

# Purpose and Meaning

If you have a strong purpose in life, you don't have to be pushed.

Your passion will drive you there.

## Do you have a clear purpose?

It's the beginning of the year and it's the perfect time to ensure that you are living your best life and delivering on your true purpose.

Most lawyers choose the profession due to high marks it takes to be accepted and a desire to do good in the world by preventing injustice. The reality is quite different.

Legal workplaces seem to be generating more stress than most. There is an oversupply of lawyers which creates a toxically competitive environment. The workload and hours can be inhumane due to a failure to prioritise and plan legal matters effectively.

In some practice areas, clients are distressed and suffering from mental illness which subjects their lawyers to Vicarious Trauma. And another big factor is that legal workplaces are often fuelled with negativity, unreasonable expectations, bullying and harassment.

***One in two female lawyers and one in three male lawyers say they experience bullying at work. This is much higher than the general working population.***

## The importance of purpose

A sense of purpose is integral to the human experience. Having a sense of purpose brings lifelong benefits, research shows that purposeful people live longer and are -

- less sick
- less depressed
- less likely to abuse drugs and alcohol
- better performers
- more successful
- happier

***“Purpose is a forward-looking directionality, an intention to do something in the world.***

***It's different than a goal, which can be accomplished.”***

***“The findings are mind-blowing!”***

Anthony L. Burrow, Human Development, Cornell Research



## Organisational Purpose

Most firms and organisations have a purpose statement. They are designed to inspire the way everyone works and behaves in the firm.

When I was researching for this article, it surprised me how few major law firms have their purpose and values available on their websites for both clients and teams to see!

Perhaps they promote them more internally rather than externally, or perhaps they haven't realised the advantage they can have by creating an inspirational purpose behind which all their staff can align. And creating strong values that drive the way team members work and also how they interact with clients.

- **Have you read the purpose for your firm?** More importantly, have you considered it carefully.
- **How does it influence the way you do your work?** And if it aligns with your own purpose and values.

***You will find more meaning in your work if you are aligned to the purpose of your firm or organisation.***

## Take action to find your purpose

Having purpose means the work you have committed to is serving humanity in a positive way. There are many benefits to living a more purposeful life - increased fulfilment and resilience; guidance and support during tough times; motivation to add value and achieve success; and feeling more alive and living longer.

This activity is designed for you to consider your purpose and to increase the meaning in your working life.

1. Find a quiet space on your own and get comfortable
2. Grab a blank piece of paper and write down all the answers to those questions without over thinking or editing
3. Refine the words and concepts to craft your personal purpose statement

Keep it short, positive, and inspiring. You can always review your purpose statement regularly and refine it as required. It will become the guiding principle that directs all your actions.

***The purpose of my life is to share knowledge and create change!***

## How to deliver on your purpose?

We are going to take your purpose statement and expand on it so that you are more specific about what you do in the world.

Consider the contribution you make to the world. Your purpose is the why and now it's important to define the what. REMEMBER – the **WHY** of your life **IS DIFFERENT** to **WHAT** you actually do with your life.

**Step 1** - State your purpose – the purpose of my life is to...

**Step 2** - Take the next step to state the why...I do this by...

**I'll share mine...**

"The purpose of my life is to share knowledge and create change!

...I do this by transforming the way lawyers work through legal project management, legal process improvement and The POSITIVE Lawyer program."

## How do you want to live your life?

This quote from Michelle Obama has inspired the concept of BE Statements

**Don't be afraid...Be focused - Be determine -Be hopeful - Be empowered!**  
**Michelle Obama**

These 4 small statements are extremely powerful constructs to guide how you live your life each day and how you interact with the world moment by moment. You can apply them to every situation so that at the end of the day you have moved towards your purpose and lived a more positive life.

Consider these 4 questions to develop your own Be statements –

1. Who do you want to be?
2. How do you want to live your life?
3. How do you think about yourself?
4. How do others describe you?

## Developing you BE statements

These 4 small statements are extremely powerful constructs to guide how you live your life each day and how you interact with the world moment by moment. You can apply them to every situation so that at the end of the day you have moved towards your purpose and lived a more positive life.

**Step 1** - Grab a blank piece of paper, reflect on the questions above and brainstorm all the words that best describe how you want to live your life and be remembered. Don't edit yourself. Simply write them down, there will be more than 4 and that's okay.

**Step 2** - When you've slowed down then consider each word and select the ones that provide you with higher order inspiration and support your purpose. You may already have the 4 magic words that are your Be statements, or you may have a few extra ones.

If you can get it down to 4 that's great, although it's not mandatory. You can have 5 or 6 or 7 if you like. I don't recommend more than 7 as our short term memory has limited capacity and can only store around 7 items at a time.

It might take you just a few minutes or you might have a working list that you refine over the next week, or possibly the next few years. You can always come back and refine them with important life events or when you feel you're not living as positively as you can.

**Take it deeper** - You might like to take it one step further and keep a daily journal that records your reflections on how you went in terms of living your Be statements. Remember there is no right or wrong, and you can always try them out for a while and then come back and refine them later.

### About the author...



Hi, I'm Therese Linton, a global leader in legal project management legal process improvement and personal productivity. Over the last decade I've worked with thousands of lawyers to introduce innovative ways of working that delights clients, reduces stress, improves work-life balance and leads to better legal outcomes.

I've been encouraged by my best friend, business partner and many clients to expand the positive impact of these ways of working with the NEW Positive Lawyer coaching program.

I've been growing and learning throughout this journey myself. I have firsthand experience with learning new skills, along with the ups and downs that are inevitable when striving for mastery.

### Announcing an amazing new program - THE POSITIVE LAWYER<sup>®</sup>

The Positive Lawyer provides the new 'non-negotiable' approaches to legal work, and a well-researched collection of tools and techniques to support positive mindsets, improve resilience and uplift legal working environments.

It's the solution for lawyers who want to stress less and live more! Participants will be supported with a ground-breaking coaching program, tailored to address the complex challenges faced by lawyers today. Over 6 months you will participate in 6 face to face sessions, or workshops, and have fortnightly contact to complete guided activities to support your breakthrough and transformation.



If you're committed to releasing yourself from limiting beliefs; learning new skills that are critical to your success; developing and implementing realistic action plans; reigniting your enthusiasm for your career...then register your interest at <https://basaltgroup.clickfunnels.com/registerpl>.

You will be the first to know when the program is available, and we'll keep you motivated and updated along the way.

***My aim is to inspire you to achieve great things and I look forward to joining you on your journey! Cheers....T***