



YOUR GREATEST ASSET

By Gina Mollicone-Long ©2011

Do you get the most out of your employees? Do you know how to motivate them? Do you realize that if **you** or **your employees** aren't operating at full potential then you are leaving money on the table?

We've all heard the old adage that the people in your business are your greatest asset. But very few organizations take that sentiment seriously. Let's face it, many companies spend more money annually on tea bags and coffee filters than they do on developing their people or on team building. Yet, when you think about it, not one of those businesses could run at all if you took away their people.

A common mistake that many business owners and managers make is that they hire on based on skills or likeability often neglecting the cultural fit and the potential performance of the employee. They look for experience, education or hard skills. This may work in the short term but it can lead to big problems in the long run. **How** a person does something is as much, if not more, important than **what** they do. Skills can be taught but cultural fit and performance potential cannot. There is an entire field of study called neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), which is dedicated to understanding what causes peak performance and how to replicate it. NLP is about understanding **how** a result is achieved and what is critical to success.

How someone thinks and acts is usually a preprogrammed response. The way they handle stressful situations or how they communicate with other team members or even their ability to multi-task are all habitual patterns of behaviour. These types of details are very important in the overall performance of the employee and yet most companies don't have a clue how to discover them. In NLP, these patterns of behaviour are called **Meta Programs**, which are basically mental processes that manage, direct and control other mental sub-processes. Essentially, **meta programs** are the master mental processes that govern behaviour and therefore performance. Knowing someone's **meta programs** will give you a good understanding of how they will perform on the job.

If you're like most companies then your interview and screening process is more focused on skills and experience than on discovering how the candidate thinks and how they will behave and perform in your corporate culture. Some companies use assessment tools such as personality testing which is a fantastic first step towards understanding cultural fit. But most personality testing is not detailed enough to predict performance potential. Understanding the **meta programs** of a person takes personality testing to the next level and can usually be discovered in less than 15 minutes.



YOUR GREATEST ASSET (continued)

Another common trend is the lack of performance development with existing employees. It's analogous to buying a car and then never doing a day of maintenance on it. The more you tune your engine, the better it will run. Obviously, many companies have scores of people who are not operating anywhere near their performance potential. When people operate at their peak performance then they will do the things necessary to maximize results whether it is revenue generating or cost cutting. Essentially, they will do the job that you hired them to do and they will do it in the best possible fashion.

Here are five tips to help boost performance in yourself and others that you can begin doing immediately.

1. **Ensure that your employees have the resources they need** to get the job done well. Having the right tools allows employees to focus on their outcomes.
2. **Recognize employees on a regular and frequent basis**. This recognition could be formal or informal but it should be done at least weekly.
3. **Foster a cohesive, supportive environment** where employees feel as though they belong. Engage in events that build team morale and interpersonal relationships.
4. **Develop your employees and teams on a regular basis** with opportunities for personal and professional development so that they can maximize their contribution and build their skill levels.
5. **Start using an assessment tool** to help allocate people to the right job, motivate them and even determine whether they would be better to part ways with your company.

Your people are the only real competitive advantage you've got. In a day and age when everyone has access to the same resources, the same raw materials, the same methodologies and the same strategies, there is only one area where you can still cultivate a meaningful difference – your people. When you learn how to leverage your people then the sky's the limit as to what you can achieve. What would be possible if you and your people were operating at full potential?



YOUR GREATEST ASSET (continued)

Gina Mollicone-Long helps people get what they want. She is an international best-selling author, compelling speaker and peak performance specialist with a mission to reveal greatness in individuals, teams and organizations. She is the co-founder and CEO of The Greatness Group, a multi-national corporate team building and training company. Since 1998, she has trained, coached or spoken to tens of thousands of people globally. Her books, *Think or Sink* and *The Secret of Successful Failing* are widely read and enjoyed by people around the world. She can show you exactly how to get out of your own way.

