

Use Scaling Questions to Help You Achieve Your Goals

Objective

To use scaling questions to assess your current situation, recognize your progress, and identify what is needed to achieve your goals.

What to Know

Scaling questions help you envision your desired future and map the necessary steps to achieve your goals. They also help you explore your feelings and analyze behaviors and experiences on a 1 to 10 scale. Here is how they work.

1. **Measure Progress.** Scaling questions ask you to rate your current position on a scale related to your goals, feelings, or perceptions of a problem.
2. **Identify Resources.** By identifying your current position on the scale, you can explore what it took to get to that point from a lower number, highlighting your strengths, resources, and previous successes.
3. **Set Hopeful Goals.** What would a higher number on the scale look like for you? This can help you identify goals and feel more hopeful.
4. **Explore Detailed Change.** Aim for detailed, specific changes, making your goals tangible and achievable.
5. **Recognize Small Successes:** Even a slight move up the scale is a success, building your confidence and increasing motivation.
6. **Find Exceptions.** Identify times when the problem was less severe or absent (also known as *exceptions*). This can illuminate what you are doing differently during those times and how those strategies might be applied.
7. **Future Pacing.** Imagine a future where the problem is less impactful or resolved, and what steps are needed to reach that point.

Scaling questions are a flexible tool, adaptable to many situations, and helpful in supporting you in visualizing progress, planning steps to achieve your goals, and recognizing your strengths and resources.

What to Do

Write down your strengths, resources, and previous successes when faced with challenges or problems. Be specific.

Describe a current problem you have.

On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 = the worst the problem has ever been, and 10 = the problem is completely resolved, where are you now? _____

What factors influenced the number you chose? Describe them.

Imagine your scale number is one point higher. What small changes or differences might you notice that would indicate this improvement?

What number on the scale represents your "best hope" for the situation? _____
Describe this ideal scenario.

Consider the problem you described above. What would it take to increase the number, even by a half point, if you utilized your strengths, resources, and previous successes? Be specific.

Next, think about an important personal goal. Consider any challenges you face. Rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 = farthest from your goal, and 10 = achieving your goal. _____

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 = complete confidence in achieving your goal, and 1 = complete lack of confidence, where do you currently place yourself? _____

If you *did not* choose 1, what prevented you from choosing a lower number? What positives in your situation are reflected in the number you chose?

What specific actions or changes can you make to move your number up by one point?

Considering the ideal number, identify your strengths or resources to help you reach this goal.

Reflect on the insights gained from answering the above questions. Based on your reflections, write a brief action plan outlining steps you can take in the next month to move closer to your goal.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

Now, choose either the problem you wish to solve or the goal you want to achieve. Use the following chart to track your progress over the next month. In the first column, write down the date. Record the action step, the outcome, and then rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10. If you choose a goal, rate yourself 1 = farthest from your goal, and 10 = achieving your goal. Or, if you

choose to solve a problem, 1 = the worst the problem has ever been, and 10 = the problem is entirely resolved,

[illegible]

Scaling questions are about measuring where you are and visualizing where you want to be and strategizing how to get there. They highlight your strengths and the potential for positive change. Remember, progress often comes in small steps.

Reflections on This Exercise

Did anything surprise you about this activity? If so, describe.

How helpful was this exercise? _____

(1 = not very helpful, 5 = moderately helpful, 10 = extremely helpful)

What did you learn from this exercise?
