

Book Review : *A-Z pearls of Wisdom for Executive PAs.*

Lindsay Taylor

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Reviewed by Mark Northway FInstAM, BA(Hons).

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A-Z books are great as a means of providing snippets of information for practitioners within an alphabetical framework. Zs, Xs and the like, make the writers think that little bit deeper to extract something the rest of us might never have thought of.

When it comes to books for PAs, the best combine practical skills with tools for survival. To an extent this book achieves this, and some good tools for working as a PA are included: Perceptual Positions, Wellbeing, Eriksons' "Child of 6" theory, KISS – as examples – provide an interesting breadth to this book.

There is a lack of depth, as might be expected with such a book. Mehrabian pops up numerous times, but few other writers are invoked, and the book would benefit from providing suggested further reading or signposting to other resources. But with good quips, quotations (one from Henry Ford appears three times!), other nuggets, and with fun photos, it keeps the book bouncing along, as well as giving pause for thought and reflection.

Some sections are more comprehensive and worthwhile than others. N for NLP leads to 6 pages of overview, "G for Gatekeeper" is one page of nothing related to gatekeeping. The use of each letter, too, is uneven. "H for Helpful" becomes how to say no; "T for Time" simply states that you should read "7 Habits of Highly Effective People", before going on to a story about granny.

Noticeable too is the slightly defensive feel. Being assertive (section A), saying no (section H), and maintaining work boundaries in accordance with a job specification (p112/3), is hardly what a boss might be looking for from a Personal Assistant. Unfortunate stereotyping creeps in too – talk of womens' shoe sizes (p100) and of being a Wonder Woman super-hero PA (p122) does jar somewhat in 2016.

For the price of a few throwaway magazines, this is a book worth buying and browsing for anyone employed as a PA. Some of the ideas presented might just spark something for the reader.

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Mark Northway FInstAM., BA(Hons).

*Mark Northway is Director and Courses Co-ordinator at Deltic Training. Tel: 01263 711811 [www.deltic-training.co.uk](http://www.deltic-training.co.uk)*

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*"Delivering Pearls of Wisdom"*

**A – Z Pearls of Wisdom  
for Executive PAs**