

wlpg



STAGEseven

My WLPG life plan

OPTION 1 – MY FIVE-YEAR COUNTDOWN

OPTION 2 – MY SIX-MONTH PLAN

OPTION 3 – MY FIRST SUCCESS!



YOU'VE PLANNED YOUR HOLIDAY, MADE ALL THE DECISIONS ABOUT WHERE YOU'RE GOING, THE KIND OF BREAK YOU WANT AND THE PEOPLE YOU'RE GOING WITH. NOW ALL THAT REMAINS IS TO CHECK YOUR TIMETABLE AND YOUR ITINERARY BEFORE YOU FINALLY SET OUT ON YOUR JOURNEY.

OVERVIEW

This section draws Stages 1-6 together by helping you design your own life plan. You are welcome to use one or more of the following three options or simply design your own from scratch. As you go through it, you will start to realise it's easier to act your way into new ways of thinking than to think your way into new ways of acting.

OPTION 1 focuses on the next five years. You'll look at the building blocks you'll need in place to achieve your vision by then.

OPTION 2 looks six months ahead. You'll consider creative ways of blending your working, learning, playing and giving in that time to realise the life you want.

OPTION 3 concentrates on the next month. You'll aim to get off to a flying start by creating an early win.

BY NOW YOU'VE PROBABLY PUT IN AN AMAZING AMOUNT OF WORK – AND GONE WAY BEYOND YOUR EXPECTATIONS. THIS IS THE TIME TO MAKE ALL THE HARD WORK PAY AND MAKE A REAL DIFFERENCE BOTH TO YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS.

HOW STAGE 7 WILL HELP YOU

Stage 7 will help you to:

- Develop practical plans for the next six months of your life
- **BEGIN LIVING YOUR DREAM TODAY**

'The future depends on what we do in the present'

– Mahatma Gandhi



HAVE THE FORESIGHT

Matt Cliff runs for his country, but to keep his passion alive his life plan was to secure an income to support his athletics. Suffering from retinitis pigmentosa meant that in five years time he may need a guide dog for support. With a love of numbers Matt has decided to enter accountancy and instead of going to University he decided to learn on the job and secure his employability whilst his eyesight was reasonable.

Matt not only researched firms with a positive culture towards disability, but also thoroughly researched the support he could bring with him to boost his chances. Matt is now six months into his accountancy training with a small, forward thinking company and has recently been selected for the UK world athletics squad.



Are you ready, willing and able to make a difference?

If you can truthfully answer yes to the following positive statements, you'll be in an ideal position to make things happen. Don't worry if you haven't done everything – filling in the gaps may well increase your chances of success.

I have...

1	Reviewed my present life pattern and ways I can enhance it (Stage 1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
2	Developed a new way of thinking about blending working, learning, playing and giving (Stage 1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
3	Checked my life fitness and begun to improve my performance (Stage 1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
4	Created a clear picture of my future based on a deeper analysis of my prime skills, passions, purpose, place, people and pay-offs (Stage 2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
5	Created a picture of a day in my life in five years time (Stage 2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
6	Assessed how close I am to that picture and how working, learning, playing and giving could help sustain that life (Stage 3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
7	Taken control by developing my attitude, belief and commitment (Stage 4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
8	Built a support community to help me make things happen (Stage 5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
9	Explored all the real-life possibilities – whether bringing work to life, making life work or finding new forms of work (Stage 6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO
10	Committed to putting time and energy into my six-month plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
		YES	NO

You are pure potential'

– Maat

'Have fun and live your life – all aspects of it'

– Sara Wright



THE ICING ON THE CAKE

It wasn't until Peter Hawkins reviewed his own life pattern with a friend that he realised while work scored extremely highly, he wasn't giving enough quality time and commitment to his partner Helen.

He soon realised the foundations of a successful future were based on a loving and happy family. Peter married Helen within six months – and James was born after they married. After the wedding they both took a week off work to create a partnership life plan, mapping out how they could both support each other in their working, learning, playing and giving.

They also provide support for Ted, an adult with learning difficulties, helping him become more independent in his life.



OPTION 1 – MY FIVE-YEAR COUNTDOWN

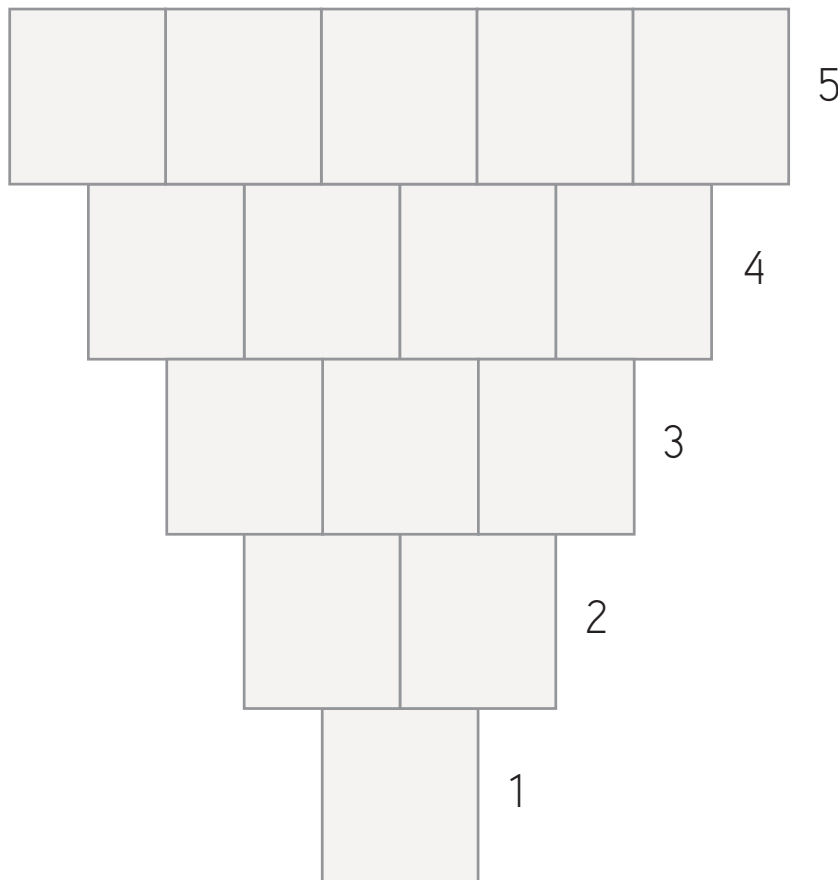
To reach that ideal life – the vision you’ve created – in five years from now, you need to have the key building blocks in place over that period. To do this you need to think backwards to today from the time when you’ll have achieved your vision.

You’ll find the triangle below useful to help you think about your challenge ahead. The triangle is upside down for a good reason – it will help you think in an upside down manner – or from your goal backwards.

1. Get a copy of your five-year vision and scenario beside you (Stage 2, pg 27) and any other useful information.
2. Start at the top and imagine yourself five years from today. You’ve achieved everything and more in your picture. Looking backwards from that time, what five things needed to be in place in the year before Year 5 to realise your vision (insert these in the top five boxes).
3. Now think back to the year before that (Year 4) and write down the four things that needed to be in place to make these things happen and so on until you reach the final year. What one thing started the whole process off in the first year?

Try to think as big and bold as possible. Write down the first things that come into your head rather than worrying about the detail. If you have problems with this exercise, try to split the triangle into three sections marked short (0-1 years), medium (1-3 years) and long term (3-5 years) and fill in key actions under these headings. You may also flip the triangle over and build up from the base, ie: what five things do I need to achieve in the first year, four in second... to achieve my vision.

Use whichever method you prefer.



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OPTION 2 – MY SIX-MONTH PLAN

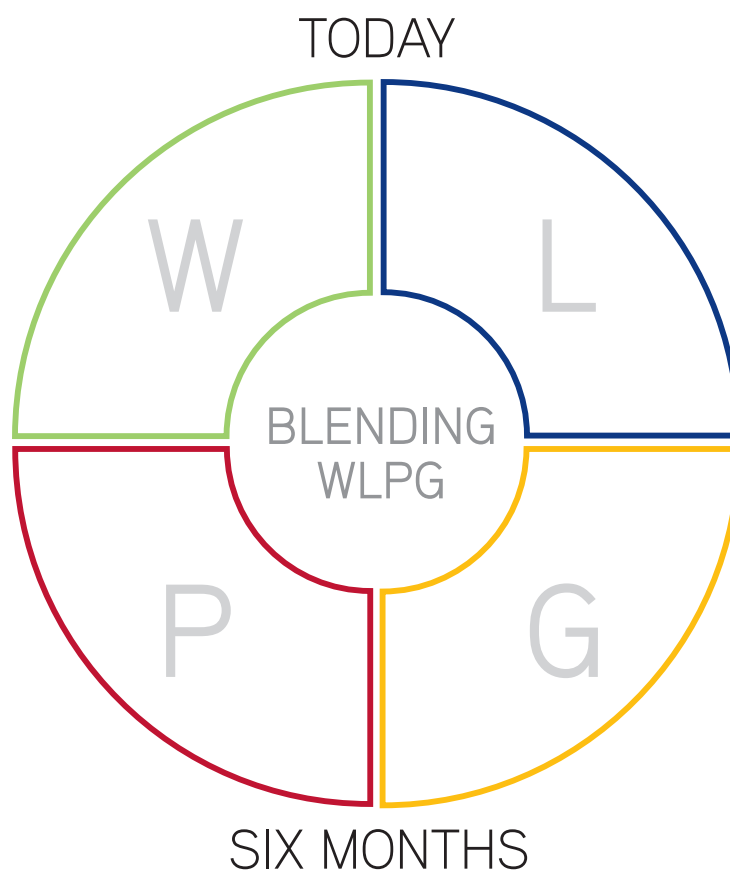
Now imagine you have been given a challenge to cram as much of your five-year vision as possible into the next six months. Believe it or not but you can achieve an amazing amount of your vision right here and now. It may not be an exact fit, but it can contain elements that are really important to you.

1. Review all your ideas for WLPG actions and record the most appealing ones in the outer sections below.
2. Look creatively at the elements that naturally overlap and how you can blend them together more. Now put these ideas in the centre of your circle.
3. On a separate piece of paper, turn these ideas into objectives clearly stating the outcomes you want, eg:

Idea: To enjoy spending more time with my child.

Objective: To work three days a week.

Outcome: To ensure my child knows me more than he /she knows my child minder.



So what are you going to do in the next second, minute, hour, day, week, or month – to make your dreams a reality? You have a simple choice. You could push things away to ‘someday never’. Or you could take the first step – however small – to get your life moving now. So why not commit yourself to some simple actions over the next month?

1. Think of the vital actions you’ve highlighted in Stages 1-6.
2. Choose and place a primary goal for the next month in the centre of the star. Make this as specific and realistic as you can.
3. Using the following star as a template, list your actions to achieve this goal in priority order – start with the ones that will make the biggest impact in the shortest time.
4. Try to put a timescale on each - what are you going to achieve by when?



You have now devised a plan to begin to shape the rest of your life. How are you going to make the most of those days? Once again WLPG can provide a useful guide:

WORKING

Making your life work as a whole requires hard work in itself. Make sure you treat your next plan as a dedicated project – don't let the day-to-day business of living get in the way.

Sketch out your own flexible project plan by:

- Agreeing a start and end date. Be clear what you want
- Setting quality time aside. How much time are you committing to the process? What things can you do jointly? What things could you give up to create more time?
- Trying to integrate your plans into things you do every day rather than see them as extras
- Keeping an eye on the bigger picture – always ask why you're doing things and are they taking you in the right direction
- Creating a number of alternatives. Life is full of plan Bs
- Writing the names of the project team you need around you – you also need to invest in the right resources
- Learning and responding to mistakes. Don't worry, the wonderful thing about work/life management is there's no such thing as failure, only feedback

Remember you need to take responsibility and manage your own plan.

Go for what seem your best options – then give them your best shot.

If an idea or method doesn't work, try another. Avoid just repeating what didn't work in the past.

LEARNING

Learn to manage risk. Remember, risk and reward go hand in hand throughout life. Avoid one, and the other will also pass you by. You can manage risk in a number of ways – the choice is yours.

MANAGING RISK – the safekeeping self

This involves using your safekeeping self (the left-side of your brain) to logically plan out a structured path. It works by taking lots of tiny, well-considered steps to minimise any risk. It creates a realistic route to the goal.



TAKE ONE STEP AT A TIME

Members of the Windmills team at GIEU decided to enter the Corporate Cup for fun. Half the team hadn't run for years. Instead of giving up before they started, they decided to walk the course, jogging at intervals, keeping at the pace of the slowest member. Everybody enjoyed the day, nobody cared about the time, and it was the taking part that mattered.

However big your challenge is, break it down into small steps and find some help and encouragement. Remember you only win the game of life by playing it, not sitting in the stands.

Managing risk – The experimental self

This is almost the exact opposite approach (and uses the right side of the brain). The experimental self urges you to just do it and not worry about the consequences. Here are how some people view it:

'Don't be afraid to take a big step if one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small steps' – D Lloyd George

'The greatest mistake you can make in life is to be continually fearing you will make one' – Albert G Hubbard

'People cannot discover new oceans, until they have the courage to lose sight of the shore' – Anon

'Faith is taking the first step even when you don't see the whole staircase' – Martin Luther King Jnr

Use whatever approach you feel is right for you. You may, however, combine both.

e Managing risk – combining both approaches

Here is a technique you may find useful as you try to balance risk with reward.

1. List every risk, worry, fear or possibility for change you currently have related to your life plan. (Place these in column 1).
2. In column 2 write down the worst case scenario. What is the worst thing that can possibly happen if this occurs?
3. Now move to column 3 and record the best case scenario. What is the most wonderful, unexpected thing that can happen?
4. In column 4 think about a second-worst case scenario. What is the absolutely worst case scenario if you do nothing at all?
5. Now weigh up your options. If 3 and 4 outweigh 2, then it's time to act. List in column 5, the actions you need to take to maximise 3 and minimise 2 and 4.

	RISK/FEAR (1)	WORST CASE (2) (if it occurs)	BEST CASE (3) (if it occurs)	WORST CASE (4) (if I do nothing)	ACTION (5)
1	<i>Eg. I'm scared of arranging an information interview in case I make a fool of myself</i>	<i>They'd laugh at me and say no</i>	<i>They're really positive and give me lots of ideas and contacts</i>	<i>Nothing changes – I'm still stuck</i>	<i>Try it with friends of friends and don't worry if it doesn't work first time</i>
2					

PLAYING

Inject as much fun and play into your plan as you can. Make sure it's a happy blend of WLPG not an unhappy one. Life is too short to spend notching up achievements but being miserable at the same time. If you enjoy what you're doing, you will be far more motivated to do more. It takes no exceptional qualities to be a happy person. Below you'll find a few ways of injecting play and happiness into each day:

1. From the moment you wake up, decide to bring play into your day. Which side of the bed are you going to get out of – the happy side or the unhappy side?
2. Take a fresh approach to the day ahead. See the central purpose as having fun while achieving everything else. Stand out from the crowd by smiling as you walk into work.
3. Cut out the things that make you unhappy and focus your energy on things that excite you.
4. Be clear on how you define success. Happiness is far bigger than any bank account.
5. Spend as much time as you can with positive people who appreciate fun. Life is too precious to be wasted on critics, cynics and the quarrelsome.
6. Allow yourself to be yourself – you can't be happy in someone else's shoes.
7. Make fun out of the mistakes you make.
8. Celebrate your successes.
9. Give yourself enjoyable rewards as you progress through your life plan.
10. Learn about the people, environments, roles, values and purpose that bring joy into your life – and get more of them.

GIVING

You may have a lot of working, learning and playing in your life project – but what about giving? In many cases it's giving that invests life with meaning – whether giving to family, friends, colleagues, neighbours or to the wider community. Your gifts are meant to be shared with others. But on what basis are you approaching your life plan?

No regrets

As you progress through life, keep asking yourself a simple question: "What will I remember with joy and pleasure at the end of my life?" Make sure you have as few regrets as possible and everything to celebrate. Below are some different reflections on life. If any of the thoughts jump out at you, make sure you address them in your plan.

If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently? Dr Bell put that question to 4,000 retired executives with an average age of 70. Their answers were:

1. **I would have carved out life goals and owned my life. Life was not practice, it was the real thing. I should have taken charge of my life by setting goals.**
2. **I would have taken better care of my health. I threw away health as though it were trash.**
3. **I would have managed my money a lot more effectively.**
4. **I would have worked on quality family goals a lot more.**
5. **I would have spent more time on personal development.**
6. **I would have had a whole lot more fun in my life.**
7. **I would have planned my career.**
8. **I would have lived in oneness with my god and/or given more back to my community.**



real life... real people...



real success



THE WINDMILLS APPROACH TO
WORKING, LEARNING, PLAYING & GIVING

‘When the wind blows, some people
build walls – others build windmills’

Windmills is about dealing positively with the winds of change in your life.

The Windmills approach to working, learning, playing and giving will open your eyes to possibilities you never dreamed existed. You'll discover it's far easier than you imagined to achieve the life you really want and deserve. You'll find out how to make some plans for the future that will begin to make that ideal life a reality.

THE WINDMILLS PARTNERSHIP

Windmills is a partnership between The University of Liverpool's GIEU (Graduate Into Employment Unit) and Dr Peter Hawkins. It has evolved from extensive delivery programmes funded by National LSC, NWDA, Greater Merseyside LSC, IAG Partnership, ESF, DfES and GONW.

DR PETER HAWKINS



Dr Peter Hawkins is a Fellow of The University of Liverpool and a world expert on career and life management.

As a visiting lecturer at Harvard University and advisor to UK Government, he writes, speaks and consults on an international basis.

Peter is the author of seven books, including the acclaimed 'Art of Building Windmills' and enjoys working with a range of partners including VSO, KPMG, Unicef, European Commission, BBC, DfES and the Association of Graduate Recruiters.

Passionate about working with people with special needs, Peter leads a charity for adults with learning difficulties and is an advocate for individuals with disabilities.

THE WINDMILLS TEAM

The Windmills team is part of GIEU, based at The University of Liverpool. Team members, in particular Helen Wakefield and Sharon Nicholson, have significantly contributed to the concepts, development and writing of this resource.

Windmills was developed through the team's experience and its success has included; increasing the employability of 20,000 under-employed and unemployed individuals; enhancing the competitiveness of 2,000 businesses; creating 1,250 entirely new jobs, and adding over £30 million value to the economy.

Windmills includes a portfolio of job, career, work and life resources together with tailored training programmes. The process has been successfully used with a range of clients, including women's groups and graduates, as well as for staff development, public, voluntary and commercial organisations and career and life practitioners.



For more information visit our website www.windmillsprogramme.com or contact:

The Windmills Team, GIEU. T: +44 (0)151 709 1760 // F: +44 (0)151 709 0576 // E: mail@gieu.co.uk // www.gieu.co.uk