

DEMYSTIFYING LEADERSHIP SERIES

10 *Foundational Elements of* INTENTIONAL TRANSFORMATION



HOW TO BECOME YOUR BEST SELF

MACK STORY

10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation: How to Become Your Best Self

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Mack Story

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DEDICATION

To those with the courage to press the reset button and
move beyond their current circumstances in order
to transform themselves into the person
they were destined to be.

CONTENTS

	Introduction	1
1	Thought is the foundation of choice	5
2	Thoughts are based on values	8
3	The thought that changed my life	11
4	Choice is the foundation of vision	15
5	Choices create the future	18
6	One of many bad choices	21
7	Vision is the foundation of hope	25
8	Vision provides direction	28
9	Vision allows focus	31
10	Hope is the foundation of sacrifice	35
11	Hope is not a strategy	38
12	For me, hope was the key	41
13	Sacrifice is the foundation of discipline	45
14	Sacrifice demonstrates commitment	48
15	It was time to sacrifice most of my relationships	51
16	Discipline is the foundation of growth	55
17	Discipline leverages sacrifice	58

18	Developing the discipline to invest in myself	61
19	Growth is the foundation of change	65
20	Growth creates options	68
21	The impact of intentional growth	71
22	Change is the foundation of success	75
23	Change releases potential	78
24	A change I didn't see coming	81
25	Success is the foundation of significance	85
26	Success creates momentum	88
27	Success led me to more success	91
28	Significance is the foundation of legacy	95
29	Significance is not about you, but it starts with you	98
30	Choosing a life of significance	101

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I would like to recognize those who have a desire to help others become the best version of themselves. You are making a difference in the lives of others who will make a difference in the lives of others. I wish there were more of you.

I will always be grateful to my wife, Ria, for the positive influence she has been in my life. She has inspired much of my transformation while experiencing her own.

INTRODUCTION

“What distinguishes winners from losers is that winners concentrate at all times on what they can do, not what they can’t do.” ~ Bob Butera

People who have known me since I was a teenager often want to know *how* I transformed myself. In the past, I drank alcohol, partied, had a short-temper, was very reactive, narcissistic, and blamed others for my circumstances. Today, I help develop leaders and their teams. I speak to thousands from the stage each year with a heavy focus on personal growth and leadership.

How did I transform myself? The short answer: I simply decided I wanted to be a better person. Then, I started making better choices and became a better person.

The long answer to the question of *how* I transformed myself is found on the remaining pages of this book.

The first thing I often tell people I haven’t seen for many years is, *“The person you knew in the past doesn’t live here anymore. He moved out years ago.”* Actually, he didn’t move out. I kicked him out because he was holding me back.

As you begin your journey through this material, you must understand this book is based on what I call the *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*. Each “layer” of the foundation is supported by those layers that come before it. The book is divided into 10 sections, one for each of the foundational layers of transformation.

Each section will have three chapters. The first two chapters of each section are intended to introduce a specific foundational layer and teach you the related fundamental leadership principles you must apply as you move forward with your intentional transformation. The third chapter in each section is where I pull back the

curtain on my life a bit and share some of my personal stories of transformation. You will see where I failed, where I struggled, and where I eventually succeeded.

The success stories aren't meant to impress you. I share them to motivate and inspire you to move yourself to the next level and beyond. My story is simply that: my story. It is what it is. I *don't* think I'm special. I *don't* think I'm better than *anyone* else. I *do* think I'm *different* than *everyone* else, and *so are you*. We are all unique individuals shaped by all of our unique life experiences. We choose many of our experiences. But, many of our experiences choose us. Life happens.

My wife, Ria, has experienced an amazing transformation of her own after experiencing seven years of extreme sexual abuse at the hands of her father and others from age 12-19. Ria says, "*Transparency is the purest form of truth.*" I agree. I also believe *transparency is telling the truth when you don't have to simply because you want to*. When sharing my supporting stories, my intent is to be transparent.

Note: Ria shared her story in three of her books, Ria's Story from Ashes to Beauty, Beyond Bound and Broken: A Journey of Healing and Resilience, and Bridges Out of the Past: A Survivor's Lessons on Resilience. They detail her unimaginable experiences and how she moved beyond surviving and began thriving. More information on her books can be found in the back of this one.

There are many others, like Ria, who have overcome much more than I have and experienced a much more significant transformation than I have. My story is not their story. I can't tell their story. I can only tell mine. All of us who have experienced true transformation have one thing in common. We had to apply the *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation* in order to make it happen. It doesn't mean we read a book about it and did

it. It most likely means we learned the hard way through trial and error. There are no shortcuts.

However, you can intentionally accelerate your transformation with knowledge, understanding, and focused application of the right principles at the right time. This material will build upon itself as you make your way through it. It will be much more meaningful if read at least twice because the layers above add meaning to the layers below. Reflection and re-reading will greatly enhance your ability to understand and intentionally apply these principles of transformation.

Make this book a tool and a resource. Mark it up. Fold the pages. Highlight and underline key points. DON'T GIVE IT AWAY! If you think someone else will get value from it, that's great. Invest in them and purchase a copy for them as a gift, so they can also mark it up and use it as a resource of their own.

My intent is to ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EMPOWER you as you become more focused and intentional about moving from where you are to where you want to be as you create the life you want. You can and will find yourself struggling in some areas while experiencing great success in other areas. That's normal.

Your ability to effectively move from where you are to where you want to be in any area of your life will be determined by your ability to transform your thinking relative to that area of your life. When it comes to true transformation, if you don't go within, you will go without. *You* are the key to your success.

“If you truly want to initiate a change that will redirect your life and unleash your potential, focus on transforming yourself.” ~ Mack Story

SECTION 1

THOUGHT IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHOICE

1

THOUGHT IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHOICE

WHAT YOU THINK
DETERMINES WHAT YOU DO

“The outer world of circumstance shapes itself to the inner world of thought.” ~ James Allen

If you already knew what you needed to know, you would already be where you want to go. Until you change what you think, you will not change what you do.

Your conscious thoughts are real but only in *your* mind. Your thoughts will lead to other private thoughts and subconscious feelings or emotions. Once you act on your thoughts and feelings, they are translated to the world as choices when they begin to shape your life.

You first make your choices. Then, your choices make you.

The Choice Formula:

Thought + Emotion + Action = Choice

Thought – something we are consciously aware of in our mind

Emotion – something we subconsciously feel based on our thoughts

Action – something we do based on our thoughts and emotions

Your choices flow from your thoughts. The quality of the choices depends on the quality of the thoughts. There is no conscious choice without conscious thought.

Think of what your home looks like or think of your favorite car. Not only can you choose your thoughts, but as you just experienced in this simple exercise, it is very easy for others to influence your thoughts. This is where our real problems start. Far too often, we accept bad influence instead of rejecting it and using our own reasoning to positively influence our thoughts.

James Allen in his book, *As a Man Thinketh*, wrote, “*Our mind may be likened to a garden, which may be intelligently cultivated or allowed to run wild; but whether cultivated or neglected, it must, and will, bring forth. If no useful seeds are put into it, then an abundance of useless weed-seeds will fall therein, and will continue to produce their kind.*”

Our mind can be prepared to produce great thoughts and choices just as a freshly plowed field is made ready to produce a great crop. Our mind can also be left undeveloped or underdeveloped to produce whatever thoughts it may without any intentional development. But make no mistake, our mind will produce thoughts. Thoughts and choices will flow from our mind whether good or bad, beneficial or harmful. *Sought or not, there will be thought.* Thoughts will sprout from our mind as plants sprout from the earth. Abundantly.

When you garden, you are responsible for planting seeds capable of producing a great crop. Likewise, you are responsible for developing your mind to produce great thoughts and choices beneficial to you and others. Thoughts that will lead you to where you want to be.

You can take another step and work the garden continuously by watering, weeding, and fertilizing to ensure and enhance the quality of the crop. You can go

farther in the development of your mind by associating with people who want to help you by choosing to remove bad habits and toxic people from your life, by intentionally studying positive people, by reading positive books, and by making positive choices.

One very powerful life and death choice is self-talk, *thoughts* you have about yourself and others. Self-talk is far more destructive than what others say to you or about you. Why? Because you are *always* listening to yourself.

People take their lives every day because of their own self-talk, not what others are saying. Sometimes they are not talking to others at all. Their own thoughts have brought them to the point of feeling worthless, helpless, and most often, hopeless. They have convinced themselves there is no reason to continue living.

These people no longer have hope and have given up. When you don't have hope, you must get it from others. You must connect with positive people, be with them, and talk with them. You must borrow their belief in you. They can and will lift you up. If the people you are around don't lift you up, you are around the wrong people. The right people will *always* give you hope and lift you up.

There are endless examples of self-talk (thought) being detrimental to our well-being. You can choose your thoughts and change your thoughts. When you do, you begin to change your habits, your circumstances, and ultimately, your life.

“We imagine that thought can be kept secret, but it cannot; it rapidly crystallizes into habit, and habit solidifies into circumstance.” ~ James Allen

2

THOUGHTS ARE BASED ON VALUES

HIGH IMPACT VALUES LEAD TO HIGH IMPACT THOUGHTS

*“I cannot teach anybody anything,
I can only make them think.” ~ Socrates*

Ultimately, you choose your results when you choose your values. *Your values are the foundation for your results.*

Your values influence your thoughts, which influence your feelings, which influence your actions, which *determine* your results. Dramatically different values will always lead to dramatically different results.

V. Gilbert Beers had this to say about values, *“A person of integrity is one who has established a system of values against which all of life is judged.”*

Everyone has values. They can be good or bad. You categorize them as good or bad by asking, *“Are my values in alignment with natural laws and principles?”* Natural laws and principles are timeless. Every human understands them regardless of age, race, religion, gender, etc. Fairness is a great example. No one ever taught you the thousands of ways you can be treated unfairly. However, you know when it happens because you *feel* it.

You came fully loaded with the innate ability to understand right and wrong. And, you also came fully loaded with free will, the ability to choose to adhere to natural laws and principles or to go completely against

them. You have an internal “*map*” with street lights along the path you should take, but you also have the awareness and ability to see and travel the dimly lit and dark paths you should avoid.

Do you *value* accepting responsibility or transferring responsibility? When you look through the window and blame others, you are transferring responsibility. Statements like “*You make me so mad!*” are made by those who choose to blame and transfer responsibility. When you look in the mirror to find the solution to your problems, you are accepting responsibility. Statements like “*How was this my fault?*” and “*What could I have done differently?*” are made by those who choose to reflect on and accept responsibility for the situation.

Your values are the foundation upon which you base your thoughts. My book, *10 Values of High Impact Leaders*, details 10 key values everyone should work to master because those values will have a tremendous impact on one’s ability to positively influence others. The more influence you have, the more options you will have. Since influence is very dynamic and complex, the more values you have been able to internalize and utilize synergistically together, the more effective you will be and the more influence you will have. So, where do you start?

There is a story of a tourist who paused for a rest in a small town in the mountains. He went over to an old man sitting on a bench in front of the only store in town and inquired, “*Friend, can you tell me something this town is noted for?*”

“*Well,*” replied the old man, “*I don’t rightly know except it’s the starting point to the world. You can start here and go anywhere you want.*”

That’s a great little story. We are all at “*the starting point to the world.*” We can start where we are and go anywhere.

We can expand our influence 360° in all directions by simply starting in the center and expanding ourselves.

Consider the illustration below. Imagine you are standing in the center. You can make a high impact. However, it will not happen by accident. You *must* become *intentional*. You must *live with purpose* while *focusing on your performance* as you *unleash your potential*.



Why we do what we do is about our *purpose*. **How** we do what we do is about our *performance*. **What** we do will unleash our *potential*. Where these three components overlap, you will achieve a **HIGH IMPACT**.

“The values that form the basis for your True North are derived from your beliefs and convictions.

In defining your values, you must decide what is most important in your life.

Is it maintaining your integrity, making a difference, helping other people, or devoting yourself to family?

There is no one right set of values. Only you can decide the question of your values.” ~ Bill George

3

THE THOUGHT THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

IN ORDER TO TRANSFORM YOURSELF, YOU
MUST FIRST BE ABLE TO LEAD YOURSELF

*“Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by
those who dared believe that something inside
themselves was superior to circumstance.”*

~ Bruce Barton

I'll never forget the first time I heard Stephen R. Covey say 14 words that would change the rest of my life. He said, *“Between stimulus and response, we have the ability to pause and choose our response.”* As simple as these words sound today, they were profound at that moment. I had never intentionally thought about what he had just taught me.

The year was 2008. I had recently resigned from 20 years in the corporate world to start my own process improvement (Lean Manufacturing) consulting business. At the time, I was listening to a one hour audio featuring the highlights of Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. I didn't find out there was a book by the same title until many months later. I would also later learn the entire audio book was approximately 13 hours.

One hour only scratched the surface. However, that was exactly what I needed to get me going, not too much at the start, just a taste of what could be. This book is

meant to scratch the surface in the same way. It's meant to stir your thoughts, motivate you to action, and inspire you along the path of transformation.

Many of us need to experience a character-based transformation. Unfortunately, most of us don't know it. I didn't know it until 2008. I thought I was a great person.

We naturally tend to spend more time looking out the window judging others instead of looking in the mirror judging ourselves. Transformation requires a lot of time intentionally looking in the mirror as we reflect on who we really are. For most of us, our intentional growth focuses on developing our competency (what we know) and very little, if any, intentional effort is put into developing our character (who we are).

Well-developed character *always* serves as a multiplier of our competency.

During our lifetime, most of us only experience accidental character growth. There aren't near as many among us who will experience a real, intentional character transformation. Transformation at the core, at the character level, does not happen by accident. It happens by choice. A choice to change your values followed by a lifetime of choices to align your behavior with timeless, tested, proven, natural laws and values.

When I first heard Covey speak about stimulus and response, I actually paused the audio and thought about what he was saying. Fortunately for me, I was paying attention, and those powerful words didn't go unnoticed. It was actually as if he had reached out of my car stereo and literally shook me to get my attention while saying, *"Listen to me, son. I'm talking to you!"*

At the time, I needed to hear those words for many reasons, some of which I wouldn't understand until much later into my transformational journey. The key for me at

that moment was how they effortlessly *stuck* in my mind. They resonated with me at the core. They made a lot of sense. I still think about them, say them to myself, and use the principle found in them daily. That day in 2008, I actually pressed rewind on my audio player and listened, paused, and reflected on his words many times before I let the audio continue.

Until I was exposed to the formal principles of character-based leadership I started learning from Covey, I didn't think very intentionally about my character at all. I had been experiencing non-stop growth throughout my entire life. In my mind, I had been very successful.

Success is a relative term. To most, success means a good job, a good and steady income, a nice home, and a nice life. To a few, those who have highly developed character, success means mastery of self. Only when we have mastered self are we truly successful. Then, everything else in life becomes a bonus. We don't simply live our life. We design, build, and create our life on a foundation of solid well-developed character.

I didn't experience transformation in my life until I was 42. My character growth had always been accidental. If you would have spoken to me before then, I would have told you I was successful. I would have felt proud of what I had accomplished. However, after hearing those words, my *thoughts* began to change. My *thoughts* began to move me away from the window and closer to the mirror.

I believed every word Covey had said. I also believed *I could change myself*. For the first time, I began to imagine what would change if I changed my thoughts.

*“All that a man achieves or fails to achieve
is the direct result of his thoughts.” ~ James Allen*

SECTION 2

CHOICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF VISION

4

CHOICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF VISION

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE YOU'RE GOING,
YOU'LL END UP SOMEWHERE ELSE

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, but a matter of choice. It is not a thing to be waited for but is a thing to be achieved.” ~ William Jennings Bryan

There is no conscious action without conscious thought. You can turn your potential into your reality. The quality of your *choices* depends on the quality of your thoughts. When is the last time you spent 10 minutes per day for 90 consecutive days thinking about where you want to be and how you're going to get there? Doing so is simply a *choice* you can make.

Most people haven't spent one day thinking intentionally for 10 minutes about where they want to be and how they are going to get there. Far too many people get trapped in a never ending cycle of doing the same thing day in and day out while hoping, wishing, and praying for different results. This makes absolutely no sense when you *actually* think about it. But, most people *don't* think about it.

You are responsible for *choosing* to move yourself forward. Until you *choose* to realize this simple fact, you will be at the mercy of society. And, society doesn't have a lot planned for you. Once you make the *choice* to

become responsible you have positioned yourself to make some amazing things happen.

As Dee Ann Turner stated so simply, *“Wise choices in the beginning provide a better chance of success in the end.”* When you make the *choice* to respond to everything based on internalized values that are timeless, tested, and have been proven across generations, you are prepared to launch yourself to the next level and beyond.

When it comes to creating a compelling vision for yourself, you must intentionally tap into your passion and purpose to begin to think of what could be. Too many people chase money instead of things that make them happy. As a result, they get neither. You will be the happiest when you’re earning a living doing something you are passionate about and that interests you. Odds are, you will also earn more money over a lifetime doing it. And if you don’t, it won’t matter because you’ll be happy simply because you’re doing what you love.

Developing a vision, big or small, is a *choice*. We must think on purpose about our purpose. Most people are far removed from their purpose. When asked what their purpose is, most don’t have an answer. However, the most common answer is, *“I don’t know.”* Or, *“I’ve never really thought about it.”*

If you are serious about creating the life you want instead of continuing to live the life you have accepted, it’s time to *choose* to think about your purpose. Once you know who you are and who you want to become and once you know where you are and where you want to be, you can begin your transformation. Transformation is a choice that only responsible people can and will make.

Transformation turns vision into reality. You must intentionally *choose* to dream of what is possible. You must *choose* to let your imagination run wild. Who do you want

to become? What do you want to do? Where do you want to go? When do you want to go? Don't ask, "*Can I do it?*" Ask, "*Is it possible?*" Think, "*How can I make it happen?*" and "*When can I make it happen?*" Then, follow up with the most important question of all, "*What's stopping me from making it happen?*"

When you ask these questions, don't look out the window for excuses. An effective vision taps into your strengths not your weaknesses. Look into the mirror, *choose* to be responsible, and find a way to make it happen. You are exactly where you're supposed to be based on every choice you've made leading up to this moment.

Will things outside of your control happen to you? Absolutely...until the day you die. Those things are important and will influence you along your journey. However, there's something much more important than what happens to you.

The most important thing is your response to what happens to you. You don't always get to choose what happens to you. But, you will *always* get to *choose your response* to what happens to you. Your response to what happens will determine much, but not all, of what happens to you in the future.

Regardless of what has happened to you or what will happen to you in the future, the *choices* you make daily will *always* shape your future. When you *choose* to intentionally create a vision for your future, you're aligned to make the *choices* that will create that future. Things will happen outside of your control. When they do, you simply regroup, reevaluate the situation, look forward, make the necessary adjustments, and continue creating your future.

"A man's environment is a merciless mirror of him as a human being." ~ Earl Nightingale

5

CHOICES CREATE THE FUTURE

WHAT WE CHOOSE TO DO
TODAY WILL DETERMINE WHAT
WE GET TO DO TOMORROW

“Show me someone who is humble enough to accept and take responsibility for his or her circumstances and courageous enough to take whatever initiative is necessary to creatively work his or her way through or around these challenges, and I’ll show you the supreme power of choice.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

When you *choose* to accept responsibility for your future, you will be able to define your future.

Apply what is on these pages, and you will be amazed at the future you will create. A future you can’t begin to imagine now. There are opportunities for you right now that you can’t see. You must start preparing for those opportunities without knowing what they are. You must *trust they are there* and begin moving toward them.

It’s much like taking a trip in a car at night. You can’t see very much in the dark. If you want to see ahead in the dark, you must first turn on the lights. Then, if you want to see farther ahead, you must start moving slowly in the direction you think you want to go. As you move, you will begin to see what was previously unseen.

Your growth toward a better and preferred future is exactly the same. You’re holding in your hand a way forward, if you’ll turn the light on (take responsibility) and

start moving forward toward your vision (growth). As Henry Cloud says, *"If you have already been trying hard, maybe trying harder is not the way. Try different."*

If you don't choose to create your future, the cumulative choices of society will determine your future. You can choose to navigate your way to your destination, or you can refuse to navigate your way to your destination. If you refuse to navigate your way forward, it's like being adrift in the ocean. There's no telling where you'll end up or when you'll get there. In other words, you will be helpless and hopeless.

Unfortunately, that's exactly how many people live their lives. They are where they are because that's where they ended up. By not choosing to be someplace else, they chose to be there. By not choosing to navigate their way forward, they simply drifted into a career or job, and maybe, into a bad relationship. Instead of intentionally creating their future, they accidentally created their future.

Too often, people who are searching in life find what they will settle for and stop looking for what they were searching for. As John G. Miller remarked, *"There's nothing you have to do. We all have the power to make a decision that will direct us to a new destination. Each of us can make a choice that will change our life."*

The future is in you now. Think about that for a moment. Your future really is in you now. That's not a play on words. It's the truth. Your future is defined and refined by the *choices* you make every day. Make a bad *choice*, and you get a less desirable future. Make a good *choice*, and you get a more desirable future. You can easily see you are very much in control of creating your future. You don't have to settle. It's your choice.

You can't predict your future, but *you can create your future*. This is powerful and profound if you have never

taken the time to slow down and truly think it out. The thousands of *choices* we make every day of our life, not only shape our life, but they also create our future.

Remember, with only a few exceptions, you're exactly where you're supposed to be based on all of the *choices* you have made leading up to this moment. If you were supposed to be someplace else, you would already be there. You must own the results your *choices* have produced. James Allen said it best, *"We are anxious to improve our circumstances but unwilling to improve ourselves. We therefore remain bound."*

Until you own that you're responsible, you're being irresponsible. That's why those blaming others for their circumstances can't improve their circumstances.

The thought process of blaming someone else for your circumstances has a zero chance of making anything in your life better. Many people wake up and live out this model from start to finish every day.

Why? Because when we blame others, we don't have to do anything. We truly believe someone else is responsible, and think they should do everything. But, when we take the blame, we are 100% responsible. Now, *we* must do everything.

Most people take the easy way out and blame others for their circumstances. It takes a higher level of character development to accept responsibility for your circumstances and make changes when necessary. Don't fear change. Embrace change. Then, learn to leverage change for greater benefit.

Don't be fearful. Be hopeful. It's a choice.

"May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears."
~ Nelson Mandela

6

ONE OF MANY BAD CHOICES

OUR CHOICES ARE THE INK WE USE TO
WRITE OUR STORY. CHOOSE WISELY.

*“Choices always come with consequences.
Choosing wisely brings the consequences we want in
life. Choosing poorly will bring the consequences
we don’t want in life.” ~ Ria Story*

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CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Who you are tomorrow is determined
by the choices you make today.” ~ Ria Story*

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Check out the [Blue-Collar Leadership](#) website for Speaking
and Training/Development Info

Watch what our clients have to say on the [Blue-Collar
Leadership YouTube channel](#)

Listen/subscribe to the [Blue-Collar Leadership® Podcast](#).

SECTION 3

VISION IS THE FOUNDATION OF HOPE

7

VISION IS THE FOUNDATION OF HOPE

**WHAT WE CHOOSE TO IMAGINE WILL MAKE
US FEEL FEARFUL OR HOPEFUL**

*“There are three requirements for humans to act:
1) dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs, 2) a
vision of a better state, and 3) belief that we can reach
that better state. When just one of the requirements is
missing, people will not act.” ~ Ludwig von Mises*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Cherish your vision and your dreams as they are
the children of your soul, the blueprints of your
ultimate achievements.” ~ Napoleon Hill*

8

VISION PROVIDES DIRECTION

**KNOWING WHERE WE'RE GOING
ALLOWS US TO CHART THE COURSE**

“Clarity of vision will compensate for uncertainty in planning. If you are unclear about the destination of the journey, even the most sophisticated, well-thought-through strategy is useless. Pencil in your plans. Etch the vision in stone.” ~ Andy Stanley

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Vision is not enough. It must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps; we must step up the stairs.” ~ Vaclav Havel

9

VISION ALLOWS FOCUS

**CHANGE IS OFTEN TEMPORARY, BUT
TRANSFORMATION IS USUALLY PERMANENT**

*“Nothing is impossible, if only your
will power is strong enough.” ~ Bruce Barton*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“What we fear doing most is usually
what we most need to do.” ~ Tim Ferriss*

SECTION 4

HOPE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SACRIFICE

10

HOPE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SACRIFICE

**WHEN THERE IS HOPE FOR THE FUTURE,
THERE IS MEANING IN THE SACRIFICE**

*“There are no hopeless situations; there are only men
and women who have grown hopeless about them.”
~ Marshal Ferdinand Foch*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Extraordinary people survive under the most terrible
circumstances and then become more extraordinary
because of it.” ~ Robertson Davies*

11

HOPE IS NOT A STRATEGY

HOPE HAS THE POWER TO LAUNCH YOU,
BUT HOPE CANNOT DELIVER YOU

“It really is amazing what happens when you recognize the importance of the opportunities ahead of you, accept responsibility for your future, and take positive action.” ~ Michael F. Sciortino, Sr.

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“When you decide to pursue greatness, you are taking responsibility for your life. This means that you are choosing to accept the consequences of your actions, and to become the agent of your mental, physical, spiritual, and material success. You may not always be able to control what life puts in your path, but I believe you can always control who you are.”
~ Les Brown

12

FOR ME, HOPE WAS THE KEY

**HOPE ALLOWED ME TO SEE
THROUGH THE DARKNESS**

“One of the most common causes of failure is the habit of quitting when one is overtaken by temporary defeat.” ~ Napoleon Hill

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The ability to be successful is the ability to go from failure to failure without giving up.”
~ Winston Churchill*

SECTION 5

SACRIFICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF DISCIPLINE

13

SACRIFICE IS THE FOUNDATION OF DISCIPLINE

TOO OFTEN, YOU CAN'T REACH WHAT
YOU NEED MOST BECAUSE YOU WON'T
LET GO OF WHAT YOU WANT MOST

*“Everything I’ve ever let go of has claw marks on it.”
~ David Foster Wallace*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Whenever you see a successful person, you only see
the public glories, never the private sacrifices
to reach them.” ~ Vaibhav Shah*

14

SACRIFICE DEMONSTRATES COMMITMENT

**WHEN YOU GIVE UP SOMETHING OF LESSER
VALUE, YOU ARE POSITIONED TO GAIN
SOMETHING OF GREATER VALUE**

*“The price of anything is the amount of life you
exchange for it.” ~ Henry David Thoreau*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Why do you enter into any activity with anything but
commitment to achieve your objective of that activity -
not a desire to achieve your objective, but
a commitment?” ~ Samuel L. Parker*

15

IT WAS TIME TO SACRIFICE MOST OF MY RELATIONSHIPS

**OFTEN, THOSE CLOSEST TO US ARE
HOLDING US BACK THE MOST**

“How many of us walk around being weighed down by the baggage of our journey? You can’t possibly embrace that new relationship, that new companion, that new career, that new friendship, or that new life you want while you’re still holding on to the baggage of the last one. Let go...and allow yourself to embrace what is waiting for you right at your feet.”

~Steve Maraboli

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“If you want a better life personally and/or professionally, you have to ask yourself this question, ‘Who am I surrounding myself with, day to day?’ Those who support and create energy for change? Or those who are stuck in the comfort of what is?”

~ Henry Cloud

SECTION 6

DISCIPLINE IS THE FOUNDATION OF GROWTH

16

DISCIPLINE IS THE FOUNDATION OF GROWTH

**YOU MUST TO DO THE RIGHT THING AT THE
RIGHT TIME FOR THE RIGHT REASON**

“When it comes to self-discipline, people choose one of two things: Either they choose the pain of discipline, which comes from sacrifice and growth, or they choose the pain of regret, which comes from taking the easy road and missing opportunities.”

~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The pain of discipline weighs ounces.
Regret weighs tons.” ~ Jim Rohn*

17

DISCIPLINE LEVERAGES SACRIFICE

THE GREATER THE DISCIPLINE,
THE GREATER THE REWARD

“Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goals; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.”

~ Thomas Jefferson

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“We are not victims of our situation.
We are the architects of it.” ~ Simon Sinek*

18

DEVELOPING THE DISCIPLINE TO INVEST IN MYSELF

**IT WAS TIME TO START LIVING MY LIFE BY
DESIGN INSTEAD OF BY DEFAULT**

“There are 24 hours in a day. What will you do with yours? If you write, you will become an author. If you exercise, you will become an athlete. If you study, you will become an expert. Your life is a result of how you invest your time.” ~ Denard Ash

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“If you have too little confidence, you will think you can’t learn. If you have too much, you will think you don’t have to learn.” ~ Eric Hoffer

SECTION 7

GROWTH IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHANGE

19

GROWTH IS THE FOUNDATION OF CHANGE

IF YOU'RE NOT GROWING, YOU'RE SLOWING

“When I go through change it is because I am passive; I accept it as inevitable. So, I sigh and say, I hope this comes out all right. When I grow through change, I become active. I take control of my attitude, my emotions. Years ago, I determined that while others may lead small lives, I would not; while others may become victims, I would not; and while others will leave their future in other’s hands, I will not. And while others go through life, I will grow through it. That is my choice, and I will surrender it to no one.”
~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Where there is no belief or hope for growth to be real, it is no longer attempted. People, or organizations, enter into a state of sameness, and as we have seen, that is really when things are no longer alive. Death is taking over not growth.” ~ Henry Cloud

20

GROWTH CREATES OPTIONS

WHEN YOU GROW YOURSELF,
YOU ATTRACT NEW OPPORTUNITIES

*“The moment you take responsibility for everything
in your life is the moment you can change
anything in your life.” ~ Hal Elrod*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“On the path to your God-inspired future, attractive
alternatives will be offered. You will be presented with
more money, a better position, or a more sedate
lifestyle in a more comfortable geographic location.
You are going to face other kinds of more dramatic
temptations as well. We all do. But, we have to
constantly remember our future.” ~ Terry A. Smith*

21

THE IMPACT OF INTENTIONAL GROWTH

WHEN I BEGAN TO LIVE ON PURPOSE,
I DISCOVERED MY PURPOSE

*“You must have a long-range vision to keep you from
being frustrated by short-range failures.”*

~ Charles Noble

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Into the hands of every individual is given a
marvelous power for good or evil - the silent,
unconscious, unseen influence of his life. This is
simply the constant radiation of what man really is,
not what he pretends to be.” ~ William George Jordan*

SECTION 8

CHANGE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS

22

CHANGE IS THE FOUNDATION OF SUCCESS

**IF YOU ALREADY KNEW WHAT YOU NEED
TO KNOW, YOU WOULD ALREADY BE
WHERE YOU WANT TO GO**

*“Those who cannot change their minds
cannot change anything.” ~ George Bernard Shaw*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“The first step toward success is taken when you
refuse to be a captive of the environment you
first find yourself in.” ~ Mark Caine*

23

CHANGE RELEASES POTENTIAL

**WITHOUT CHANGE, YOUR POTENTIAL CAN
NEVER BECOME YOUR REALITY**

“When we are faced with change, we either step forward into growth, or we step backward into safety.” ~ Abraham Maslow

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Small, Smart Choices + Consistency + Time
= RADICAL DIFFERENCE” ~ Darren Hardy*

24

A CHANGE I DIDN'T SEE COMING

WHEN WE EXPERIENCE THE RIGHT CHANGE,
THE RIGHT THINGS CHANGE

*“Without change, something sleeps inside us, and
seldom awakens. The sleeper must awaken.”*

~ Frank Herbert

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Things do not change; we change.”

~ Henry David Thoreau

SECTION 9

SUCCESS IS THE FOUNDATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

25

SUCCESS IS THE FOUNDATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

**TO BE SUCCESSFUL, YOU MUST FOCUS
ON BECOMING MORE VALUABLE,
NOT MORE SUCCESSFUL**

“Your ability to achieve your own happiness is the true measure of your success in life. Nothing is more important. Nothing can replace it. If you accomplish everything of a material nature, but you are not happy, you have actually ‘failed’ at fulfilling your potential as a human being.” ~ Brian Tracy

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“When a challenge in life is met by a response that is equal to it, you have success. But when the challenge moves to a higher level, the old, once successful response no longer works - it fails; thus, nothing fails like success.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

26

SUCCESS CREATES MOMENTUM

**WHEN YOU CREATE MOMENTUM, DON'T
REST UPON IT. BUILD UPON IT.**

“Where success is concerned, people are not measured in inches, or pounds, or college degrees, or family background; they are measured by the size of their thinking. How big we think determines the size of our accomplishments.” ~ David Schwartz

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others.” ~ Jack Welch

27

SUCCESS LED ME TO MORE SUCCESS

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO
DETERMINES WHAT WE GET TO DO

“Where God guides, He provides.” ~ Dee Ann Turner

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“I’m learning more everyday that God doesn’t prefer
hearing what we are programmed to ask and pray
for, He wants to hear and talk about what
we were born for!” ~ Tonya Spence*

SECTION 10

SIGNIFICANCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF LEGACY

28

SIGNIFICANCE IS THE FOUNDATION OF LEGACY

**SUCCESS IS ABOUT GETTING RESULTS,
SIGNIFICANCE IS ABOUT HELPING
OTHERS GET RESULTS**

“We build and defend not for our generation alone. We defend the foundations laid by our fathers. We build a life for generations yet unborn. We defend and we build a way of life, not for America alone, but for all mankind.” ~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“I dare you, whoever you are, share with others the fruits of your daring. Catch a passion for helping others and a richer life will come back to you.”
~ William H. Danforth*

29

SIGNIFICANCE IS NOT ABOUT YOU, BUT IT STARTS WITH YOU

WHO YOU ARE ON THE INSIDE IS WHAT
OTHERS EXPERIENCE ON THE OUTSIDE

*“Talent is God-given. Be humble.
Fame is man-given. Be grateful.
Conceit is self-given. Be careful.”
~ John Wooden*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“When you do the common things in life in an
uncommon way, you will command the attention
of the world.” ~ George Washington Carver*

30

CHOOSING A LIFE OF SIGNIFICANCE

IT'S NOT ABOUT ME,
BUT IT STARTED WITH ME

*“Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet.
Only through experience of trial and suffering can
the soul be strengthened, ambition inspired,
and success achieved.” ~ Helen Keller*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“I am not what happened to me,
I am what I choose to become.” ~ Carl Jung*

Want to order a copy for you and/or your entire team?

[Click here](#) to order *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation* now.

Mack has also written [*Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture: The 5 Component for Building High Performance Teams*](#), [*Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision: Unleash Your Team's Potential*](#), [*Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork: 30 Traits of High Impact Players*](#), and [*Blue-Collar Kaizen: Leading Lean and Lean Teams*](#). As of 2025, [Mack](#) and his wife, [Ria](#), have published [35 books on leadership development and personal growth](#).

[Watch an interview](#) with a frontline, blue-collar guy that has been using our books to facilitate high impact books studies with his team for years.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mack's story is an amazing journey of personal and professional growth. He married Ria in 2001. He has one son, Eric, born in 1991.

After graduating high school in 1987, Mack joined the United States Marine Corps Reserve as an 0311 infantryman. Soon after, he began his 20 plus year manufacturing career. Graduating with highest honors, he earned an Executive Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Faulkner University.

Mack began his career in manufacturing in 1988 on the front lines of a large production machine shop. He eventually grew himself into upper management and found his niche in lean manufacturing and along with it, developed his passion for leadership. In 2008, he launched his own Lean Manufacturing and Leadership Development firm.

From 2005-2012, Mack led leaders and their cross-functional teams through more than 11,000 hours of process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation. Ria joined Mack full-time in late 2013.

In 2013, they worked with John C. Maxwell as part of an international training event focused on the Cultural Transformation in Guatemala where over 20,000 leaders were trained. They also shared the stage with internationally recognized motivational speaker Les Brown in 2014.

Mack and Ria have published 30+ books on personal growth and leadership development. In 2018, they were invited to speak at Yale University's School of Management. They also had over 80,000 international followers at the end of 2019 on LinkedIn where they provide motivational, inspirational, and leadership content to people around the world.

Mack and Ria inspire people everywhere through their example of achievement, growth, and personal development.

Clients: ATD (Association for Talent Development), Auburn University, Chevron, Chick-fil-A, Kimberly Clark, Koch Industries, Southern Company, and the U.S. Military.

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Excerpt from

Defining Influence: Increasing Your Influence Increases Your Options

In *Defining Influence*, I outline the foundational leadership principles and lessons we must learn in order to develop our character in a way that allows us to increase our influence with others. I also share many of my personal stories revealing how I got it wrong many times in the past and how I grew from front-line factory worker to become a Motivational Leadership Speaker.

INTRODUCTION

When You Increase Your Influence, You Increase Your Options.

*“Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less.
Everything rises and falls on leadership.” ~ John C. Maxwell*

Everyone is born a leader. However, everyone is not born a high impact leader.

I haven’t always believed everyone is a leader. You may or may not at this point. That’s okay. There is a lot to learn about leadership.

At this very moment, you may already be thinking to yourself, *“I’m not a leader.”* My goal is to help you understand why everyone is a leader and to help you develop a deeper understanding of the principles of leadership and influence.

Developing a deep understanding of leadership has changed my life for the better. It has also changed the lives of my family members, friends, associates, and clients. My intention is to help you improve not only your

life, but also the lives of those around you.

Until I became a student of leadership in 2008 which eventually led me to become a John Maxwell Certified Leadership Coach, Trainer, and Speaker in 2012, I did not understand leadership or realize everyone can benefit from learning the related principles.

In the past, I thought leadership was a term associated with being the boss and having formal authority over others. Those people are definitely leaders. But, I had been missing something. All of the other seven billion people on the planet are leaders too.

I say everyone is born a leader because I agree with John Maxwell, *“Leadership is Influence. Nothing more. Nothing less.”* Everyone has influence. It’s a fact. Therefore, everyone is a leader.

No matter your age, gender, religion, race, nationality, location, or position, everyone has influence. Whether you want to be a leader or not, you are. After reading this book, I hope you do not question whether or not you are a leader. However, I do hope you question what type of leader you are and what you need to do to increase your influence.

Everyone does not have authority, but everyone does have influence. There are plenty of examples in the world of people without authority leading people through influence alone. Actually, every one of us is an example. We have already done it. We know it is true. This principle is self-evident which means it contains its own evidence and does not need to be demonstrated or explained; it is obvious to everyone: we all have influence with others.

As I mentioned, the question to ask yourself is not, *“Am I a leader?”* The question to ask yourself is, *“What type of leader am I?”* The answer: whatever kind you choose to

be. Choosing not to be a leader is not an option. As long as you live, you will have influence. You are a leader.

You started influencing your parents before you were actually born. You may have influence after your death. How? Thomas Edison still influences the world every time a light is turned on, you may do things in your life to influence others long after you're gone. Or, you may pass away with few people noticing. It depends on the choices you make.

Even when you're alone, you have influence.

The most important person you will ever influence is yourself. The degree to which you influence yourself determines the level of influence you ultimately have with others. Typically, when we are talking about leading ourselves, the word most commonly used to describe self-leadership is discipline which can be defined as giving yourself a command and following through with it. We must practice discipline daily to increase our influence with others.

"We must all suffer one of two things: the pain of discipline or the pain of regret or disappointment." ~ Jim Rohn

As I define leadership as influence, keep in mind the words leadership and influence can be interchanged anytime and anywhere. They are one and the same. Throughout this book, I'll help you remember by placing one of the words in parentheses next to the other occasionally as a reminder. They are synonyms. When you read one, think of the other.

Everything rises and falls on influence (leadership). When you share what you're learning, clearly define leadership as influence for others. They need to understand the context of what you are teaching and

understand they *are* leaders (people with influence) too. If you truly want to learn and apply leadership principles, you must start teaching this material to others within 24-48 hours of learning it yourself.

You will learn the foundational principles of leadership (influence) which will help you understand the importance of the following five questions. You will be able to take effective action by growing yourself and possibly others to a higher level of leadership (influence). Everything you ever achieve, internally and externally, will be a direct result of your influence.

1. ***Why* do we influence?** – Our character determines *why* we influence. Who we are on the inside is what matters. Do we manipulate or motivate? It's all about our intent.
2. ***How* do we influence?** – Our character, combined with our competency, determines *how* we influence. Who we are and what we know combine to create our unique style of influence which determines our methods of influence.
3. ***Where* do we influence?** – Our passion and purpose determine *where* we have the greatest influence. What motivates and inspires us gives us the energy and authenticity to motivate and inspire others.
4. ***Who* do we influence?** – We influence those *who* buy-in to us. Only those valuing and seeking what we value and seek will volunteer to follow us. They give us or deny us permission to influence them based on how well we have developed our character and competency.

5. **When do we influence?** – We influence others *when* they want our influence. We choose when others influence us. Everyone else has the same choice. They decide when to accept or reject our influence.

The first three questions are about the choices we make as we lead (influence) ourselves and others. The last two questions deal more with the choices others will make as they decide first, *if* they will follow us, and second, *when* they will follow us. They will base their choices on *who we are* and *what we know*.

Asking these questions is important. Knowing the answers is more important. But, taking action based on the answers is most important. Cumulatively, the answers to these questions determine our leadership style and our level of influence (leadership).

On a scale of 1-10, your influence can be very low level (1) to very high level (10). But make no mistake, you *are* a leader. You *are* always on the scale. There is a positive and negative scale too. The higher on the scale you are the more effective you are. You will be at different levels with different people at different times depending on many different variables.

Someone thinking they are not a leader or someone that doesn't want to be a leader is still a leader. They will simply remain a low impact leader with low level influence getting low level results. They will likely spend much time frustrated with many areas of their life. Although they could influence a change, they choose instead to be primarily influenced by others.

What separates high impact leaders from low impact leaders? There are many things, but two primary differences are:

- 1) High impact leaders accept more responsibility in all areas of their lives while low impact leaders tend to blame others and transfer responsibility more often.
- 2) High impact leaders have more positive influence while low impact leaders tend to have more negative influence.

My passion has led me to grow into my purpose which is to help others increase their influence personally and professionally while setting and reaching their goals. I am very passionate and have great conviction. I have realized many benefits by getting better results in all areas of my life. I have improved relationships with my family members, my friends, my associates, my peers, and my clients. I have witnessed people within these same groups embrace leadership principles and reap the same benefits.

The degree to which I *live* what I teach determines my effectiveness. My goal is to learn it, live it, and *then* teach it. I had major internal struggles as I grew my way to where I am. I'm a long way from perfect, so I seek daily improvement. Too often, I see people teaching leadership but not living what they're teaching. If I teach it, I live it.

My goal is to be a better leader tomorrow than I am today. I simply must get out of my own way and lead. I must lead me effectively before I can lead others effectively, not only with acquired knowledge, but also with experience from applying and living the principles.

I'll be transparent with personal stories to help you see how I have applied leadership principles by sharing: How I've struggled. How I've learned. How I've sacrificed. And, how I've succeeded.

Go beyond highlighting or underlining key points. Take the time to write down your thoughts related to the

principle. Write down what you want to change. Write down how you can apply the principle in your life. You may want to consider getting a journal to fully capture your thoughts as you progress through the chapters. What you are thinking as you read is often much more important than what you're reading.

Most importantly, do not focus your thoughts on others. Yes, they need it too. We all need it. I need it. You need it. However, if you focus outside of yourself, you are missing the very point. Your influence comes from within. Your influence rises and falls based on your choices. You have untapped and unlimited potential waiting to be released. Only you can release it.

You, like everyone else, were born a leader. Now, let's take a leadership journey together.

(If you enjoyed this Introduction to *Defining Influence*, it is available in paperback, audio, and as an eBook on Amazon.com)

Excerpt from

10 Values of High Impact Leaders

Our values are the foundation upon which we build our character. I'll be sharing 10 values high impact leaders work to master because they know these values will have a tremendous impact on their ability to lead others well. You may be thinking, "*Aren't there more than 10 leadership values?*" Absolutely! They seem to be endless. And, they are all important. These are simply 10 key values which I have chosen to highlight.

Since leadership is very dynamic and complex, the more values you have been able to internalize and utilize synergistically together, the more effective you will be. The more influence you will have.

"High performing organizations that continuously invest in leadership development are now defining new 21st century leadership models to deal with today's gaps in their leadership pipelines and the new global business environment. These people-focused organizations have generated nearly 60% improved business growth, reported a 66% improvement in bench strength, and showed a 62% improvement in employee retention. And, our research shows that it is not enough to just spend money on leadership training, but rather to follow specific practices that drive accelerated business results." ~ Josh Bersin

Do you want to become a high impact leader?

I believe everyone is a leader, but they are leading at different levels.

I believe everyone can and should lead from *where they are*.

I believe everyone can and should make a high impact.

I believe growth doesn't just happen; we must make it happen.

I believe before you will invest in yourself you must first believe in yourself.

I believe leaders must believe in their team before they will invest in their team.

I truly believe *everything rises and falls on influence*.

There is a story of a tourist who paused for a rest in a small town in the mountains. He went over to an old man sitting on a bench in front of the only store in town and inquired, "*Friend, can you tell me something this town is noted for?*"

"*Well,*" replied the old man, "*I don't rightly know except it's the starting point to the world. You can start here and go anywhere you want.*"¹

That's a great little story. We are all at "*the starting point*" to the world, and we "*can start here and go anywhere we want.*" We can expand our influence 360° in all directions by starting in the center with ourselves.

Consider the following illustration. Imagine you are standing in the center. You can make a high impact. However, it will not happen by accident. You must become intentional. You must live with purpose while focusing on your performance as you develop your potential.

Note: Illustration and 10 Values are listed on the following pages.



Why we do what we do is about our *purpose*.

How we do what we do is about our *performance*.

What we do will determine our *potential*.

Where these three components overlap, you will achieve a
HIGH IMPACT.

10 Values of High Impact Leaders

1

THE VALUE OF VISION

Vision is the foundation of hope.

“When there’s hope in the future, there’s power in the present.” ~ Les Brown

2

THE VALUE OF MODELING

Someone is always watching you.

“Who we are on the inside is what people see on the outside.” ~ Mack Story

3

THE VALUE OF RESPONSIBILITY

***When we take responsibility,
we take control.***

“What is common sense is not always common practice.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

4

THE VALUE OF TIMING

It matters when you do what you do.

“It’s about doing the right thing for the right reason at the right time.” ~ Mack Story

5

THE VALUE OF RESPECT

To be respected, we must be respectful.

“Go See, ask why, and show respect”

~ Jim Womack

6

THE VALUE OF EMPOWERMENT

*Leaders gain influence by
giving it to others.*

“Leadership is not reserved for leaders.”

~ Marcus Buckingham

7

THE VALUE OF DELEGATION

*We should lead with questions
instead of directions.*

*“Delegation 101: Delegating ‘what to do,’ makes
you responsible. Delegating ‘what to accomplish,’
allows others to become responsible.”*

~ Mack Story

8

THE VALUE OF MULTIPLICATION

None of us is as influential as all of us.

*“To add growth, lead followers. To
multiply, lead leaders.” ~ John C. Maxwell*

9

THE VALUE OF RESULTS

***Leaders like to make things happen.
“Most people fail in the getting started.”
~ Maureen Falcone***

10

THE VALUE OF SIGNIFICANCE

***Are you going to settle for success?
“Significance is a choice that only
successful people can make.”
~ Mack Story***

Excerpt (Chapter 3 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture:
The 5 Components for Building High Performance Teams

THE IMPACT OF CULTURE

THOSE WHO WORK THERE WILL DETERMINE
WHO WANTS TO WORK THERE

“I think the most important and difficult thing is to create a culture in the organization where leadership is really important. It’s important for people in the company to realize that this is a growth-oriented company, and the biggest thing we have to grow here is you, because it’s you who will make this company better by your own growth. ~ Jim Blanchard

Listen to the voices of leaders who are losing the labor war:

- “We just can’t find any good people.”
As if...there aren’t any good or great people.
- “Due to the low unemployment rate, there just aren’t any good people left.”
As if...the only people who can be offered a job are those without a job.
- “In today’s labor market, those who want to work are already working.”
As if...those who are working at one place can’t decide to work at a different place.
- “When we do get good people, they won’t stay.”
As if...the problem is always with the people and never with their leaders.

One thing I know about leaders who make these and similar comments is this: Their culture is a competitive disadvantage. Someone else has the advantage and is winning the battle for the good and great people. The good and great people certainly aren't out of work wishing they had a job. They're working someplace else.

Until a leader is aware of the problem, they can't address the problem. In case it's not obvious, the problem is their culture. The leader owns this problem whether they want to or not. Every time I hear these comments, and I hear them a lot, I know I'm talking to a leader who doesn't know what they don't know.

Ria and I hear leaders across varying blue-collar and white-collar industries repeatedly making these comments as we travel across the USA speaking on leadership development. These voices seem to be getting louder and louder. In fact, these voices are an inspiration for this book.

There are many leaders in blue-collar industries needing help. I want to help them stop searching for good people and start attracting great people. The transformation won't happen overnight. However, until it starts happening, it's not going to happen. My intention is to use this book to raise awareness while providing a transformational road map for those leaders who want to make their culture their greatest competitive advantage.

We were speaking in Louisville, KY recently to owners of blue-collar organizations. Afterward, one approached and said, "There isn't a magic pill is there? I think we all hoped there was." I replied, "No sir. There isn't a magic pill or an easy button. This is how you build a high performance team and an exceptional culture that will attract, retain, and support them. There is no other way."

Your culture is always attracting certain types of people and repelling others. Who we are is who we attract. This principle applies to individuals as well as organizations. The culture within your organization is negatively or positively impacting those within the organization, and some who are outside the organization.

The key point is to understand the people inside your organization are constantly providing the most influential type of advertising about your organization and the leaders within it. It's called word of mouth advertising. How your team is feeling inside the organization will determine what they're saying outside the organization.

If what they're saying about their leaders and the organization to others is good, it'll be easier to find good people. If what they're saying is great, it'll be easier to attract great people. But, if what they're saying is bad, finding good people will be hard, if not impossible.

Remember the voices at the start of this chapter? Those leaders had team members who were sharing bad word of mouth advertising about the organization. Unless those leaders choose to change, nothing will change.

Common sense reveals it's easier to win the labor war while attracting great people instead of searching for good people. However, what's common sense isn't always common practice. Often, it takes uncommon sense to act on things that are commonly understood. Creating an organizational culture that will attract and retain great people requires leaders with uncommon sense.

The best led companies aren't impacted by labor shortages because they're consistently attracting the best and the brightest people to their organizations.

“If we lose sight of people, we lose sight of the very purpose of leadership.” ~ Tony Dungy

Excerpt (Trait 4 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork:
30 Traits of High Impact Players

BE RESPONSIBLE

MAKING THIS CHOICE GIVES YOU A VOICE

“Total responsibility for failure is a difficult thing to accept, and taking ownership when things go wrong requires extraordinary humility and courage.”

~ Jocko Willink

The higher we climb up the organizational chart or the higher we climb up the pay scale, the harder it is for many of us to remain humble. However, as high impact team players, it's our responsibility to choose to be humble regardless of our status or income. And if necessary, it's also our responsibility to learn what it truly means to be humble.

Humility is a choice that high impact players will make.

If you haven't accomplished much or done much, it's a little easier to remain humble. I believe as a whole the blue-collar workforce is naturally more humble simply because of who we are and where we come from. However, I also believe some who climb their way up from the entry-level positions let it go to their heads.

I want to remain a humble high impact player. That's on me. Not letting my success go to my head is my responsibility. I've also gone a step farther and made helping others do the same my responsibility. High impact team players always do more than is required.

Each of us is responsible for choosing our values and

those values will determine our circumstances and the impact we have, especially when it comes to teamwork.

Just as humility is sometimes a hard choice for those with a high position or status, taking responsibility is often a hard choice for those in a low position or status. But as I've learned over the years, taking responsibility seems to be a hard choice for many regardless of their title, position, rank, status, or income.

When it comes to teamwork, low impact players dodge responsibility like it's a deadly disease. They may disappear when the task is being addressed or begin to make excuses as to why they can't help and shouldn't be asked to help. That creates distrust.

High impact players know a secret: When low impact players are whining, it's easy to start shining. They also know how to shine. It's actually pretty simple. They just listen for whining, and then step up and say, "I'll do it."

At that moment, the high impact player builds trust by simply taking the responsibility. The next responsibility of the high impact player is to follow through and get results. If they don't, they will create distrust with the team and the leaders. If they do, they will build additional trust with the team and the leaders.

Leaders are ultimately responsible for making things happen. If they don't make things happen, it won't be long before they are replaced by someone else who will be given the same mission. High impact players know the quickest way to build trust with a leader is to help them get results, so that's what they focus on doing.

As they develop a reputation for helping the leaders get results, their influence increases with those leaders. Because of their choice (taking responsibility and following through), they earn a voice. As time passes, the high impact players are asked their opinions much more

often than the low impact players.

As a result, the high impact players begin to influence the leader's choices and the team's direction. They're still on the team, but they're playing at much higher level. Those who are willing to make things happen are also given more chances to make things happen.

High impact players are never just along for the ride. They want to drive. They see the big picture. They don't shy away from responsibility. They wake up everyday looking for an opportunity to shine.

Imagine a team full of low impact players where everyone is dodging responsibility on every front. The leader will be frustrated, and the team will be frustrated. And little, if anything, will get accomplished. Unfortunately, these types of teams are common. Depending on your circumstances, it may be too easy to imagine this team. If so, don't miss what's right in front of you: endless opportunities to shine.

Now imagine a very different team, one filled with high impact players. They could be given the exact same mission as the frustrated low impact team. However, no one would be frustrated. The mission would be accomplished. Instead of being focused on finding excuses, the entire team would be focused on finding a way to make it happen. In that case, everyone shines.

What's the major difference between the two teams above? Attitude. Low impact players tend to have a negative attitude. High impact players always have a positive attitude. Attitude is a choice. If we can choose to be positive or negative, why not choose to be positive.

“Responsibility includes two important ideas – choosing right over wrong and accepting ownership for one’s conduct and obligations.” ~ Charles G. Koch

Excerpt (Ch. 4 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision:
Unleash Your Team's Potential

UNDERSTANDING ARTIFICIAL INFLUENCE

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SOMEONE RESPECTING YOUR POSITION AND SOMEONE RESPECTING YOU

“Into the hands of every individual is given a marvelous power for good or evil - the silent, unconscious, unseen influence of his life. This is simply the constant radiation of what man really is, not what he pretends to be.”

~ William George Jordan

If you want to begin to lead beyond your position, you must be respected by those you want to influence. No one gives you respect. You can demand respect all day long, but it's a waste of time. I always laugh (on the inside) when I hear someone demand respect. You will never be respected because you demand to be respected, at work or at home. It's simply not going to happen.

Think about it from your own point of view. If there's a boss or manager you don't like because of who they are as a person, can they demand respect from you and get it? Absolutely not. You may respect their position. But, you will never respect them simply because they demand it. You *must* respect their position to *keep* your job. But, you don't have to respect *them* to keep your job.

A position will give you authority but not influence. Influence must be earned by first earning respect. The more you are respected the more influence you will gain. Everything I'm sharing in this book, *if applied*, will help you earn respect and increase your influence with others.

Having a position or title such as Mom, Dad, Coach, Boss, Supervisor, Manager, VP, President, CEO, Owner, etc. gives you authority and control over other people. I call this *artificial influence*. Artificial influence creates the *illusion* that you have *real* influence. However, if you choose to influence people using only artificial influence, you are not leading. You are simply managing. Sure you may accomplish a lot, but what are you leaving on the table?

You can easily validate the principle of artificial influence by considering those bosses you've had, or now have, that you would never follow if they didn't control your pay, your time off, your promotions, etc. If you only follow a boss because you *have to*, their influence is *not* real. It's artificial. And unfortunately for the company, most likely, you will only do what you have to do.

The title of boss is one that is simply given, often by another manager with artificial influence. However, when it comes to real influence, managers are not in the same league as leaders. If you develop real influence based on character-based principles that you have internalized, then you will *earn* the right to lead. When you do, those reporting to you will do much *more than they have to* simply because they *respect* you.

A high impact leader operates from a position of real influence, not artificial influence or authority.

Listen to the voices of those with *artificial* influence:

- How am I supposed to make something happen when those people don't report to me?
- I can't make them do anything. They don't report to me and won't do anything I tell them to do.
- I can't get anything done in that department. They report to someone else, not me. It's useless to try.
- How can I be responsible for their results when they don't report to me?
- If you want me to make it happen, you've got to give me authority over those people.
- My hands are tied. They don't report to me.

Phrases like those are always spoken by a manager, never

by a leader. I've heard them spoken many times in my career by managers who don't have a clue about leadership. The only influence they have at work is directly tied to the authority, *artificial influence*, which is associated with the position they hold. Without it, they wouldn't accomplish much of anything.

I remember being in a facility as a consultant once. I needed some help from a few team members in a different department, so I asked the manager I was working with if it would be okay if I went over and asked them for some help. He said, "*You'll have to wait. I'll have to get an interpreter because none of them speak English.*" I said, "*Okay, I'll go wait over there.*" I thought it was interesting. When I got there, they all spoke English to me. Leadership is influence.

Managers make things happen with people who *have to* help them. Leaders make things happen with people who *want to* help them.

Most managers have never read a leadership book and can't understand a leader doesn't need authority to make something happen. Leaders only need *influence* to make something happen. Leadership is *not* about who *has to* help you. Leadership is about who *wants to* help you.

Research studies have repeatedly shown a 40% productivity increase when comparing people who *want to* follow a leader with those who *have to* follow a manager.

A manager thrives on artificial influence and is not interested in developing himself or others in order to capture this massive loss of productivity. That's what leaders do, not managers.

How do you influence? What is your style? Are you a director or a connector? Do you tell or sell? What would change if you had more real influence in every situation?

"When we look at people who disobey their leaders, the first question we ought to ask is not, 'What's wrong with those people?' but rather, 'What's wrong with their leader?'

It says that responsibility begins at the top."

~ Malcolm Gladwell

Excerpt (Ch. 26 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Kaizen:
Leading Lean & Lean Teams

LEVERAGE THE TEAM

FOCUS ON STRENGTHS; DEVELOP WEAKNESSES

“Instead of focusing on weaknesses, give your attention to people’s strengths. Focus on sharpening skills that already exist. Compliment positive qualities. Bring out the gifts inherent in them. Weaknesses can wait unless they are character flaws. Only after you have developed a strong rapport with the person and they have begun to grow and gain confidence should you address areas of weakness...and then those should be handled gently and one at a time.”
~ John C. Maxwell

High impact Lean leaders have a gift for turning a group of people into a team in a short period of time.

At the start of a kaizen event, calling the group of people a team is a poor use of the word team. They are simply a group of people assembled in a room about to be given a task to accomplish together. Most often, some want to be there, and some don’t want to be there. Odds are, this specific group of people has never worked together on a project before.

Knowing about continuous improvement is a must if you’re going to lead a kaizen event. However, knowing about continuous improvement (your competency) will not be the key to turning a group of people into a team of people. Turning a group of people into a team of people

is about having respect for the people. Your ability to quickly build a strong, functional team will be determined primarily by your character and secondarily by your competency. Your character is key in this area.

I've seen some very talented Lean leaders and others who have an extensive in-depth knowledge of Lean attempt to lead kaizen events. Most often, they struggle from the moment the event kicks off until the end. They know a lot about Lean but very little about leading people effectively. Why? Because their focus has been on learning Lean, not on learning leadership.

When it comes to growing, developing, and creating a new team, high impact Lean leaders know to focus on the team member's strengths in their area of competency and to develop their weaknesses in the area of character.

Each team member's competency strengths (what they know and can do), if leveraged, will launch the team forward. Each team member's character weaknesses (who they are) will hold the team back. This includes you.

High impact Lean leaders know there are always character issues. We all have them. A few of us are constantly working to improving ourselves, but many of us aren't. Focusing on character weaknesses is why high impact Lean leaders blend leadership development and personal growth components into all of their continuous improvement initiatives.

This is why I utilize the 20/80 rule I taught you in chapter 19. I didn't start using it by accident. I started using it by design. Until then, I only focused on leveraging the team's strengths. But, I hadn't been focused on developing their weaknesses. I'm sure you already know the root cause of most major problems that arise during kaizen events, whether with team members or people not on the team, is rooted in character issues.

The majority of Lean leaders focus only on the continuous improvement (competency) component of Lean. As a result, they provide no leadership in the area that will hold them and the team back the most, character development.

The reason Lean leaders do not address character development during kaizen events is because many of them are not addressing it in their own lives. In other words, because they are not leading themselves well, they cannot lead others well. Character development is always the missing link personally and professionally.

In the area of competency, ask questions and generate discussions to find out what people like or don't like to do. Don't assume they like to do what they are paid to do. I always have everyone introduce and speak about themselves before I talk about anything. I ask what their job is, how long they have been with the organization, what their previous job was, what their hobbies are, what they do for fun, how much Lean and event experience they have, and I ask them to tell me about their family.

The answers to these questions and the associated discussions allow me to connect and learn about their strengths. Then, I'm positioned to leverage the team.

“Humility means knowing and using your strength for the benefit of others, on behalf of a higher purpose. The humble leader is not weak, but strong...is not pre-occupied with self, but with how best to use his or her strengths for the good of others. A humble leader does not think less of himself, but chooses to consider the needs of others in fulfilling a worthy cause. We love to be in the presence of a humble leader because they bring out the very best in us. Their focus is on our purpose, our contribution, and our ability to accomplish all we set out to accomplish.” ~ Alan Ross

Excerpt (Toolbox Tip #15) from
Blue-Collar Leadership® Toolbox Tips:
60 Micro-Lessons to Maximize Your INFLUENCE



Toolbox Tip #15

Character counts. Who we are on the inside determines what others see, feel, and experience on the outside.

Why It Matters: When it comes to character, it's not about what we know. It's about who we are. People are most often hired for what they know, but they are most often fired for who they are. Our character will either launch us or limit us. Character is personal, but it's not private.

What We Do: We intentionally make choices that reveal a high degree of character. We make and keep commitments. We do what we said we would do, when we said we would do it, how we said we would do it, because we said we would do it. We ensure our motive, agenda, and behavior are aligned with positive, character-based principles. We say and do things that build trust.

What We Don't Do: We don't lie. We don't make and break commitments. We don't talk about others behind their backs. We don't fail to stand for what's right. We don't hang around negative people. We

don't do or say things that create distrust.

Bad Example(s): Blaming others for our behavior when things don't go our way. Speaking to others in anger. Pretending to know when we don't know.

Think About This

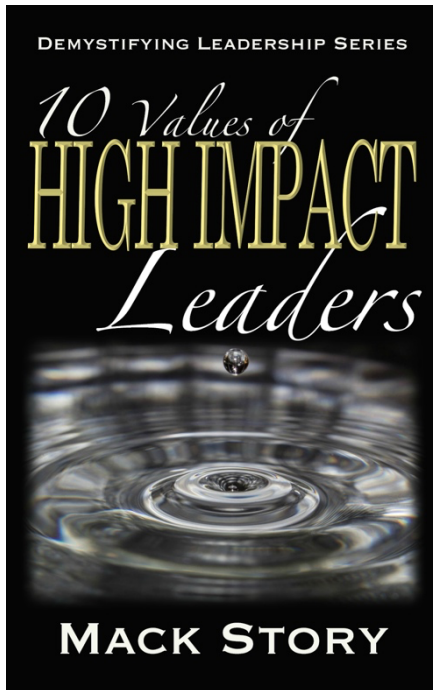
“Our reputations do not come from how we talk about ourselves. Our reputations come from how others talk about us.” ~ Simon Sinek

Allowing our pride and ego to prevent us from doing the right thing.

Ask Yourself: Do I ever blame others for my behavior? Do others control me, or do I control me? Who is responsible for my behavior? What does my behavior communicate to others?

What Do You Think?

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High impact leaders align their habits with key values in order to maximize their influence. High impact leaders intentionally grow and develop themselves in an effort to more effectively grow and develop others.

These *10 Values* are commonly understood. However, they are not always commonly practiced. These *10 Values* will help you build trust and accelerate relationship building. Those mastering these *10 Values* will be able to lead with speed as they develop 360° of influence from wherever they are.

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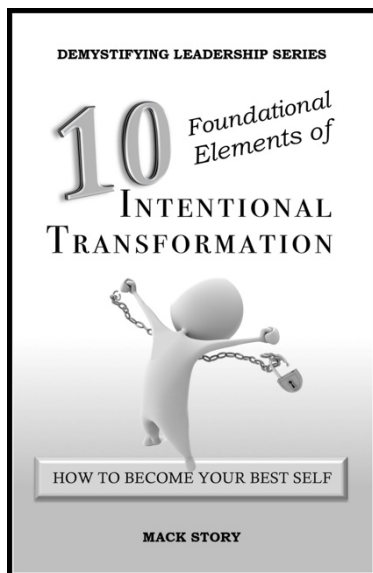


Are you looking for transformation in your life? Do you want better results? Do you want stronger relationships?

In *Defining Influence*, Mack breaks down many of the principles that will allow anyone at any level to methodically and intentionally increase their positive influence.

Mack blends his personal growth journey with lessons on the principles he learned along the way. He's not telling you what he learned after years of research, but rather what he learned from years of application and transformation. Everything rises and falls on influence.

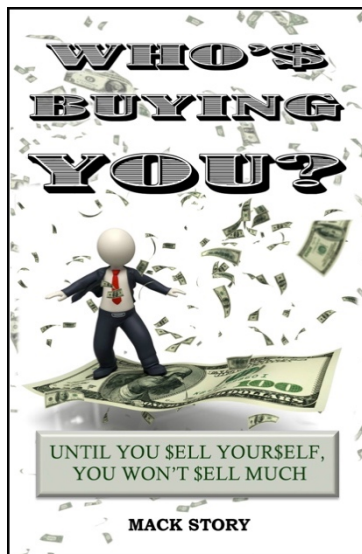
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10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation serves as a source of motivation and inspiration to help you climb your way to the next level and beyond as you learn to intentionally create a better future for yourself. The pages will ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EMPOWER you as you become more focused and intentional about moving from where you are to where you want to be.

All of us are somewhere, but most of us want to be somewhere else. However, we don't always know how to get there. You will learn how to intentionally move forward as you learn to navigate the 10 foundational layers of transformation.

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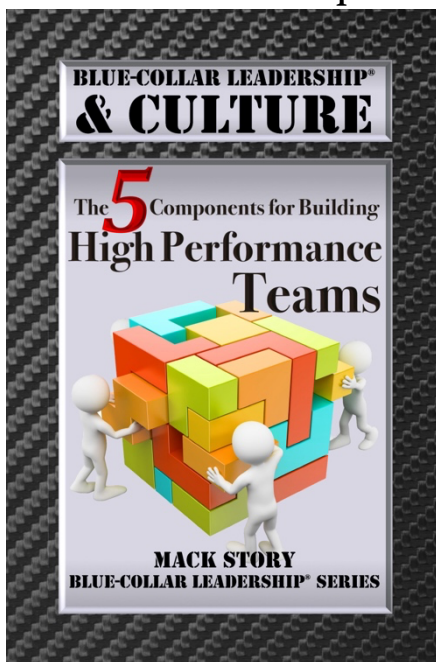


“Sales persuasion and influence, moving others, has changed more in the last 10 years than it has in the last 100 years. It has transitioned from buyer beware to seller beware” ~ Daniel Pink

So, it's no longer “Buyer beware!” It's “Seller beware!” Why? Today, the buyer has the advantage over the seller. Most often, they are holding it in their hand. It's a smart phone. They can learn everything about your product before they meet you. They can compare features and prices instantly. The major advantage you do still have is: YOU! IF they like you. IF they trust you. IF they feel you want to help them.

This book is filled with 30 short chapters providing unique insights that will give you the advantage, not over the buyer, but over your competition: those who are selling what you're selling. It will help you sell yourself.

**Order books online at Amazon or
BlueCollarLeadership.com**



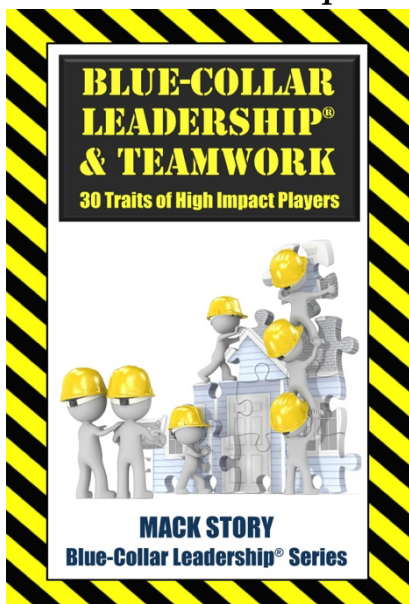
It's easier to compete when you're attracting great people instead of searching for good people.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture will help you understand why culture is the key to becoming a sought after employer of choice within your industry and in your area of operation.

You'll also discover how to leverage the components of The Transformation Equation to create a culture that will support, attract, and retain high performance team members.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture is intended to serve as a tool, a guide, and a transformational road map for leaders who want to create a high impact culture that will become their greatest competitive advantage.

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(Also available in Spanish)

Are you ready to play at the next level and beyond?

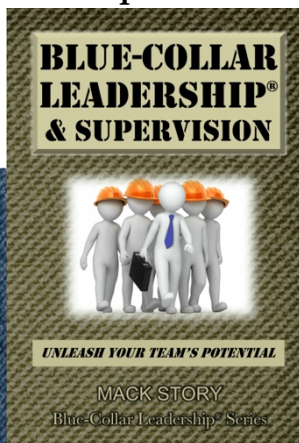
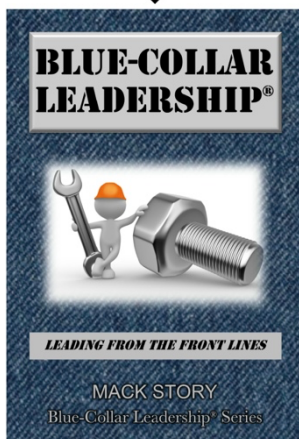
In today's high stakes game of business, the players on the team are the competitive advantage for any organization. But, only if they are on the field instead of on the bench.

The competitive advantage for every individual is developing 360° of influence regardless of position, title, or rank.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork provides a simple, yet powerful and unique, resource for individuals who want to increase their influence and make a high impact. It's also a resource and tool for leaders, teams, and organizations, who are ready to Engage the Front Line to Improve the Bottom Line.

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**AVAILABLE
IN SPANISH**



"I wish someone would have given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career on the front lines. They would have launched my career then. They can launch your career now." ~ Mack Story

Blue-Collar Leadership® and Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision were written specifically for those working on the front lines and those who are leading them. With 30 short, easy to read 3 page chapters, these books contain powerful, yet simple to understand leadership principles and lessons.

Note: These two Blue-Collar Leadership® books are the blue-collar version of the MAXIMIZE books and contain nearly identical content.

**Download the first 5 chapters of these books FREE at:
BlueCollarLeadership.com/download**

Order books online at Amazon or
BlueCollarLeadership.com



QUICKLY DEVELOP LEADERS AT EVERY LEVEL

Leaders are BUSY. That's why Mack and Ria Story created *Toolbox Tips*, a collection of powerful leadership principles delivered in a short and easy to understand format for quick and consistent workforce development.

Kick-off weekly meetings by reviewing a *Toolbox Tip* on **responsibility**, start your team safety meetings with a *Toolbox Tip* on **trust**, or begin your management team meeting with a *Toolbox Tip* on **character**.

Leverage the power of micro-learning with powerful, common-sense leadership principles. Quickly and consistently review, discuss, and apply *Toolbox Tips* to create a leadership culture filled with high impact individuals, high impact team players, and high impact leaders worth following.

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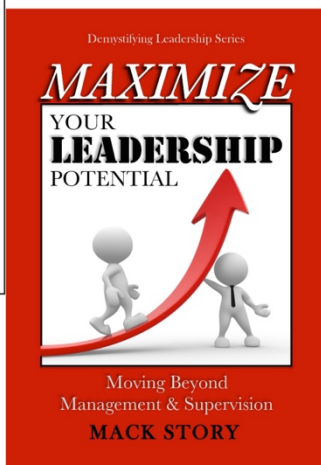
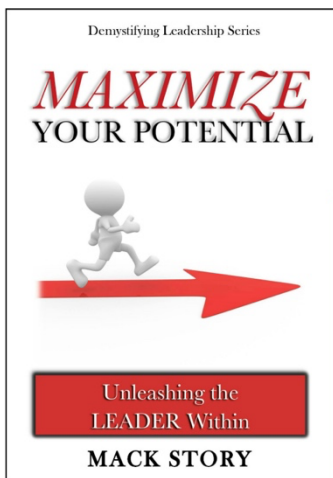


The biggest challenge in process improvement and cultural transformation isn't identifying the problems. It's execution: implementing and sustaining the solutions.

Blue-Collar Kaizen is a resource for anyone in any position who is, or will be, leading a team through process improvement and change. Learn to engage, empower, and encourage your team for long term buy-in and sustained gains.

Mack Story has over 11,000 hours experience leading hundreds of leaders and thousands of their cross-functional kaizen team members through process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation. He shares lessons learned from his experience and many years of studying, teaching, and applying leadership principles.

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"I wish someone had given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career. They would have changed my life then. They can change your life now." ~ Mack Story

MAXIMIZE Your Potential will help you learn to lead yourself well. *MAXIMIZE Your Leadership Potential* will help you learn to lead others well. With 30 short, easy to read 3 page chapters, these books contain simple and easy to understand, yet powerful leadership lessons.

Note: These two MAXIMIZE books are the white-collar, or non-specific, version of the Blue-Collar Leadership® books and contain nearly identical content.

ABOUT RIA STORY

Mack's wife, Ria, is also a motivational leadership speaker, author, and a world class coach who has a unique ability to help people develop and achieve their life and career goals and guide them in building the habits and discipline to achieve their personal view of greatness. Ria brings a wealth of personal experience in working with clients to achieve their personal goals and aspirations in a way few coaches can.

Like many, Ria has faced adversity in life. Raised on an isolated farm in Alabama, she suffered extreme sexual abuse by her father from age 12 to 19. Desperate to escape, she left home at 19 without a job, a car, or even a high school diploma. Ria learned to be resilient, and not just survive, but thrive. (Watch her 7 minute TEDx talk at RiaStory.com/TEDx) She worked her way through school, acquiring an MBA with a 4.0 GPA, and eventually resigned from her career in the corporate world to pursue a passion for helping others achieve success.

Ria's background includes more than 10 years in healthcare administration, including several years in management, and later, Director of Compliance and Regulatory Affairs for a large healthcare organization. Ria's responsibilities included oversight of thousands of organizational policies, organizational compliance with all State and Federal regulations, and responsibility for several million dollars in Medicare appeals.

Ria co-founded Top Story Leadership, which offers leadership speaking, training, coaching, and consulting.

Ria's Story From Ashes To Beauty

by Ria Story

The unforgettable story and inspirational memoir of a young woman who was extremely sexually abused by her father from age 12 to 19 and then rejected by her mother. (*Watch 7 minutes of her story in her TEDx talk at RiaStory.com/TEDx*)

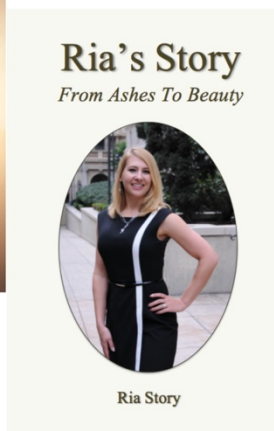
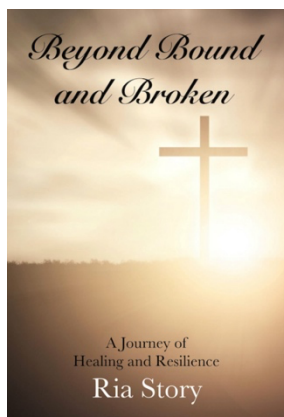
For the first time, Ria publicly reveals details of the extreme sexual abuse she endured growing up. 13 years after leaving home at 19, she decided to speak out about her story and encourage others to find hope and healing.

Determined to not only survive, but also thrive, Ria shares how she was able to overcome the odds and find hope and healing to Achieve Abundant Life. She shares the leadership principles she applied to find professional success, personal significance, and details how she was able to find the courage to share her story to give hope to others around the world.

Ria states, "It would be easier for me to let this story go untold forever and simply move on with life...One of the most difficult things I've ever done is write this book. Victims of sexual assault or abuse don't want to talk because they want to avoid the social stigma and the fear of not being believed or the possibility of being blamed for something that was not their fault. My hope and prayer is someone will benefit from learning how I was able to overcome such difficult circumstances. That brings purpose to the pain and reason enough to share what I would rather have left behind forever. Our scars make us stronger."

Available at Amazon.com in paperback, audio, and eBook. To learn more about Ria or to book her to speak at your event, please visit: RiaStory.com/TEDx

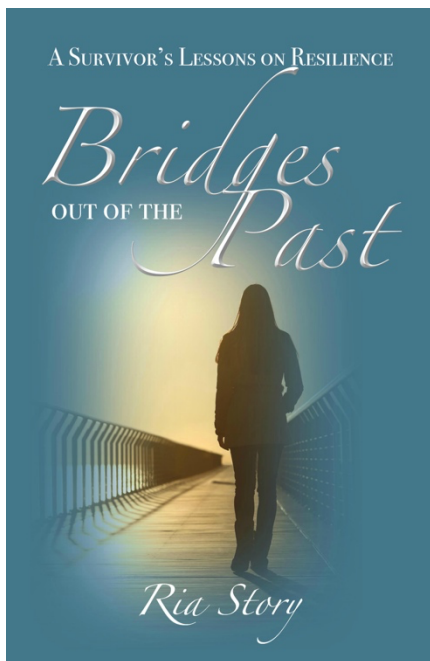
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In *Beyond Bound and Broken*, Ria shares how she overcame the shame, fear, and doubt she developed after enduring years of extreme sexual abuse by her father. Forced to play the role of a wife and even shared with other men due to her father's perversions, Ria left home at 19 without a job, a car, or even a high-school diploma. This book also contains lessons on resilience and overcoming adversity that you can apply to your own life.

In *Ria's Story From Ashes To Beauty*, Ria tells her personal story of growing up as a victim of extreme sexual abuse from age 12 – 19, leaving home to escape, and her decision to tell her story. She shares her heart in an attempt to help others overcome their own adversity.

**Order books online at Amazon or
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It's not what happens to you in life. It's who you become because of it. We all experience pain, grief, and loss in life. Resilience is the difference between "*I didn't die,*" and "*I learned to live again.*" In this captivating book on resilience, Ria walks you through her own horrific story of more than seven years of sexual abuse by her father. She then shares how she learned not only to survive, but also to thrive in spite of her past. Learn how to overcome challenges, obstacles, and adversity in your own life by building a bridge out of the past and into the future.

(Watch 7 minutes of her story at RiaStory.com/TEDx)

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You have untapped potential to do, have, and be more in life. But, developing your potential and becoming the best version of yourself will require personal transformation. You will have to transform from who you are today into who you want to become tomorrow.

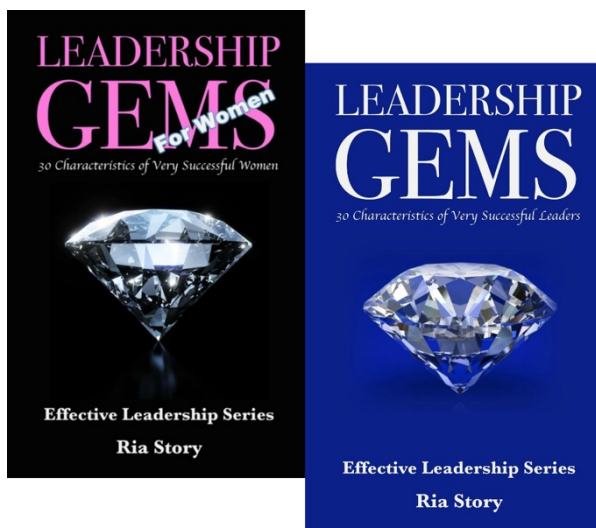
Gain unique insight in, *“Fearfully and Wonderfully Me: Become the Woman You are Destined to Be”* and the accompanying workbook to help you: believe in yourself and your potential; embrace your self-worth; overcome self-limiting beliefs; increase your influence personally & professionally; and achieve your goals & develop a mindset for success. These two resources will empower you to own your story, write a new chapter, and become the woman and leader you are destined to be.

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You have untapped potential waiting to be unlocked. To be successful requires us to have knowledge of the principles of success, awareness of how to utilize them, and discipline to intentionally apply them. There are no shortcuts to success, but we can travel much faster when we have an achievement model we can apply. This model will help you develop more influence personally and professionally, execute an action plan for personal success, and maximize your potential in life. Both women and men alike will find practical and relevant information to immediately apply to their situation and improve the outcome.

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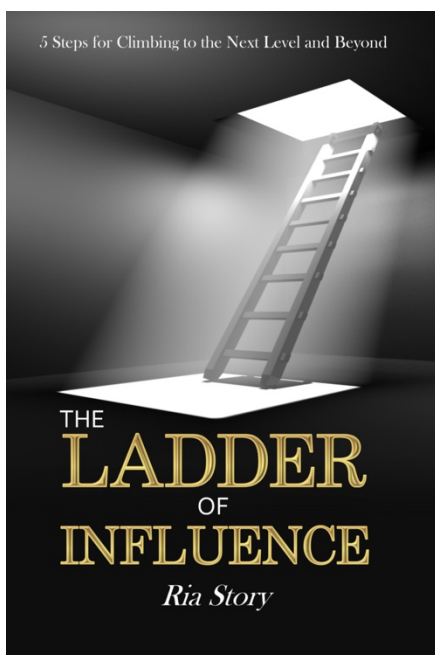


Note: Leadership Gems is the generic, non-gender specific, version of Leadership Gems for Women. The content is very similar.

Women are naturally high level leaders because they are relationship oriented. However, it's a “man’s world” out there and natural ability isn’t enough to help you be successful as a leader. You must be intentional.

Ria packed these books with 30 leadership gems which very successful people internalize and apply. Ria has combined her years of experience in leadership roles of different organizations along with years of studying, teaching, training, and speaking on leadership to give you these 30, short and simple, yet powerful and profound, lessons to help you become very successful, regardless of whether you are in a formal leadership position or not.

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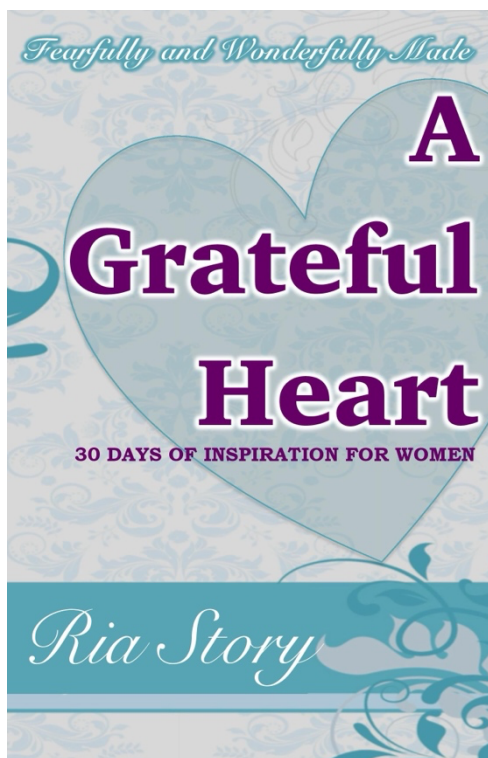


The Ladder of Influence® provides a powerful, yet simple, framework to help you realize the practical steps you can take to increase your influence with the people around you: family, friends, co-workers, your boss, etc.

We all have some influence, yet we all want more influence. Simple. But why, how, where, who, and when we influence others as well as how we in turn are influenced by others is incredibly complex because people are incredibly complex.

When we have more influence, we have more options, opportunities, and more choices. Life will always be better with more options, more opportunities, and more choices.

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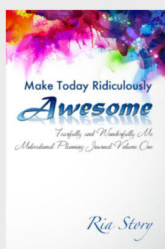
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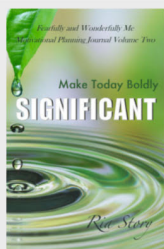
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Choose a theme for the season of your life!

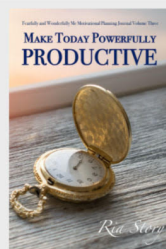
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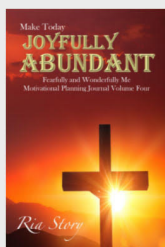
Motivational



Purposeful/Living
Your Legacy



Productivity



Joy/Faith



Resilience



Make the Most
of Today

Start each day with a purposeful mindset, and you will achieve your priorities based on your values.

Just a few minutes of intentional thought every morning will allow you to focus your energy, increase your influence, and make your day all that it can be!

Each journal in the series has different motivational quotes and a motivational theme. Choose one or get all six for an entire year's worth of **Motivational Planning!**

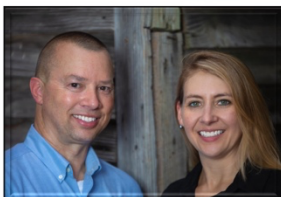
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"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, and I stress, not your everyday leadership seminar! I have attended dozens and sent hundreds to the so-called 'Leadership-Training.' I can tell you that while all of the courses, classes, webinars, and seminars, had good intentions, nothing can touch what Mack and Ria Story provide. I just wish I had it 20 years ago!"

~ Sam McLamb, VP & COO, CMP

"We would highly recommend Mack and Ria as speakers...their presentation was inspirational, thought-provoking, and filled with humor. They taught us some foundational leadership principles."

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**Are you ready to turn your
greatest asset into
your greatest
advantage?**



What clients have to say

"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, and I stress, not your everyday leadership seminar! I have attended dozens and sent hundreds to the so-called 'Leadership-Training.' I can tell you that while all of the courses, classes, webinars, and seminars, had good intentions, nothing can touch what Mack and Ria Story provide. I just wish I had it 20 years ago!"

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- Engaging the Front Line
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Mack Story, founder of Blue-Collar Leadership®, logged 11,000+ hours leading cross-functional teams and has 30+ years of experience in the blue-collar manufacturing industry. He is a certified leadership speaker, trainer, and author of 14 leadership books, including 10 Values of High Impact Leaders and Defining Influence, as well as the Blue-Collar Leadership® Series books.

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