

How to Structure Outcomes

Copied and paraphrased from Joseph O'Connor's NLP Workbook, Thorsons 2001

Following these nine questions will create an outcome that is realistic, achievable and motivating.

Instead of looking at a problem in terms of what should you do about it, reframing it to what you want is more useful as it directs your thoughts towards a solution. Think of a problem and apply the following questions:

1. What do you want? Phrase what you want in a positive tense. For example, losing weight is negative. Having a healthy body is positive.
2. How will you know you are succeeding and that you have succeeded? It's important to know you are on track. Measurable results are important. Consider both questions – feedback on your progression and evidence to tell you you're there.
3. Where do you want the outcome? When do you want it? In what context do you want this?
4. What resources do you have? Think objects, people, role models, personal qualities, and money. Depending on your outcome, some of these may not apply or, all of these might apply.
5. How much is under your direct control? What can you do to get this outcome? Whose assistance do you need and what do you have to do to get this assistance?
6. What time and effort will this outcome need? Who else will be affected? What will you have to give up when you achieve this outcome? What is good about the present situation? What else could happen when you get your outcome?
7. Is this outcome in keeping with who you are?
8. What prevents me from achieving this outcome? Sometimes your outcome may have many obstacles. By breaking it down into smaller outcomes will help you get over the obstacles one at a time.
9. Action plan – what will you do next? By going through the questions, you are now ready to act. You should have an idea of what you need to do and what you need to delegate.