

KEARY HARPER

Insight Six

Imagining what the new 'me' will look like and feel like

The brain responds to positive thoughts: if you can imagine what 'good' will be like you have more chance of getting there.



Andrew was already months into a new role and had a constant feeling of never being able to catch up and get on top of the job. He and his coach analysed where his time was going and what things, in particular, were draining his energy. The diagnosis was depressing because he could not see any quick or easy ways of changing things. The coach then challenged him to imagine how he would feel if he really was on top of things. With some scepticism, he did this. Gradually, his mind cleared and he started to see a variety of ways of improving things, including involving his PA much more. Several months on, he described how he now felt: "I'm finally in charge of my destiny – I feel totally re-energised".

Annabel is a senior manager who shares with many other executives the sinking feeling about having tough performance-related conversations with direct reports. One member of her team really affected her confidence to confront the issue. She and the coach imagined what it would be like to have a successful meeting with this individual: what she would be saying; how she would react; how she would feel at the end of the discussion. This gave her the confidence to address the issue directly. Her direct report even thanked her for giving honest feedback for the first time!

