  
My personal life major themes are likely to include:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_

**Suggestions**

Use a different colour for each trend line  
Do a separate exercise for your business  
then combine the two trend maps to see what happens



Observations

Benefits

Obstacles

Remedies

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The questions you may consider and chart out over a five or ten-year period could include:

- Will work tend to get harder / easier i.e. is this line generally going up or down?
- What will my workload look like over time, - is it going up or down?
- Draw a line for the time available to do things, - will it trend up or down?
- The money available to do things will generally tend to... (draw trend)
- The cost of things will tend to...(draw trend)
- The number of people available to do a task will...(draw trend)
- My physical fitness and energy levels over time will ...(draw trend)
- Generally speaking stress levels are expected to ... (draw trend)
- How much will be expected of me over time... (draw trend)
- Competition in our industry or system is expected to ... (draw trend)
- My family will---
- My children will -----
- The person I love the most -----
- Think of several other influences on your work or home life and draw the trend

Next, write down how much harder could you work? \_\_\_\_\_ %

Then next to the square box on the graph write the number of hours you personally put in at work each week currently. Underneath it write the number of contracted hours. Divide the two and express the result as a percentage.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Hours worked per week} &= \text{_____} \\ \text{Divided by contract hours per week} &= \text{_____} \text{ hours} \\ &= \text{_____} \% \end{aligned}$$

This percentage figure will describe your current load. If you work a 50-hour week and are on a 40-hour contract, for example, you are currently working at 125%. The starting box on the left side of the chart represents your current workload. This allows you to put an approximate scale of higher and lower percentage values on the vertical scale.

Does this extra work buy you anything you can bank on? Put another way if you regularly clock up 50 hour weeks from the age of 25 then will your organisation guarantee you a full pension several equivalent years ahead of the agreed retirement date?

What would you do if you could claim that time back AND still perform really well?

Be smart - choose to work smarter. Consider working in a different more intelligent way. Think things through, get some advice. If you always do what you always did – guess what you're most likely to get?

If you need to change get some help and support, get ready for the shift and the obstacles and have a go. When it goes off track, course correct and keep trying! Don't give in at the first hiccup!

Use your head.

Use some of your emotion but be careful how much.