Are you one of the many professionals who has (or is thinking about) taking the plunge into solopreneurship? In today’s economy, more and more people are choosing self employment, either by choice or circumstance.

The solo worker, now known as the solopreneur, is defined as typically someone who works for him or herself in a professional capacity, and has clients or customers but no boss. The solopreneur is different from the entrepreneur. An entrepreneur builds a company, with its own brand that could, presumably, exist even if the entrepreneur left the company. A solopreneur builds a personal brand tied to the person, it is in your best interest to create a strategic plan to keep you on track.

Having clarity of direction and purpose will help solopreneurs from wasting time and money on unproductive activities. Being your own boss can be exhilarating and challenging at the same time. The journey of solopreneurship has many bumps and turns, but the way to success is to “start your engine” with a plan. Even if you’ve been in business for some time, you need a plan to keep you focused. It’s easy to jump into your business by “doing” the tactical activities of your profession. But if you fail to plan; plan to fail. Rejection and failure are already an inherent part of the solopreneur’s life, so it is in your best interest to create a strategic plan to keep you on track.

Where do you want to be in 3, 5, or 10 years from now? Having a vision of your future is critical for success. Many solopreneurs are so caught up in the “day-to-day” that they do not envision their future. By having a clear vision statement, you can direct your thoughts and business to achieve these outcomes in a proactive manner rather than reacting to daily influences.

Setting clear, written goals that are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based) will help you make decisions that are strategic. Keep your goals visible and track how you are measuring up to achieving them at least on a quarterly basis. If circumstances have changed, you can modify the goals as needed. Most people are afraid to write down their goals because they fear they will not meet them. By reviewing them regularly, you can overcome this fear by adapting to any changes. One caveat is not to use this as an excuse for procrastination!