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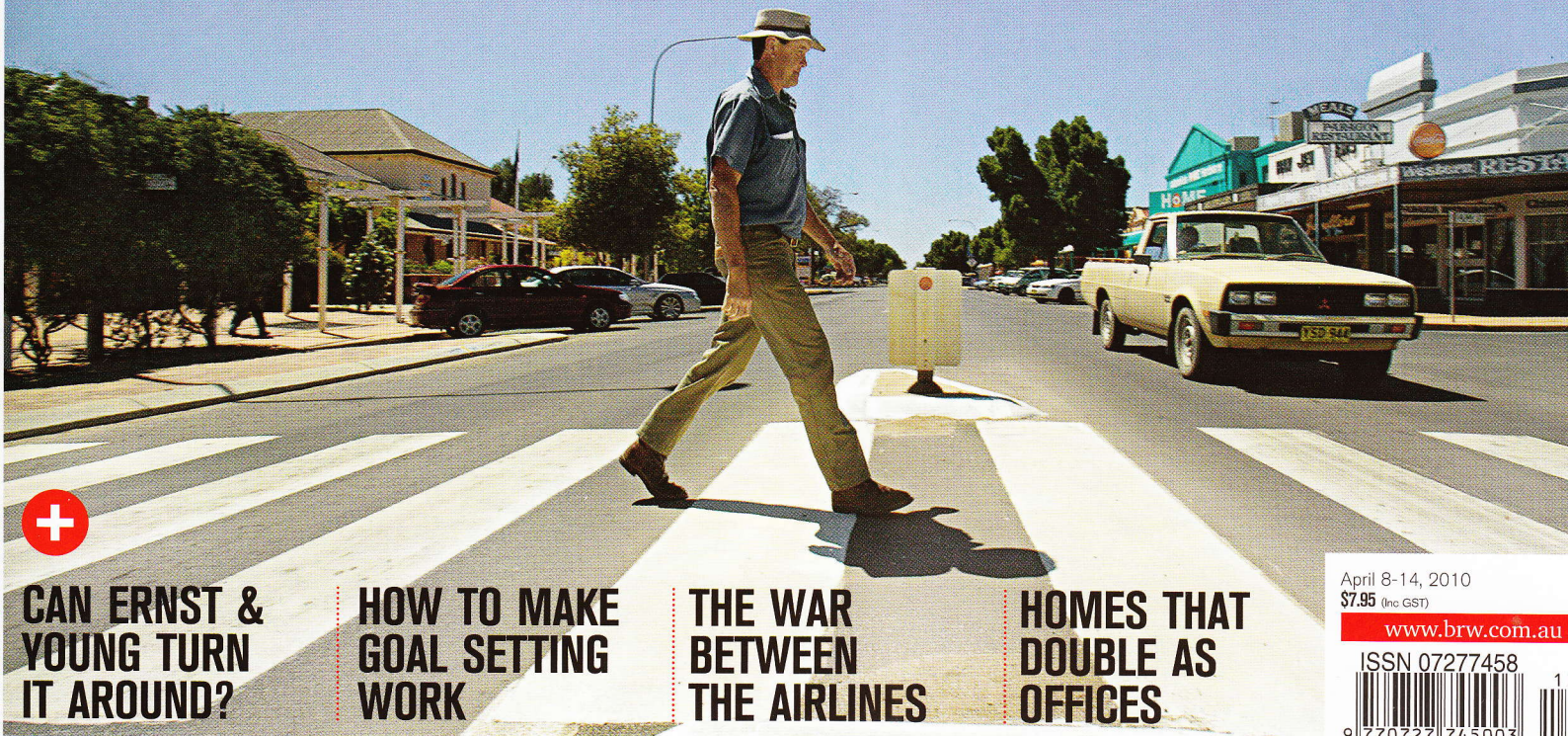
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**Aim high: Pushing the boundaries helps people to achieve their dreams**

## HEALTH

# GOAL KEEPERS

Setting targets and planning how to achieve them can have surprising results. **Report: Emily Chantiri**

● Every year business people set goals for themselves and their companies, and year after year they don't achieve them.

The biggest reasons for failing, says executive coach and author of *Be. Do. Live* (Pembroke Publishers, 2009) Rajeev Dewan, are not a reflection on the individuals but on the way in which they set their goals.

"Goal setting has become a cliché – people need to simplify the concept. If you don't have strong reasons from the start it becomes a nice idea ... but you never get off on the right foot or stay committed," Dewan says.

Vince Watt, chief financial officer of wealth management group MLC, agrees and says the reasons for setting goals in the first place far outweigh the means by which they are to be achieved. In early 2009 his professional goal for his team of 170 staff was greater efficiency.

"The leadership team had been together for some time and we had developed norms that were holding us back. I felt that for my own satisfaction and standards it was important this group lifted its performance. Rather than just set safe goals we found ourselves going for aspirational goals around people, processes, systems and efficiency. I made the commitment for change. You don't want to fail in front of your peers," Watt says.

"This approach caused us to stretch beyond our comfort zone. We attached more urgency, focused on how much more we could achieve and became more courageous. As a result we aimed higher than before and also felt an increased sense of satisfaction."

Twelve months down the track Watt is pleased with the progress. The success of this approach has made the team more willing to go for even bigger goals.

"Pushing through those existing boundaries has given us a different mindset and we have the momentum to continue," Watt says.

Teaming up with a coach, a peer, a friend or a goals group is another way to improve accountability.

"This is not about being friends, it's about someone who cares about you and holds you to a higher standard. Any system that moves you towards action

and momentum is a good system," Dewan says.

The business operations manager at IBM, Glenn Morris, joined a goals group at the beginning of 2009. The six members meet once a month to discuss the progress of each member's individual goals.

"The goals group proved to be a great sounding board and source of inspiration. Last year, at work, we were going through changes. There was a change of staff within the division and the new managers did not have the depth of knowledge with regard to finances.

"My goal was to set up a structure to help others understand the financial side."

Morris was given a target of six months to implement a new financial system at IBM. He achieved the end result by breaking down each task into smaller components.

"Each month at the goals meeting I was able to discuss my progress at each stage. This really helped me to see how far I had come and what I had achieved," Morris says.

In his book, Dewan writes: "While achieving goals is important, what is more important is to enjoy the growth you experience in the pursuit of your goals." **BRW**

### HOW TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOAL

1. Be clear about the goal and the reasons for pursuing it.
2. Take complete responsibility for the goal.
3. Decide and commit.
4. Believe that you deserve to achieve your goal and that you will achieve it.
5. Have a documented plan.
6. Execute your plan.
7. Be congruent with your thoughts, words and actions.
8. Persist.

Source: *Be. Do. Live.* by Rajeev Dewan