

## Peak Experience

This exercise aims to identify those moments when you are absolutely at your best. These have been described in a number of ways, including 'Peak Experience', 'In Flow', or 'Being in the Zone'. 'Being in the Zone' for instance, is the phrase athletes use when they know they are at a peak of fitness, optimism and strength and are likely to win whatever competition they are entering. It is a 'bottom up' approach to identifying values for clients.

### What is peak experience?

These terms all describe the same experience. These are moments when:

- You are not conscious of time passing because it is going so quickly and you are so absorbed.
- You are aware that you are doing the thing you were born to do.
- It is easy and effortless.
- There is a core enjoyment present and just thinking about it now creates a warm feeling.
- Everything is going well: you know it will be successful.
- There is a kind of joyousness and fun in the activity: it's serious, yet playful.
- There is no self-doubt present.
- You are using all of your learned and innate skills and abilities.

### How to identify peak experience

1. Think about a time in your life when all the above conditions were present. It may apply to a particular few hours or to a whole period – it doesn't matter which. Try to identify three or four strong candidates, perhaps two from your personal life and two from your professional life.
2. With a partner, describe what was going on for each incident/episode and re-extract the meaning.
  - Who was there?
  - What does that mean for you?
  - What was your responsibility for what happened?
  - What was special about that?

**Azure Consulting Ltd**

4 Lakeside  
Calder Island Way  
Wakefield  
West Yorkshire  
WF2 7AW  
t: 01924 385600  
f: 01924 385622  
e: info@azure-consulting.co.uk  
w: www.azure-consulting.co.uk



- What made it so successful for you?
  - What makes it so important?
  - What feelings were associated with the experience?
3. Your partner writes down all the key words (NB not attempting to edit them in any way).
  4. Repeat for a second experience.
  5. You then review these words together, highlighting the top ten important words for you.
  6. Rank the ten 'values' from one to ten in order of importance to you.
  7. Use the top five values to review your fulfilment in your life now. How far on a scale of one to ten are these values being honoured in your life now?
  8. This can often be a cathartic and liberating experience for both coach and client.