What is the difference between tactical and strategic thinking?

07 Jan 2011 by [Phil Charles](http://transport-futures.com/author/TFI/) [Leave a Comment](http://transport-futures.com/2011/01/tactical-and-strategic-thinking/#comments)

Let’s look at a few obstacles that currently stand in your way.

By exposing and eliminating these obstacles or problems, you’ll be able to develop your career and be more satisfied than you ever thought possible. These are the same overriding concepts that successful career builders understand and operate on.  
The format of this section will be similar to a medical diagnosis. You’ll see the problem, its symptoms, cause and an overview of the solution.

Let’s take a look at one fundamental problem most people experience.  
*Symptoms*: Try every tactic that looks like it’ll make you successful  
*Cause*: Tactical thinking  
*Problem*: Lack of strategy.

**What is the difference between tactical and strategic thinking?**  
The very first obstacle we need to look at is you and your thinking. The way I see things is that there are two different diametrically opposing ways of thinking when it comes to building a career. There’s tactical thinking and strategic thinking.

**Tactical Thinking**  
Use every tactic that you can – focus on the how.  
Busy with day to day tasks.  
Take action on what is appealing.  
Don’t feel productive.

**Strategic Thinking**  
You have an end in mind, a vision – the what.  
Continually asking what is the best way to do things.  
Choose the best approach that will get the job done quickly and efficiently.

Here’s the deal, tactical focussed people think tactically and strategists think strategically.

The questions tactical thinkers ask themselves is, “What are the tactics I know to use to get this job done? What’s the easiest way for me to get the job done right now?”

A successful strategist, on the other hand, is a completely different animal altogether. S/he has a clear vision of what they want to become. Because they have a vision they can analyse their own strengths, experience, skills and knowledge and devise different strategies for achieving their vision. After reviewing the pros and cons of each strategic alternative they pick the best strategy most certain to successfully achieve their vision. Then they use the best tactics to get the job done