



# The Neil Thompson Academy Information Pack

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In association with



## Why I set up the Neil Thompson Academy

Some years ago, I was advised to consolidate my various activities under the one virtual roof. I thought it was a good idea, but at that time I was too busy with too many projects to take it forward. But, now that I am at the tail end of my career, I thought this would be a good time to do it.

The notion of 'academy' dates back to Ancient Greece and has strong associations with learning, so I felt that would be a good term to use. So, we now see the existence of the Neil Thompson Academy that combines information about my existing books, manuals and e-courses with the development of a number of new projects:

***The Social Work Finishing School*** This is an online learning programme designed with two groups of people in mind: final year students and newly qualified workers wanting to make a success of the transition to fully fledged worker and experienced practitioners and managers wanting a refresher to re-energise them. Visit [www.SocialWorkFinishing.school](http://www.SocialWorkFinishing.school) to find out more.

***Vigoroom employee wellness platform*** Recognising the major problems in terms of health and wellbeing, stress and major recruitment and retention problems, I have negotiated with Vigoroom for its services to be made available to local authorities and other employers of social workers (to date they have only worked with private companies). This is a very sophisticated set of resources to promote healthier and happier workplaces (see below for more information).

***The Avenue Subscription Service*** Over the past ten years or so I have been developing a range of e-learning courses. I am now able to offer a total of 60 courses on an annual subscription basis for up to 300 staff. This can work out at as little as £10 per person (see below for further information).

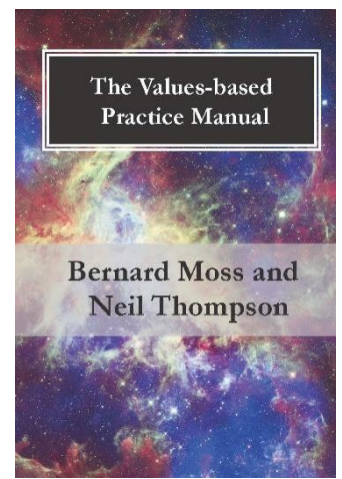
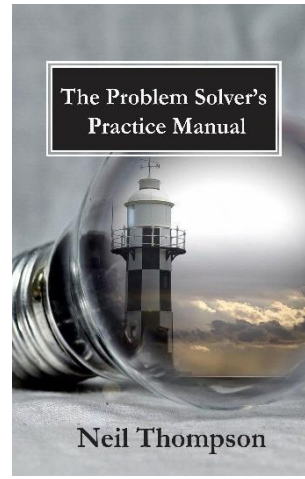
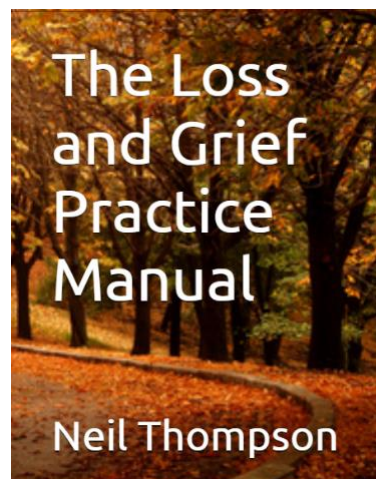
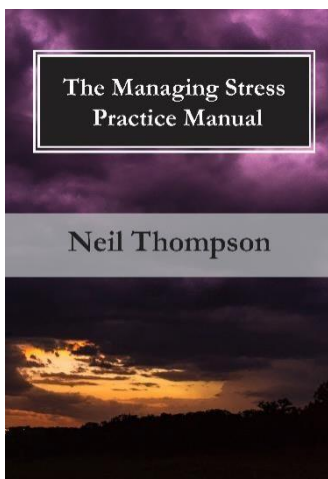
The Academy also offers a range of free learning resources for members (membership is free), so please do pay a visit to it at [www.NeilThompson.info](http://www.NeilThompson.info).



Neil Thompson is one of the most successful authors of his generation. With over 40 books to his name and over 40 years of experience as a practitioner, manager, educator and adviser, he is one of the most highly respected people in his field.

His Academy brings together in one convenient place information about his books, e-courses and services. There are also free learning resources, [including his highly acclaimed \*Manifesto for Making a Difference\*](#), all available at [www.NeilThompson.info](http://www.NeilThompson.info).

You will find information about his practice manuals, including:

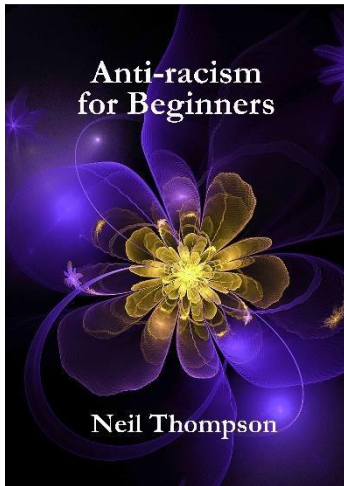


Neil also offers a wide range of e-learning courses based on his decades of experience of teaching, training and mentoring.

In addition, he now offers *The Social Work Finishing School*. This online programme has been developed with two groups of people in mind: final-year students and newly qualified workers wanting support and guidance in making the transition to being a fully fledged worker plus experienced practitioners and managers looking for a refresher to re-energise them.

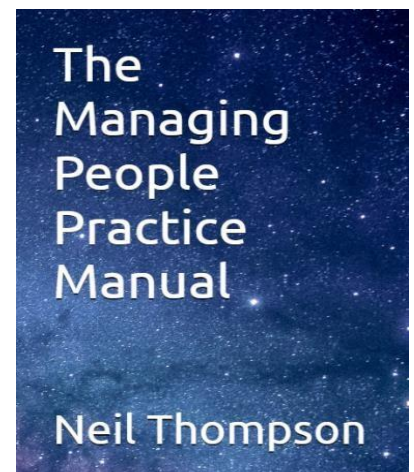
This is a programme of fives: 5 video-based modules, 5 worksheets and the opportunity to ask Neil 5 questions as a form of online mentoring. Visit [www.SocialWorkFinishing.School](http://www.SocialWorkFinishing.School) for further information.

Two of our publications are proving particularly popular:



Neil wrote this short basic guide to address the number of oversimplifications he saw creeping in to discussions of anti-racism and anti-discriminatory practice more broadly. It provides a strong foundation for development.

An ideal resource for anyone in a leadership role, it covers 30 different aspects of effective people management



Visit [www.NeilThompson.info](http://www.NeilThompson.info) to see what the Academy has to offer. Membership is FREE!

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Neil directly at: [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk).

## Why I'm working with Vigoroom

A few people have noticed I have been doing some work with a company called Vigoroom and have asked me how that came to be and what it is all about.

Vigoroom is an employee wellness platform geared towards creating win-win outcomes – improved health and wellbeing for employees and fewer recruitment and retention headaches for employers.

I had never come across them before when they initially approached me. They had been impressed with my e-learning that they had seen online and wanted to include some of it on their platform, as it fitted well with their ethos and approach.

I was well aware that there is a great deal of poor-quality material online that I would not want to be associated with, so I had a very close look at their platform before committing myself. I was so glad I did because not only was I convinced that it would be OK for my work to sit alongside their existing good-quality work, but also it struck me that this was a set of resources that is very much needed in the modern-day over-pressurised workplace, especially in social work.

From my training and consultancy work I had become extremely concerned about the immense challenges today's social workers face. In my published work I had made it perfectly clear that I see social work as a demanding occupation by its very nature. But, what I was seeing went far beyond that, no doubt as a result of what has been happening in the wider sociopolitical and economic world.

I was also aware that research undertaken by the Social Workers Union (SWU) on working conditions for social workers was raising significant concerns. This led to a collaboration with John McGowan, the SWU general secretary, in writing the book *How to Survive in Social Work*. The book is geared towards helping social workers not only survive the current pressures, but also to thrive by supporting one another in achieving the best results possible in extremely difficult circumstances.

So, when I saw the Vigoroom resources (over 1,000 of them), I was impressed by four things. First, all the resources are expert led, unlike so much of the questionable stuff put out by people jumping on the workplace wellbeing bandwagon.

Second, I had recognised that a lot of the materials that are supposed to address health and wellbeing focus mainly on health

issues, with relatively little to say about wider wellbeing concerns. By contrast, the Vigoroom materials focus much more holistically on both health and wellbeing matters.

Third, the focus is not just on the individual. For example, there are team challenges that can not only improve health and fitness, but also boost teamwork and morale – very important factors when it comes to wellbeing and keeping stress and burnout at bay.

Fourth, with so many resources available, it would be easy to get lost, but the system very cleverly navigates through this. Upon registering, you are presented with a confidential questionnaire where you are asked to identify any conditions you may have (asthma, diabetes and so on) and any concerns (lose weight, give up smoking, avoid stress and so on). The system then guides you to the most relevant materials and these resources are not just information. They include workouts, structured programmes, courses and challenges.

After looking very carefully at the platform, I could see that it could be an enormous benefit if employers were to make it available to their social workers and indeed all their staff. Consequently, I suggested to the company that they should target local authorities and other employers of social workers and social care workers. Their response was that they would be happy to do so, but, as they had no background in social work, they would want me to work with them to help make employers aware of how beneficial signing up for the service could be.

Straight away I saw that this that would be a great opportunity to make a positive impact on the major challenges we face in social work today. Sadly, some employers have responded to the current health and wellbeing crisis in simplistic and superficial ways. This can be counterproductive, as it gives a message that social workers' concerns are not being taken seriously. Investing in Vigoroom, by contrast, gives a positive message that concerns have been noted and there is a genuine commitment to addressing them by developing an authentic culture of wellbeing.

Access to the platform can be made available on a monthly fee per eligible employee on a 12-month contract.

Further information about Vigoroom can be found at [www.Vigoroom.co.uk](http://www.Vigoroom.co.uk). If this sounds of interest, let me know and I can arrange for a demo of the system and a trial for a small group of staff.



## Creating a culture of wellbeing we can all be proud of!

Major changes in the world of work over the years have increased pressures significantly, with higher levels of pressure, but lower levels of resourcing. Social work has been no exception. In fact, social work has been harder hit than most other occupations.

Health and safety legislation places a duty of care on both employers and employees to avoid health-affecting levels of stress. Where this duty is not carried out to the full, the personal and organisational costs can be immense.

Vigoroom is a sophisticated wellness platform with over 1,000 resources geared towards boosting health and wellbeing with videos, e-learning courses, activities, structured programmes and challenges. It offers expert guidance on health and fitness, managing chronic conditions, staying safe, promoting mental health and wellbeing, financial wellbeing and much more.



# Why I developed the Avenue

## Subscription Service

*The recently launched Avenue Subscription Service offers 60 online courses for up to 300 staff for a full 12 months – at a cost that can be as low as £10 per person. Not £10 per person per course – just £10 per person for access to all 60 courses!*

I first started developing online learning over ten years ago. This was partly because the demand for my face-to-face training services was growing considerably – well beyond my availability to fulfil all the requests. I was also reaching the point in my career where I needed to do less travelling and less work altogether. So, it made perfect sense for me to develop online courses.

When I reached a total of 50 courses, it struck me that it could work well to offer these as a package on a subscription service basis. But, while I was considering that, I was commissioned to develop three courses on subjects not already covered by the existing range. This spurred me to add a further seven courses to make it a package of 60 courses across a wide variety of topics – some specific to social work and social care, but all very relevant (self-care, for example).

I am now in the process of retiring in stages. So, while I am not ready to hang up my boots altogether, my in-person work is now very limited, even though I continue to get regular requests for my training services. My focus now until I retire altogether will be on writing projects and the development of further online learning and development resources (see below for information about the three programmes I have in the pipeline), alongside my advisory and support role as a visiting professor at the Open University.

I am hoping that the subscription service, at such an affordable price, will enable employers to give staff access to a broad range of helpful, thought-provoking learning materials that can make a real difference to not only quality of practice, but also morale and job satisfaction.

Further information about the package, including the full list of the courses, is available at [www.NeilThompson.info/subscription-service/](http://www.NeilThompson.info/subscription-service/). If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to contact me directly at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk).



Introducing ...

# The Avenue Subscription Service

**The ideal affordable learning resource for social work and social care!**

For over ten years Avenue Media Solutions have been producing e-learning courses based on the work of **Dr Neil Thompson** and a small group of valued colleagues. We are now delighted to be able to offer unlimited access for up to 300 staff to a total of 60 courses for a low-cost annual subscription.

Courses include:

**Dealing with Stress | Risk Assessment and Management | How to Lead a Team Under Immense Pressure | Outcome-focused Practice | Effective Meetings | Quality Supervision for Quality Practice | Managing Conflict | Handling Aggression | Time and Workload Management | Promoting Employee Wellness**

Each course includes a module companion workbook to be printed out and used to make notes and complete course exercises. The workbook will then serve as both a reminder of learning for future reference and as a CPD record.

Neil has over 45 years' experience of providing education and training in the social work and social care field. As a well-published author and sought-after trainer, consultant and conference speaker, he has earned considerable respect for his ability to explain complex ideas clearly and accessibly without oversimplifying them.

**An annual subscription of just £3,000 + VAT means that each course is available to up to 300 staff for just £50 per course! Or, to put it another way, it can cost as little as £10 per person for a full year's access to 60 courses!**

See overleaf for the full list of courses.

Interested? Want to know more?

Contact Neil directly at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk)

## **Video courses**

Alcohol and Drugs Problems in the Workplace | Childhood Trauma and Recovery | Communicating with Children | Coping with Depression | Creative Problem Solving | Customer Care: Getting it Right | Customer Care: Beyond the Basics | Dealing with Stress | Managing Stress (follow up to Dealing with Stress) | Developing Teamwork | Effective Interviewing | Effective leadership | Effective Meetings | Emotional Competence: Developing Emotional Intelligence and Resilience | Equality, Diversity and Inclusion | Managing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (follow up to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) | Equality and Diversity: Using PCS Analysis | Essaycraft | Facing Death... Enriching Life | Foundations of Social Care | Getting Started with Reflective Practice | Developing a Reflective Practice Culture (follow up to Getting Started with Reflective Practice) | Handling Aggression | How to Be Happy | How to Be Liked | How to Lead a Team Under Immense Pressure | Language and Discrimination | Learning to Learn | Making a Difference | Boost Your Impact (follow up to Making a Difference) | Making Appraisal Work | Managing Anxiety | Managing Conflict | Improve Your Conflict Management Skills (follow up to Managing Conflict) | Maximizing Effectiveness | Mental Health Problems in the Workplace | Outcome-focused Practice in Social Work | Positive Mental Health | Promoting Employee Wellness | Quality Supervision for Quality Practice | Risk Assessment and Management in Social Work | Safeguarding Children from Abuse | Safer Sex Education and Relationships | Self-care and Resilience | Sexual Abuse and Childhood Sexuality | Social Care ESSENTIALS | So, You Want to Be a Social Worker | Strategic Thinking | Tackling Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace | The Effects of Drugs and Alcohol | The Equality Act 2010 | Time and Workload Management | Understanding Autism | Working with Grief

## **Audio courses**

Boost Your Confidence | Coping with Grief | Dealing with Feelings | Developing Assertiveness | The Successful Self

## **Text-based course**

Boost Your Learning to the Full

Interested? Want to know more?

Contact Neil directly at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk)

## A note from Neil ...

I have been involved in social work and social care for over 45 years now. I have done my best to support our profession as an author, educator and adviser. I have been proud to have been part of such an important group of people playing a part in making our society a more humane and socially just society.

As my career steadily draws to a close, I see my Academy as my legacy, a focal point for my writings, my online learning and, latterly, my work around keeping stress at bay through improved leadership and a stronger emphasis on health and wellbeing in the workplace.

I hope that this information pack has given you some insights in terms of where I am coming from and what I am trying to achieve. I also hope it will encourage you to visit the Academy at [www.NeilThompson.info](http://www.NeilThompson.info) and sign up to get access to the free learning resources there.

If any of the projects I am currently involved in – The Social Work Finishing School; the Vigoroom employee wellness platform or the Avenue Subscription Service – are of interest to you, I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. You can contact me via the Academy website or at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk). I will be pleased to hear from you.

I am very aware of just how pressurised and immensely challenging social work has become, but I remain convinced that the value of social work is such that we need to continue to do what we can – individually and collectively – to make sure that we not only survive, but actually thrive.

With best wishes,

Neil

**Dr Neil Thompson**

Writer | Educator | Adviser

<https://linktr.ee/drneilthompson>

Visiting Professor, the Open University



# STOP PRESS

See overleaf for news of the latest developments!

I am currently involved in developing a range of resources to help promote better management and leadership:

**The Avenue Company Health Review** – a tool for senior leadership teams to use to gauge how well they are doing in terms of getting the best out of their staff to make working life better for everyone.

**Leading for Success** – a six months online e-learning programme geared towards achieving excellence in team management and development, ideal for team leaders old and new and aspiring team managers.

**System3V** – a 12-months online programme based on the V2V principle; that is, the idea that common workplace problems, such as stress, bullying, discrimination and disengagement create vicious circles but, if handled properly can be the basis of virtuous circles that that can produce win-win outcomes all round.

I am currently exploring the possibility of developing *Leading for Success* into an ILM Certificate at Level 5 and System3V at Level 7.

\*\*\* Turn the page to find further information about each of these \*\*\*

# Leading for Success

Unlock Your Leadership Potential with "Leading for Success: Developing Excellence in Teamwork"

Are you ready to take your leadership skills to the next level? Imagine being equipped with the knowledge, insights, and strategies to lead and develop high-performing teams. Introducing "Leading for Success: Developing Excellence in Teamwork" - a comprehensive online learning system designed to transform you into an exceptional leader.

Led by renowned human relations expert Dr Neil Thompson, this six-month programme of study offers a holistic approach to leadership development. With over 9 hours of exclusive video content, Dr Thompson shares his wealth of knowledge and expertise, providing you with practical tools and techniques that can be applied immediately in your professional role.

But "Leading for Success" is more than just videos. It's a complete learning experience carefully crafted to suit your busy schedule. Alongside the video modules, you'll have access to a wealth of supplementary materials, including interactive exercises, case studies, and downloadable resources. This multimedia approach ensures that you absorb the material effectively and retain it for long-term success.

Here's a glimpse of what you'll gain from "Leading for Success: Developing Excellence in Teamwork":

1. *Master the art of team building*: Discover the secrets to creating cohesive and high-performing teams that consistently exceed expectations.
2. *Effective communication strategies*: Learn how to communicate with impact, motivate your team, and resolve conflicts with ease.
3. *Leadership in challenging times*: Develop resilience and adaptability to navigate through uncertainty and lead your team to success.
4. *Performance management and feedback*: Gain valuable insights on setting goals, providing constructive feedback, and nurturing a culture of continuous improvement.
5. *Building a culture of trust*: Discover how to create an environment where trust thrives, fostering collaboration and innovation within your team.

But that's not all. As a participant in "Leading for Success," you'll also gain exclusive access to our private online community. Connect with like-minded leaders, share experiences, and engage in meaningful discussions. This collaborative space provides invaluable networking opportunities and ongoing support throughout your leadership journey.

Investing in your own development is the key to unlocking your true leadership potential. That's why we're offering you the opportunity to enrol in "Leading for Success: Developing

Excellence in Teamwork". This gives you unlimited access to all course materials for the full six months of the programme.

We're confident that "Leading for Success" will revolutionize your leadership style and empower you to achieve extraordinary results. So, join the ranks of successful leaders by transforming your career with "Leading for Success: Developing Excellence in Teamwork." Don't miss out on this opportunity to become the exceptional leader you were meant to be.

If you have any questions or need further information, don't hesitate to contact the Programme Director Dr Neil Thompson at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk). He will be happy to assist you every step of the way.

Take the first step towards unlocking your leadership potential and join "Leading for Success: Developing Excellence in Teamwork" today. Your team, your organization, and your future success depend on it.

## System 3V

We are delighted to tell you about an incredible opportunity that can transform the way you approach human relations in your organization. Allow me to present System3V, a comprehensive 12-month online learning system designed to equip managers, leaders, and HR professionals like yourself with the skills and knowledge necessary to create value by converting vicious circles into virtuous ones.

What sets System3V apart is its unique combination of expertly prepared video materials, practical tools, and a wealth of supplementary learning resources. With over 10 hours of video content, delivered by the esteemed human relations expert Dr Neil Thompson, you can rest assured that you will be learning from the best in the field. Dr Thompson's expertise and insights will guide you through a structured 25-part pathway, ensuring you gain a deep understanding of the principles and strategies behind transforming vicious circles into virtuous ones.

But System3V doesn't stop at theory alone. We understand the importance of applying what you learn to real-life scenarios. That's why our programme includes practical tools that will help you bridge the gap between theory and practice. These tools have been specifically designed to enable you to implement the concepts learned in the videos into your day-to-day work, empowering you to make a tangible impact within your organization.

To further enhance your learning experience, System3V also provides online mentoring from an experienced management development professional. This personalized guidance will allow you to receive tailored feedback and support as you navigate the challenges and opportunities that arise during your journey towards creating virtuous circles within your organization.

Now, you might be wondering, why the title "System3V"? It represents the core philosophy of the programme: the transformation of vicious circles into virtuous ones. By understanding and implementing this systematic approach, you will be able to create a

positive ripple effect throughout your organization, leading to increased productivity, improved employee morale, and ultimately, greater success.

We invite you to seize this opportunity and join the ranks of forward-thinking managers, leaders, and HR professionals by experiencing the transformative power of System3V. Don't let vicious circles hold you back any longer. It's time to break free and unlock the potential within your organization.

To learn more about System3V and how it can benefit you and your organization, please visit our website at [www.NeilThompson.info/system3v](http://www.NeilThompson.info/system3v). There, you will find detailed information and the option to enrol in this life-changing programme.

Thank you for considering System3V. I look forward to welcoming you on this exciting journey of growth and transformation.

## The Avenue Company Health Review

Discover the Key to Unlocking Your Organization's Full Potential!

Are you ready to take your organization's performance to new heights? Introducing the Avenue Company Health Review, the groundbreaking management tool designed specifically for senior leaders like you who are committed to enhancing their people management practices.

As a seasoned professional, you understand that effective people management is the cornerstone of a successful organization. However, with so many areas to consider, it can be daunting to evaluate and improve upon every aspect of your people management practices. That's where the Avenue Company Health Review comes in.

Developed by renowned human relations expert Dr Neil Thompson, the Avenue Company Health Review offers a comprehensive and systematic approach to assessing the effectiveness of your people management practices across 30 key areas. From induction programmes to diversity initiatives, this tool provides you with the insights and data you need to make informed decisions and drive positive change within your organization.

What sets the Avenue Company Health Review apart is its flexibility. Whether you prefer to use it directly with your senior leadership team or as the foundation for a staff survey, this tool can be tailored to meet your unique needs and organizational structure. By involving your team in the assessment process, you not only gain valuable perspectives but also foster a culture of engagement and continuous improvement.

Here's how the Avenue Company Health Review can transform your organization:

1. *Gain clarity:* Identify the strengths and areas for improvement in your people management practices. No more guesswork or relying on outdated information. The Avenue Company Health Review provides you with a clear snapshot of your organization's current state.
2. *Drive innovation:* Armed with robust insights, you can make informed decisions to

implement innovative strategies that will enhance employee engagement, productivity and overall performance.

3. *Foster collaboration*: The Avenue Company Health Review encourages collaboration and open communication within your senior leadership team and across departments. By involving stakeholders at every level, you create a shared understanding and commitment to driving positive change.

4. *Stay ahead of the curve*: With the rapidly evolving business landscape, it's crucial to stay ahead of the competition. The Avenue Company Health Review helps you identify emerging trends and best practices, ensuring you remain at the forefront of effective people management.

Now is the time to take action and unlock your organization's full potential. Embrace the power of the Avenue Company Health Review and become a leader who not only manages people, but also inspires them to achieve greatness.

To learn more about the Avenue Company Health Review and how it can revolutionize your organization, contact Neil directly at [neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk](mailto:neil@avenueconsulting.co.uk). He will be happy to support you every step of the way.

Don't settle for mediocrity. Elevate your people management practices with the Avenue Company Health Review and witness the transformation in your organization.



**[www.NeilThompson.info](http://www.NeilThompson.info)**