

NICOLE LYNN



AGENT *YOU*

SHOW UP, DO THE WORK, AND
SUCCEED ON YOUR OWN TERMS

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

*Dedicated to every woman who is making room
for other women at the table*

Copyright © 2021 by Nicole Lynn

All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, scanning, or other—except for brief quotations in critical reviews or articles, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Published by Harper Horizon, an imprint of HarperCollins Focus LLC.

Any internet addresses, phone numbers, or company or product information printed in this book are offered as a resource and are not intended in any way to be or to imply an endorsement by Harper Horizon, nor does Harper Horizon vouch for the existence, content, or services of these sites, phone numbers, companies, or products beyond the life of this book.

Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.®

ISBN 978-0-7852-3805-8 (eBook)

ISBN 978-0-7852-3804-1 (HC)

Library of Congress Control Number: 2021930956

Printed in the United States of America

21 22 23 24 25 LSC 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

APPENDIX A

Agent You: Take Action! Exercises

CHAPTER ONE: FIND YOUR PURPOSE

1. Use the steps provided in this chapter to identify your purpose. Make a list of four or five things you're really good at, then cross off any item that doesn't meet the following criteria:
 - Things you truly enjoy;
 - Things that impact the world; and
 - Things you would do for free, if money were no object.

After this process, you should only have one, perhaps two, items on your list.

-
-
2. Find a way to walk in your purpose. If you're already living out your purpose, congratulations! However, if you aren't, you may need to find the time and energy to make this a reality. Think of at least one or two ways, small or large, that enable you to start walking in your purpose *today*.
-
-

3. Begin planning for the long term. Even if you have other commitments keeping you from walking fully in your purpose right now, it's never too late to start planning for the future. In a journal, a note on your phone, or a document on your computer, start envisioning how your day-to-day life will look when you're walking in your purpose. Think about not only the practical elements, but the positive mental and emotional benefits that walking in your purpose will have on you.

CHAPTER TWO: GET YOUR DREAM JOB

1. Make a list of five small things you can do to work toward your dream job.

- If you need to schedule time each day to hold yourself accountable for completing these tasks, do so. Also, remember to include easy tasks on your list, for the days you have less time or motivation.
- When you complete this first list, start a new one—keep the momentum going.

2. Think of at least five people you can ask for a ten-to-fifteen-minute commitment to have a phone conversation or grab coffee. After you do this, brainstorm ideas around the answers to the following questions:

- How can you get in front of these people? Do you share any mutual connections? Can you direct message (DM) them on social media? Are they attending an event you can gain entrance to?
- How can you demonstrate added value to each person on your list? Can you make a connection for them? Do you have a skill that these people or their organizations are lacking?

3. Though it's not possible for everyone, consider working for experience.
 - How many hours a week could you commit to this undertaking? Setting limits from the outset will help keep you from being taken advantage of.
 - Document everything you gain from this experience: build a portfolio, list your accomplishments on your résumé, and so forth.
 - If you absolutely can't work solely to gain experience, consider bartering your services. Is there someone who needs a service you can offer who also can provide you with a service?

CHAPTER THREE: BE YOUR AUTHENTIC SELF

1. Your "me statement" is a critical part of being your authentic self. This statement covers five areas: identity, belief, stance, enjoyment, and legacy. To assess each of these areas, ask yourself the following questions:

- Identity: How do you view yourself? List the primary ways.

- Belief: What are your core values? If you're struggling to come up with ideas, an online search will point you toward dozens of websites that provides lists you can choose from.

- Stance: What cause would you march in the streets to support? Even if you'd support multiple causes in this way, if you could only choose one, what would it be?

- Enjoyment: What activities make you happy? If you're like me and have trouble pinpointing things you enjoy, try to remember times when you've smiled and laughed a lot, and what you were doing then.

- Legacy: If you could choose one thing for people to remember about you after you die, what would it be? Keep in mind that this can be something close to home, such as “I want people to remember that I loved my family,” or something broader, such as “I want people to remember that I fought for global women’s rights to education.”
-
-

CHAPTER FOUR: TREAT YOURSELF LIKE THE BRAND YOU ARE

1. Ask yourself: “How do I envision my brand?” One helpful way to answer this question is to fill in the blank. For instance, I am Agent Nicole Lynn: my brand and my name. Who do you want to be known as?
-
-

2. Take steps to build your brand. Even if you’ve already begun the process of building your brand, now is a good time to evaluate the work you’ve already done and make sure you haven’t gotten off track along the way.

- Choose your pillars. What do you want people to think of when they think of you?
- Choose your theme. What do you want people to think of when they think of your brand?
- Identify your audience. Who is your brand intended to reach and help?
- Choose your medium. Where are you most likely to engage your audience?
- Be consistent. Across all your platforms, make sure that all the content relates to at least one of your pillars, adheres to your theme, will appeal to your audience, and is appropriate for the medium.

3. Make every effort not to cover. Most of us fall victim to covering in one way or another, whether in the workplace or elsewhere. Evaluate the things about yourself or your life that you've withheld from others. Are you keeping those things under wraps because of fear or a desire to make sure others are comfortable? If you're covering in any way, you can begin by writing down one thing and listing at least two or three ways you, those around you, or those who come after you can benefit from your refusal to cover.

CHAPTER FIVE: EMBRACE A MAMBA MENTALITY

1. Keep in mind that success isn't always pretty. You most likely have what it takes to succeed, but are you willing to do what it takes to succeed?
 - What are you willing to sacrifice to achieve your desired success? A long-term relationship? Financial security? Sleep?
 - What are you unwilling to sacrifice? These are your nonnegotiables, which can help you eliminate options along your journey to success. Sometimes it's equally important to know what you *aren't* willing to do as it is to know what you are willing to do.
2. Use what you have. We all have finite resources, and some of us have access to more resources than others.
 - Make a list of the things you think you need to succeed (e.g., more time, a degree, a part-time assistant).

 - Do you currently have all these resources? If not, how can you secure them? Or do you

already have something that can serve as a substitute for the time being? For instance, if you need more time but can't afford childcare, maybe you could offer one of your skills in exchange for a friend watching your kid(s) for a few hours a week.

3. Define success on your terms. Complete this sentence: I consider success to be _____.

CHAPTER SIX: STAY READY, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO GET READY

1. Reflect on times when fear prevented you from taking your shot.
 - Has fear ever prevented you from pursuing your dream? If so, what do you wish you'd done differently, or what can you start doing differently right now (e.g., not indulge in self-defeatist thought patterns, such as, *No one's ever going to take me seriously, so why should I even bother?*)?

 - Have you ever taken your shot in spite of your fear? If so, how were you able to accomplish this?

And how can you remind yourself of this victory the next time fear threatens to paralyze you? For instance, can you make a list of victories to revisit any time you feel afraid or insecure?

2. How can you *stay ready*, right now? In this chapter, I listed several ways you can stay ready. Make a list of three tasks you can work on today so you're prepared when opportunity comes your way. If you're unsure of what you can or should do to prepare, consult a trusted friend or mentor or ask someone who works in the industry.

CHAPTER SEVEN: GET COMFORTABLE WITH LOSING



1. Use affirmations to focus, stay positive, and keep your emotions in check. Mentally prepare yourself for failure, so you're not derailed when it happens.
 - If you know and admire someone successful, research that person's backstory. Did he or she

experience losses before winning? If so, how were those challenges navigated? How can you use that story to keep you motivated?

- Transform your “what if” worst-case scenarios to “what if” best-case scenarios. For instance, instead of saying, “What if no one attends my grand-opening event?” say, “What if so many people attend my grand-opening event that it’s standing room only, and the line wraps around the block?”
- Make a list of at least three positive outlets for the emotions you experience when you lose, then remind yourself of them. For example, “If I get turned down for the promotion, I will treat myself to a spa day, then ask my supervisor what I can do to put myself in a better position for the next promotion.”

2. When you lose, consider that an opportunity to add skills to your toolbox. What did you learn from the experience that can set you up for success next time?

3. Count *all* your wins. It’s easy to allow disappointment to cloud our vision instead of acknowledging even the small victories. In what ways, small or big, did

you win on your journey, even if a particular effort didn't succeed? Write down at least three things you can celebrate as wins.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DO ALL YOU CAN, THEN DO NO MORE

1. Think about this idea: "Even if you wanted to do more, you could not."
 - Are there any areas of your life where you simply cannot do more? Perhaps you've put in an insane number of hours at work, sacrificing your relationships and health, yet still haven't made partner. Or maybe you've tried everything you can think of to salvage a relationship, yet no improvement is being made.
 - Write down at least one area in your life that you have done all you could and need to let go and let God.

2. Consider an area or areas in your life where you're already trusting God, regardless of the outcome.

- One way to further commit to trusting him in that situation is to complete the following sentence:
“I’m believing God for _____, but even if he doesn’t, I’ll still honor and worship him.”
3. Another way to trust God with the outcome is to reflect on times when his answer to your prayer was no.
- List at least three times in your life you’re grateful that God said no instead of yes.

- How do those situations help you appreciate God’s plan for your life?

CHAPTER NINE: DITCH IMPOSTER SYNDROME

1. Check your tribe. Surround yourself with people who believe in you even when you don’t believe in yourself.
- Who is the one person you can always count on to cheer you on but also tell it to you straight?
 - Who are the five people who consistently call/text/email you supportive and encouraging words?

- Who, after spending time with them, fills you up and makes you feel ready to take on the world?

2. Don't just be prepared—be overprepared. Leave nothing on the table, and always be ready and willing to go above and beyond.

- What do you know you could be doing more of, more often, to overprepare? Make a list of three ways you can overprepare for a current project.

3. Compare yourself to others. However, make sure you compare yourself to your peers, not those who are further down the path than you.

- Who has a similar education/experience level to you?

-
-
- If you have peers ahead of you on the path, what must you do to catch up to them?

CHAPTER TEN: SCORE A SEAT AT THE TABLE

1. Get a seat at the table, *now*. Remember the five ways to secure your place:
 - *Keep your eyes open and research.* Who is at the table, and how did they get there? What can you learn from their journey that benefits you?
 - *Create a road map.* Make a list of your career goals and how you will achieve them. Think beyond salary to what all aspects of success look like for you.
 - *Stay aware.* Pay attention to how you're being treated, especially in relation to peers with the same level of experience as you.
 - *Advocate.* This is threefold: (1) Get comfortable asking uncomfortable questions. (2) Speak up about desiring more difficult assignments. (3) Document unconscious bias.
2. Choose a mentor. Recall the three criteria for a mentor, who should be (1) more experienced than you; (2) someone you trust; and (3) an adviser.

- Make a list of at least five people you think could mentor you.

- What specific benefits would each person bring to the relationship? For example, do they possess a skill set you want or need to learn to advance in your career? Or have they excelled in their career while also maintaining a healthy work-life balance?
- To narrow down your selection, you might also find it helpful to make a list of pros and cons for each person on the list.

3. Find a sponsor. You become someone's protégé because that person can advocate for you and leverage connections to get you where you want to go.

- List at least five potential sponsors.

- As with your mentors list, identify what specific benefits each person would bring to the relationship. Are they respected and admired by many people both inside and outside of your company? Do they have connections to clients or industry insiders who could greatly boost your career?
- Also similar to your mentor search, you can list pros and cons for each person on your potential sponsor list.
- If you can't find a sponsor right away, sponsor yourself! Keep a work journal where you record all your accomplishments, and practice showing instead of telling when you promote yourself.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: PRACTICE SELF-CARE

1. Be okay with doing nothing. You can't start your self-care journey with actions. Begin by being. This doesn't come naturally to many people, but keep practicing.
2. Practice self-care. Self-care looks different for everyone, and it might take time for you to find activities that work for you.
 - Make a list of at least five ways you can practice daily self-care.

- Now, list several ways you can practice weekly or monthly self-care.

- Journal your self-care experiences, to hold yourself accountable and to ensure that your self-care activities don't feel like another item you have to check off your to-do list.

3. Protect your self-care time. Life will continually take from you, so if you don't fiercely guard your self-care sessions, something will consume that time.

- After you've identified ways you can practice self-care, block off the necessary time on your calendar, and make these appointments with yourself nonnegotiable.
- Don't be afraid to communicate these boundaries to others. If they respect you, they'll respect your self-care boundaries.

CHAPTER TWELVE: LET GO OF BUSY

1. Work smart, not hard. Sometimes we develop bad habits along the way to achieving our goals, even if we begin with good intentions.
 - Assess your daily tasks. Is there anything you've gotten into the habit of doing, even if it's unnecessary or time consuming? For instance, maybe you're a stay-at-home mom who also runs a business and spends hours meal planning, grocery shopping, doing meal prep, and so forth. Based on your budget, would it make more sense for you to order one or two meals a week from a delivery service so you can focus more time and energy on your family and your business?
 - Evaluate strategies you're using to reach your goals. Maybe, as I did when studying for my bar exam, you're spending time on completing a to-do list unnecessarily. Determine what's essential to reach your goal and focus on those activities.
2. Set priorities and say no first. These two go hand in hand—if you haven't set your priorities, you're more likely to say yes to anything and everything.

- Make a list of your priorities, the nonnegotiables in your world. Write down or type out this list and place it where you often engage in decision making (e.g., by your home computer, in your work cubicle, or in a note on your phone).
 - Whenever you receive a request of any kind, say no first, then refer to your priorities list. Does the “ask” being made align with your priorities? If not, your no remains a no. If yes, make sure you’re clear on why and how the ask fits in with your priorities and ensure that your boundaries are respected.
3. Set yourself as the top item on your daily to-do list. Don’t let your self-care or personal needs get hijacked by a busy schedule. Every day, at the beginning of the day, make sure you do at least one thing that is for you and you alone, whether that’s exercising, journaling, watching a TV show, emailing a good friend, and so forth.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: CURATE YOUR TRIBE

1. Make a list of everyone you consider part of your tribe.
 - In what way(s) does each tribe member contribute value to your life?

- In what way(s) do you contribute value to the life of each member of your tribe?

2. Curate your tribe. Do you have anyone who is still part of your tribe, even though his or her purpose in your life has been fulfilled? For instance, maybe your best friend from college only seems to reach out to you when she needs something, and she never asks about your life and how you're doing. Or perhaps you have an old flame you message on social media or text, just in case your current relationship doesn't work out. Think about how you can gracefully either move these relationships into a different sphere of friendship or eliminate them from your life altogether.
3. Say thanks. What ways can you show appreciation to your tribe, especially those in your holy of holies? Keep in mind that people receive love in different ways. Can you write a note describing the

ways those friends add value to your life? Cook their favorite meal? Schedule a weekend adventure with them? Offer a night of babysitting, so they can have some personal time? If you're already practicing gratitude with your tribe members, keep up the great work.

APPENDIX B

Things to Remember

- Everyone has a purpose—including you!
- *Today* is the day to start working toward your dream job.
- You—and only you—determine your authentic self.
- No matter who you are, you are a brand.
- Only you can define what success looks like for *you*.
- *Stay* ready, so you don't have to *get* ready.
- You will lose, but you win when you keep going.
- When you let go and let God, you also trust him with the outcome.
- When you're true to yourself, you'll become more confident and overcome imposter syndrome.
- Don't wait—fight for your seat at the table today.
- Self-care is a priority, not a reward.
- Learn to let go of busy—glorifying the hustle is a one-way street to burnout.
- Your tribe can make or break you—choose its members wisely.