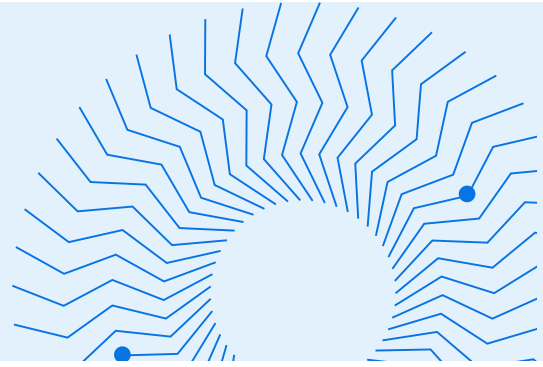


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Ambition Setting Exercise

The “how-to” guide



Before the workshop

Prepare your materials

Choose one approach:

Stock images: Print 100 diverse stock photos individually (one per page). Select images that show a wide range of concepts—objects, people, nature, technology, abstract concepts. Avoid images that are too literal or business-specific.

Random objects: Gather 25-30 unrelated physical items (e.g., stapler, rock, playing card, key, CD, scarf, artificial fruit, pocket dictionary, tool). The key is that items should NOT logically form a set.

Arrange the space

- Spread images or objects on a large table or around the room where people can move freely and browse
- Keep materials hidden or in another room until you're ready to start the exercise
- Ensure you have a space where the team can gather to discuss their selections

For virtual sessions:

- Create a shared digital board (Mural, Miro, or PowerPoint) with 80-100 diverse stock images
- Give participants annotation or voting tools to mark their selections
- Plan for breakout room discussions if your group is larger than 6 people

Facilitating the exercise

Set up the scenario

Before revealing the images/objects, explain the exercise:

"Imagine it's one year from today. Your company has asked you to create an exhibition showcasing the legal department's [accomplishments/progress/transformation] over the past 12 months. Select 8-10 images for this exhibition that celebrate your success and tell the story of what you've accomplished and who you've become as a team."

Key instructions:

- You must work together as a group
- You can only select 8-10 images (no more)
- Focus on picturing the future you want to create
- Be ready to explain why you chose each image

Browse and select

Let the team move around, look at options, and begin discussing. Encourage them to:

- Pick up objects or point to images that resonate
- Talk about what different images represent to them
- Start building consensus on which images tell their story

Your role: Observe and listen. Only intervene if the group gets stuck or starts selecting too many images

Finalize selection and rationale

Once the team has narrowed to 8-10 images, ask them to:

- Arrange their selections in a way that tells a story
- Agree on what each image represents
- Prepare to explain their choices

Guide the discussion with questions like:

- "What does this image represent about where you want to be in a year?"
- "How do these images connect to each other?"
- "What story do these images tell together?"

Present and explain

While every group and their story is unique, it can be helpful to you as the facilitator to understand some themes that have come up in previous sessions:

- What it represents
- Why it matters to their vision
- What success looks like in this area

Common themes from previous exercises include:

- Navigating complexity (traffic signs, compass)
- Innovation and new ideas (light bulb, seedling)
- Taking calculated risks (bungee jumper, tightrope walker)
- Teamwork at speed (relay race, synchronized swimmers)
- Automation and efficiency (machinery, robots)
- Creative collaboration (orchestra, artists)
- Trust and support (human pyramid, bridge)

Adapting for different group sizes

For Larger Groups (15+ participants)

- Break into groups: Divide everyone into smaller groups of 5-7.
- Each group completes the exercise: Browse, select, and discuss 8-10 images or objects that represent their ambition.
- Present to the main room: Each group shares their selections and rationale.
- Synthesize themes: As a whole, identify common themes using methods like tallying, dot voting, or creating a combined exhibition.
- Materials: Prepare multiple sets of images or objects so each group can work independently.

For Smaller Groups (2-4 participants)

- Reduce materials: Use 50-60 images or objects to avoid overwhelming the group.
- Fewer selections: Allow 6-8 choices instead of 8-10.
- More discussion time: Give a few extra minutes for deeper conversation and consensus-building.



Facilitation tips

Don't distribute materials too early: People will get distracted and start selecting before understanding the full exercise

Enforce the limit: Lawyers love nuance and options—stick to 8-10 selections maximum to force prioritization

Embrace imperfection: This is a warm-up to unlock creativity, not a final deliverable. The output doesn't need to be perfectly polished

Create ownership: Let the team discover their ambition rather than feeling it's dictated to them

Stay neutral: As facilitator, don't push your own interpretations of what images should mean

Capture everything: Take photos of the final selection and notes on the rationale—you'll need this for the next phase

What happens next

The images and rationales from this exercise become the foundation for translating your ambition into specific, measurable goals. Take the themes and values that emerged offline to refine them into a clear ambition statement before moving to goal-setting.

Remember: The richest insights come from why your team chose certain images—listen carefully to the stories they tell.

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Value Alignment Toolkit

[Access toolkit](#)



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