



## SEED'S TIP OF THE MONTH:

# Planning with the Magic of Kairos Time

Let's develop a work plan. How much *time* have you got?

The ancient Greeks introduced two words for time:

$\chi\rho\acute{o}\nu\omicron\varsigma + \kappa\alpha\iota\rho\acute{o}\varsigma = \text{time}$

1. **Chronos** is clock time; it can be traced through history into the future. It is quantifiable—we can estimate what is needed to finish a task, or how long it will take to get from here to there.
2. **Kairos** is existential time. It is more a qualitative experience, now time. We've all experienced it; just think of the last time that you were doing something you love, and suddenly it was three hours later, but it seemed like ten minutes had passed. That was you being present in kairos time.

To bring any team's vision to life requires that we “hang out” in kairos time as much as we set targets and push ourselves to meet agreed upon chronos time milestones. Here's why we need both:

Changes we can schedule are one thing: opening a new health clinic, launching a new program or product line, moving to a new location, organizing an event. “Yes!” to defining goals that will predictably make these changes real. This is essential chronos planning.

However, to fully realize our big dreams and potential as a team, there will also be changes that are tricky to schedule. For example, we continually need to change the way we look at things, to refresh how we communicate, improve how we respond to breakdowns, and reorganize how we coordinate our actions. These types of internal shifts tend to occur at the “right moment,” when there is readiness. The best we can do in our planning is to set goals that will predictably *create conditions* that are conducive to such change.

For example, let's say that part of my team's vision involves the behavior of teens in our leadership program. Our trainers can decide how technically skillful we want participants to be in one year, three years and five years (using the framework offered in SEED's [March Tip of the Month](#) for defining the vision in stages). But can we really plan for anyone to gain levels of confidence at appointed times?



## PLANNING WITH THE MAGIC OF KAIROS TIME

Here's the bad news: The only thing we can actually change is ourselves.

The good news is that we have unlimited capacity to gain awareness, set intentions, even schedule change-making opportunities, reflect on our progress, learn from our experience, and craft new goals that may support others to benefit from similar opportunities that were impactful for us.

Sounds plausible but it's a bit abstract, isn't it?



Here's the takeaway: as a first step in creating the team's work plan, give some thought to time. Knowing that many details of our visions will unfold in chronos time, consider which aspects will benefit from the magic of kairos time to fully blossom?

At SEED a lot of our work is about *stretching* our view of what's possible. That's the most transformative work we can ever do. To **Stretch** perception is the "S" in SEED.

The first "E" in SEED is a reminder to **Enliven** our work with more of what we do best. Try this enlivening exercise:

Reflect on your best kairos "moments" when hours flew by unnoticed. What were you doing? These "moments" of total creative immersion probably yielded your best work, did they not?

Then what needs to be in your work plan to create similar conditions for you and each member of your team to be fully enlivened as often as possible, as you bring your vision to life? How about your partners, constituents and others who play roles in your vision?

This chart may guide your planning. Keep it simple. Just identify three or four key aspects of your vision that may not happen on schedule. Jot those in the first column below, then fill in the blanks:

Desired Change in our Vision	Our Limiting Beliefs	Our Limiting Work Habits	New Habits We Can Cultivate	Signs of Success We Will Capture

Give this some thought as a team. As always, we'll be delighted to hear what happens, to understand how this serves you and what can serve you better: [possibilities@seedimpact.org](mailto:possibilities@seedimpact.org).