

**BLUE-COLLAR LEADERSHIP®
& CULTURE**

The **5** Components for Building
**High Performance
Teams**



MACK STORY
BLUE-COLLAR LEADERSHIP® SERIES

Blue-Collar Leadership & Culture: The 5 Components for Building High Performance Teams

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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Mack Story

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DEDICATION

To those rare, high impact leaders who are willing to intentionally challenge their own thinking as they strive to lead their teams to the next level and beyond.

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I would like to acknowledge the late S. Truett Cathy, Chick-fil-A® Founder, Jimmy Collins, Chick-fil-A® President and COO (Ret.), Dee Ann Turner, Chick-fil-A® VP of Talent (Ret.), and Bob Chapman, Barry-Wehmiller CEO. All of them have inspired me.

Each of these leaders and their teams created and sustained exceptional cultures within their respective industries. Their cultures have been and continue to be the competitive advantage that separate their organizations from their competition.

Jimmy Collins has been a friend and mentor since I first met him on June 18, 2015. I'm extremely grateful for the hours he has invested in me, for the lunches we've shared together, for the many stories he shared about his nearly 33 years creating the Chick-fil-A® culture with Truett Cathy from startup in 1967 to \$1 billion in annual sales by 2001, for inviting me into his home to record several episodes with him as a guest on my Blue-Collar Leadership® Podcast, and for all of the support and encouragement he has given me and my wife, Ria Story, as we've built our Blue-Collar Leadership® brand. The high impact culture that Jimmy Collins and Truett Cathy established during those first 33 years together produced \$10.5 billion in annual sales in 2018.

That didn't happen by accident; it happened by design.

CULTURE COUNTS

1

THE COST OF CULTURE

THE 3 DILEMMAS: ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION, AND TURNOVER

“When trust goes down, speed will also go down and costs will go up. When trust goes up, speed will also go up and costs will go down.” ~ Stephen M. R. Covey

I’ve logged well over 11,000 hours leading leaders and their blue-collar teams through process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation. I’ve learned a lot. But, two things were obvious from the start:

- 1) Every team member wants a great leader.
- 2) Every leader wants great team members.

I discovered many leaders were frustrated because they had disengaged team members. Employee engagement is not only the key to increasing retention, productivity, profitability, and teamwork, but it’s also the key to reducing turnover, costs, and frustrations. Numerous research studies reveal only 30-35% of employees consider themselves engaged.

As a result, many leaders are facing three costly dilemmas: engagement, retention, and turnover.

THE ENGAGEMENT DILEMMA:

Employee engagement starts with engaged leadership. Disengaged employees are a symptom of disengaged leaders at one or more levels in your

organization. In fact, research studies show employees are 40% more productive if they *want* to follow their leader compared to those who feel they *have* to follow their leader. In other words, the level of engagement below is determined by the level of engagement above.

Leadership development, or the lack of it, at every level determines morale, engagement, turnover, productivity, communication, teamwork, and how your customers will be served. Unfortunately, many people are over-managed and under-led.

People who are led well become highly engaged.

People who are over-managed become disengaged.

Leadership development is the key to transforming the culture of your organization, improving your team's results, and reducing costs in all areas.

THE RETENTION DILEMMA:

The competition wants more than your customers. Have you considered there are two types of competition?

1) Those in the same industry who want to steal your customers; and 2) Those who may or may not be in the same industry who want to steal your people.

A leader's ability to attract and retain high performance employees is a crucial factor for organizational success. Employees who are disengaged are far more likely to change jobs and even change industries because disengagement leads to dissatisfaction.

Minimizing employee turnover by increasing engagement through leadership development is critical to improving your bottom line.

High performance team members and managers are looking for more than a good salary. They are seeking growth and development opportunities that will help them become more successful personally and

professionally. As Heather Huhman stated, “87% of managers wish they had more training before becoming a manager.” High impact leaders understand they must offer more development opportunities in order to become the sought after employer of choice in their industry and in their area of operation.

THE TURNOVER DILEMMA:

Are you tired of hiring, then firing? Employees are primarily interviewed, selected, and hired based on their competency. In this case, competency means a leader believes the candidate has the required skillset, technical knowledge, and ability to perform the task or job.

However, most employees are terminated based on character. Character relates to who we are and how we do what we do. It’s the “soft” skills, such as attitude, work ethic, integrity, behavior, and how we work with others.

In other words, employees are hired for what they know, but fired for who they are. Performance problems are almost exclusively a character issue. According to Daniel Goleman, “90% of our results as individuals and organizations is determined by character.” However, most organizational training and development is focused on improving competency, not character.

If your team isn’t engaged, you’re likely dealing with some level of frustration, resistance, confusion, anxiety, and stagnation. It doesn’t have to be this way.

“Imagine the personal and organizational cost of failing to fully engage the passion, talent, and intelligence of the workforce. It is far greater than all taxes, interest charges, and labor costs put together.”
~ Stephen R. Covey

2

THE FOUNDATION OF CULTURE

THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE LEADER'S VALUES

*“Greatness is achieved by using resources to help people; not using people as a resource.”
~ Captain L. David Marquet, U. S. Navy*

Merriam-Webster defines culture as, “the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution or organization.”

“Values” is the key word because your values are the underlying foundation which fuel your thoughts. Thoughts produce your emotions which influence your choices. Choices lead to your results which determine your circumstances. The culture of an organization can be traced back to a single root cause: the top leader's values.

Values on the inside are revealed as character traits on the outside. I'm reminded of the words of Andy Stanley, “Character is personal, but it's not private.” The culture of an organization isn't private either. The people on the inside are always talking about it to people on the outside.

Because values are revealed outwardly as character, the collective character of everyone in an organization is what is commonly referred to as the “culture” of the organization. Organizational culture is simply a reflection of the combined character of all of the people within the organization. As Gruenter and Whitaker pointed out, “The culture of any organization is shaped by the worst

behavior the leader is willing to tolerate.”

Culture equals character. Character equals culture.

High impact leaders understand the culture of an organization affects everything else – and culture starts with them. Before a leader can change their culture, they must change their values. Why? Because the leader’s current values are what created the current culture.

High impact leaders know it doesn’t cost anything to care for their team members. They also know it costs a lot when they don’t.

As a leader, your character, which is based on your values, will determine your culture. Your character will determine: your ability to build meaningful relationships, whether you build trust or create distrust, what you tolerate, what you expect, what people say about you, who you attract, who you repel, who stays, who goes, and how long they stay before they go.

Michael Josephson said it best, “You don’t have to be sick to get better.” But, you must have a desire to get better. And ultimately, you must act on that desire.

My wife, Ria, and I had the privilege of joining John C. Maxwell and 150 others in Guatemala in June 2013 to kickoff the “Transformation Begins with Me” cultural transformation initiative across the entire nation. We were privileged to join John and the President of Guatemala at the Presidential Palace for a special celebration as the vision was broadcast live nationally. In just three days, our team conducted four hour development workshops for nearly 20,000 Guatemalan leaders.

When the Guatemalan leaders chose to value cultural transformation, cultural transformation started to occur.

Until a leader values developing their character, they won’t develop their character. Until a leader values developing the character of those on their team, they

won't develop the character of those on their team. Until a leader values transforming the culture, they won't transform their culture. Until a leader values using resources to develop people, they won't use resources to develop people.

Your values determine your direction.

Relative to developing people, John C. Maxwell made a powerful observation, “Authenticity—This is the foundation for developing people. Servanthood—This is the soul for developing people. Growth—This is the measurement for developing people. Excellence—This is the standard for developing people. Passion—This is the fuel for developing people. Success—This is the purpose for developing people.”

When one person gets a little better, the culture gets a little better. When a lot of people get a lot better, the culture gets a lot better. As Lieutenant General George Flynn stated, “Culture equals values plus behavior.”

My mission is to help leaders engage the front line to improve the bottom line.SM I do this by helping leaders develop the character of everyone on their team from the very top to the very bottom. When it comes to character development, no one should be exempt. We all need it.

Leaders who value developing others attract great people. Leaders who don't develop people struggle to find good people.

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

*“Values are not simply posters on a wall.
In order for a culture to be strong, your values
must be clear and your values must be lived.”
~ Simon Sinek*

3

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

4

BECOMING A SOUGHT AFTER EMPLOYER

**PEOPLE WHO DON'T WORK THERE
WANT TO WORK THERE**

*“Leaders set the standard – both by how they lead
and by what they do –they are the guardians of,
and must be held accountable for, the culture.”
~ Charles G. Koch, CEO Koch Industries*

I want to set the bar high right from the start as we begin our cultural transformation journey together. To ensure our cultural vision is aligned, let me clarify. Becoming a sought after employer means: Great people who don't work at your organization become aware of and are attracted to your organization, and most importantly, they have a strong desire to work there.

By great people, I mean top talent. By top talent, I mean people who not only have exceptional, well-developed competency (experience, knowledge, abilities), but also people who have exceptional, well-developed character (integrity, humility, trustworthy, responsible).

Sure, good people, and some people who aren't so good, will be attracted as well. But, my goal is to help you develop a culture that attracts great people. When you're attracting great people consistently, it becomes easier to say no to the good people and easy to say no to the people who aren't so good.

Unfortunately, because many leaders of blue-collar organizations haven't focused their energy and resources on developing a high impact culture, they and their support staff find themselves having to take anyone they can get when it's time to fill a position. These are also the organizations that are constantly advertising they're hiring because they can't find good people. And when they do, they don't stay.

If you're struggling to find good people, then attracting good people will sound like a big win. But remember this, a team of good people can't compete effectively with a team of great people. Although, they can easily compete with a team of mediocre people.

My intention is not to help you and your team climb to the middle of the cultural transformation mountain. I want to help you climb to the top.

The mountain will be tall, steep, and challenging at times. To get to the top, you and your team must make the same sacrifices and pay the same price all of those who have stood on the summit have paid. There are no short cuts, but you can increase your speed while travelling on the path to the top.

You get to the top with great people, not good people. Only high performance teams get the view from the top.

You and your team can't climb to the top of the mountain with base camp character. You must be fully aware of the challenge that lies ahead and know where you want to end up. Then, focus on conquering the moment, not the mountain. If you conquer enough moments, you will eventually conquer the mountain.

When it comes to becoming a sought after employer, culture counts. And, it counts a lot. Culture doesn't just happen. It is created, good or bad, by the everyday choices leaders and their teams are making.

Everything I'll share in this book is intended to help you help your organization become a sought after employer that attracts great people and top talent. However, I'm beginning with the end in mind, so I can help you see where I'm trying to lead you.

Becoming a sought after employer is the end result, not the starting point. It's at the top of the cultural transformation mountain, not the bottom.

Everything that follows will help you achieve that result. How long will it take? That's up to you. It depends. For example, if your goal is to swim across a lake and you dive in, you'll get to the other side of the lake much faster than those who simply stand on the bank and stick their toe in the water to see what it feels like.

Your speed will be determined by your investment. By investment, I mean not only time and money, but also your willingness to lead the transformation and change who you are and how you do what you do. It won't happen without you leading the way.

Becoming a sought after employer is not about doing something different. That's easy. It's about becoming something different. That's usually not so easy and is a bit more of a challenge.

What you need to know at this point is this: Before you can become a sought after employer, you must become an employer of choice.

"In a culture of strong character, the people inside the company will feel protected by their leaders and feel that their colleagues have their backs. In a culture of weak character, the people will feel that any protection they have comes primarily from their own ability to manage the politics, promote their own successes, and watch their own backs."
~ Simon Sinek

5

BECOMING AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE

PEOPLE WHO WORK THERE WANT TO KEEP WORKING THERE

*“At Chick-fil-A[®], leaders **SERVE**, which means they do five things: **See** and shape the future; **Engage** and develop others; **Reinvent** continuously; **Value** results and relationships; **Embody** the company values.”*
~ Dee Ann Turner, Chick-fil-A[®] VP Talent (Ret.)

To ensure our cultural vision remains aligned at this critical stage, let me clarify. Becoming an employer of choice means: The people who are currently working in your organization have a very strong desire to continue working there because they're excited about their future within the organization, there are frequent growth and development opportunities, they are consistently challenged to get better in positive ways, they feel valued by their leaders and their team, they have meaningful relationships with their co-workers, they feel good while on the job, and equally as important, they feel good about themselves and their leaders at the end of each day.

As I mentioned, the cultural transformation mountain is tall, steep, and challenging at times. If you're serious about developing a high impact culture, you may likely feel challenged. If you don't feel challenged by my last paragraph, you're either already there and trying to get better, or you have no real intentions of going there.

I assume you're reading this because you already know

you want to climb the mountain, or you're curious about climbing the mountain. Either way, don't let the challenge you may be feeling at this moment overwhelm you. You won't have to learn to climb alone. I'm here with you, and my mission is to help others climb.

My intention in the first six chapters is to help you understand why you should consider climbing the cultural transformation mountain. The remaining 24 chapters are intended to help you understand what you must do in order to climb the mountain. Not only will I describe what must be done, I'll also provide resources to aid you and your team as you begin your climb and offer a few key examples of how to climb.

Keep reading, thinking, reflecting, and making notes as you continue. Consider this book a guide, a road map, as I take you on a mental climb up the mountain before you strap your boots on and do it within your organization.

This book is intended to be a tool for high impact leaders who want to build a high performance team capable of creating a high impact culture. Jim Blanchard made a great point when he said, "When current or would-be leaders realize you are investing in their growth, it's more important to them than money."

To become highly effective at competing with those who want to steal your people, you must become an employer of choice. Otherwise, you'll find yourself on the losing end of the labor war, especially relative to attracting great people. The result: endless frustration.

Read the opening paragraph of this chapter again. Imagine the type of word of mouth advertisement someone with those feelings working at an employer of choice will provide. It will be off the charts. That type of word of mouth advertisement will cause any organization to become a sought after employer.

But, you can't buy that kind of advertisement. You must earn it. Here's an example of the impact.

Chick-fil-A® was our client for three years straight and is a great example of a sought after employer of choice. They've been climbing the mountain for over 50 years. They understand they don't have to be sick to get better and are striving relentlessly to improve.

I remember one store owner in a town of 30,000 saying to me, "When I have an entry-level job opening, I typically have 250 applicants." Wow! Without a doubt, there are always great people applying. That's what it means to be a sought after employer of choice.

To become a sought after blue-collar employer of choice, you must become innovative. Culture is all about the people, not your products and services. So, when I say innovative, I mean innovative relative to the growth and development of all people at all levels.

Why is growth and development of people innovative? It's not in the white-collar world, because they've been doing it for decades. But, it is in the blue-collar world because very few blue-collar leaders value doing it, even if they're considered successful within their industry.

Ria and I had the privilege of speaking at Yale University's School of Management on "Blue-Collar Leadership: Innovation in Talent Development." You can watch the entire one hour video of our session on our home page at BlueCollarLeadership.com

"It can be far more difficult to overcome success than adversity...There's a tendency for many in successful companies to rest on their laurels and become complacent, self-protective, and less innovative. In such bureaucratic cultures, employees can survive only by running with the herd. Decline sets in."

~ Charles G. Koch, CEO Koch Industries

6

THE TRANSFORMATION EQUATION

DISCOVER THE 5 KEY COMPONENTS FOR BUILDING HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS

“Change starts with ‘what is’ and attempts to keep what is working intact and eliminate what is not, transformation simply starts with ‘nothing’ and is led by a vision of the whole as if it were to be created from scratch today. The former views today as an extension of yesterday and tries to make the most of what is. The latter sees today as the beginning of tomorrow and shapes today’s circumstances as a solid foundation for what will be.” ~Amir Ghannad

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CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“The first step to creating a compelling culture for your team is to be assured of your calling as their leader.”
~ Dee Ann Turner, Chick-fil-A® VP Talent (Ret.)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

I want to establish the foundation for the remainder of the book by introducing you to The Transformation Equation. Check it out now in our [Blue-Collar Leadership®](#) [whitepaper](#).

COMPONENT 1

LEADERSHIP

DEVELOPMENT

7

MINIMIZE FRUSTRATION

WITHOUT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT,
THERE WILL BE FRUSTRATION

*“Failing organizations are usually
over-managed and under-led.” ~ Warren Bennis*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team discover the fundamentals of leadership and influence!
Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Defining-Influence to increase your
influence, so you can increase your options and
BlueCollarLeadership.com/ladder to discover The 5 Steps for Climbing
to the Next Level and Beyond

*“When we are in the presence of good leadership, we
usually are not even aware of it. Everything goes so
well that leadership seems unnecessary; it creates the
illusion that everything is seamless and smooth.”
~ Jimmy Collins, Chick-fil-A® President/COO (Ret.)*

8

LEADING, FOLLOWING, AND MANAGING

**EVERYONE IS A LEADER;
EVERYONE IS A FOLLOWER;
EVERYONE IS A MANAGER**

“I believe ability can get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there.” ~ John Wooden

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team learn to effectively communicate in each of these roles!

Visit: RiaStory.com/Communication

“The strength of the culture, and not its size or resources, determines an organization’s ability to adapt to the times, overcome adversity, and pioneer new innovations.” ~ Simon Sinek

9

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT NEVER ENDS

THE LANGUAGE OF LEADERSHIP IS
EXTREMELY DYNAMIC AND COMPLEX

*“Leadership.
It’s one of the most misunderstood words in the
professional world, and perhaps in the
personal development world.” ~ Ria Story*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Discover 30 key characteristics of very successful leaders!

Visit: RiaStory.com/LeadershipGems

*“Our capacity for development does not end at
physical maturity; our capacity is virtually limitless.
Our power to reason is our distinguishing
characteristic, our mind is our basic means of
survival—and our ability to think, to learn, to discover
new and better ways of dealing with reality, to expand
the range of our efficacy, to grow intellectually, is an
open door to a road that has no end.” ~ Ayn Rand*

10

THE LEADERSHIP DILEMMA

YOU CAN'T DEVELOP OTHERS
WITHOUT DEVELOPING YOURSELF

“Becoming a leader is a lifelong endeavor of study, action, reflection, and refinement.”
~ Colonel Tom Connally, USMC (Ret.)

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help leaders align themselves with key leadership values in Mack's book:
[10 Values of High Impact Leaders](#)

Listen to our podcasts and samples of our audiobooks at:
[TopStoryLeadership.com/podcast](#)
[TopStoryLeadership.com/audiobooks](#)

Watch long form interviews under the [“Real People Getting Real Results”](#)
playlist on the [Blue-Collar Leadership YouTube channel](#).

“We make some of the best industrial machinery in the world. But, I will not go to my grave being proud of all the machines we have built. Instead, I will be deeply grateful for all the lives that we touched and uplifted in our journey. The machinery we build is just the economic engine that enables us to touch lives. The flourishing of those lives is our paramount concern.”
~ Bob Chapman, CEO Barry-Wehmiller

11

DEVELOP HIGH IMPACT INDIVIDUALS

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IS THE FOUNDATION OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

*“We understand that talented people with bad values
can do far more damage to a company than
virtuous people with inferior talents.”
~ Charles G. Koch, CEO Koch Industries*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help all of your team members learn how to lead themselves well!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Workers

*“If enough people declare themselves, individually, the
cause of the current culture, and unconditionally
commit to a different behavior, we can shift the
culture instantly.” ~ Amir Ghannad*

12

DEVELOP HIGH IMPACT TEAM PLAYERS

HELP TEAM MEMBERS LEARN “HOW TO BE”
WHILE THEY’RE DOING WHAT THEY DO

*“Leadership is an ability and responsibility for all.
Our definition of leadership is the ability to make
those around you better and more productive.”
~ Jack Clark*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team learn “how to be” while they’re doing what they do!
Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Teamwork

*“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*

13

DEVELOP HIGH IMPACT LEADERS

THE LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT BELOW IS
DETERMINED BY THE LEVEL OF
ENGAGEMENT ABOVE

“Often, organizations focus only on the value of developing new leaders and neglect the development of seasoned leaders. A few will take their thinking to the next level and continue to invest in seasoned leaders. Organizations that invest in both new leadership and seasoned leaders will clearly create the most competitive workforce.”
~ Dee Ann Turner, Chick-fil-A® VP Talent (Ret.)

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help every leader at every level learn how to lead others well!
Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Leaders

“Whether in the military or a civilian organization, the culture of the first organization a young person joins has tremendous impact. And, his or her first immediate supervisor significantly shapes that person’s understanding of the organization and the role of supervisors and managers.”
~ Colonel Tom Connally, USMC (Ret.)

14

BECOMING A TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADER

**LEADERS ARE ALWAYS TEACHING WHAT
THEY'RE MODELING, REGARDLESS
OF WHAT THEY'RE TEACHING**

*“Creating a beneficial culture is impossible
without mentoring and positive examples.”
~ Charles G. Koch, CEO Koch Industries*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Discover the 10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Transformation

*“We all know, whether we actually practice it or not,
that basic respect and courtesy should not depend on
the person’s title or rank. What we forget sometimes
is that it should also not depend on a person’s
performance. It is possible to share tough feedback
and hold low performers to high standards without
treating them as lesser human beings. Transformative
Leaders have the courage to create a culture of
accountability AND the consideration to treat
everyone with dignity and respect, all the way
through the performance correction process.”
~ Amir Ghannad*

COMPONENT 2

BUY-IN

15

ELIMINATE RESISTANCE

WITHOUT BUY-IN,
THERE WILL BE RESISTANCE

*“People buy into the leader first,
then the leader’s vision.” ~ John C. Maxwell*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team learn personal foundational success principles!

Visit: RiaStory.com/Achieve

*“Only organizations with a sterling level of trust
garner a culture of true commitment vs. a whirlpool
of wishful thinking through forced compliance.”
~ Pete Beaudrault*

16

GENERATE BUY-IN

THE KEY TO OVERCOMING RESISTANCE

“If you think you’re too busy to give time and energy to your people, then they’re too busy to give time and energy to you. It is a balanced equation.”

~ Simon Sinek

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your leaders learn to unleash process improvement teams like I did!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Kaizen

“A good route to executive failure is to be a part-time role model.”

~ Jimmy Collins, Chick-fil-A® President/COO (Ret.)

17

LEADING CHANGE

WITHOUT CHANGE,
THERE CAN BE NO IMPROVEMENT

“The great thing about business is that despite all the history, all the deeply embedded traditional dysfunctional management practices, and all the baggage of unhealthy relationships and corrosive cultures, it is possible at any moment in time to push the reset button, to embrace a different way of being, and experience dramatic change.”
~ Bob Chapman, CEO Barry-Wehmiller

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team learn to embrace, support, and buy-in to change!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Leading-Change

“Don’t settle for just ‘Managing Change!’ Take on ‘Leading a Transformation!’” ~ Amir Ghannad

COMPONENT 3

UNIFYING PURPOSE

18

REDUCE CONFUSION

WITHOUT A UNIFYING PURPOSE,
THERE WILL BE CONFUSION

*“It’s not enough to have purpose yourself.
You have to create a sense of purpose for others.”
~ Mark Zuckerberg*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“If you could get all the people in an organization
rowing in the same direction, you could dominate any
industry, in any market, against any competition,
at any time.” ~ Patrick Lencioni*

19

CLARIFY THE UNIFYING PURPOSE

THE LEADER'S RESPONSIBILITY IS TO CAST
THE VISION AND DETERMINE THE MISSION

“Followers choose to follow a leader with a compelling purpose, vision, cause, or goal, the unifying purpose.

It is the leader’s unifying purpose that attracts the interest and loyalty of followers. The leader is someone who is able to communicate unifying purpose in a manner that is inspiring, persuasive, or motivating. The unifying purpose joins the followers to the leader.”

~ Jimmy Collins, Chick-fil-A® President/COO (Ret.)

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Leaders provide a mental picture of a preferred future and then ask people to follow them there. Leaders require those around them to abandon the known and embrace the unknown – with no guarantee of success. As leaders we are asking men and women not only to follow us to a place they have never been before; we are asking them to follow us to the place we have never been before either. That takes guts. That takes nerve. That takes courage.”

~ Andy Stanley

COMPONENT 4

COMPETENCY

20

PREVENT ANXIETY

WITHOUT COMPETENCY,
THERE WILL BE ANXIETY

“One source of frustration in the workplace is the frequent mismatch between what people must do and what people can do. When what they must do exceeds their capabilities, the result is anxiety. When what they must do falls short of their capabilities, the result is boredom.” ~ Daniel Pink

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Sharing knowledge builds trust, and trust creates a culture of excellent performance.”
~ Colonel Tom Connally, USMC (Ret.)*

21

TWO AREAS OF FOCUS

CHARACTER AND COMPETENCY

“The ability to mobilize the skills and competencies of the people around us has a bigger impact on our performance than does the amount of experience we have.” ~ Liz Wiseman

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“You can have great academic intelligence and still lack social intelligence.”
~ Carole Hyatt & Linda Gottlieb*

22

PROVIDE CONTINUOUS EDUCATION

MAINTAIN A LIBRARY OF PERSONAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

“Growth-minded leaders, they start with a belief in human potential and development—both their own and other people’s. Instead of using the company as a vehicle for their greatness, they use it as an engine of growth—for themselves, the employees, and the company as a whole.” ~ Carol S. Dweck

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Start filling your library. Learn more about our books, online video courses, and check out our Blue-Collar Leadership merch!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Store

“Anything less than a conscious commitment to the important is an unconscious commitment to the unimportant.” ~ Stephen R. Covey

23

SUPPLY OCCASIONAL MOTIVATION

OFFER ONSITE PERSONAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

“We don’t do a lot of ‘awareness training,’ we want people to be intensely impacted by their experience so that it leads to significant behavior change. For that reason, our shortest classes run three days, while long classes require an investment of two to three weeks.

We want people to think differently about themselves and about their work.”

~ Bob Chapman, CEO Barry-Wehmiller

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Our “Special Offer” is subject to change. Learn about our current offer!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Special-Offer

“The only thing worse than training an employee and having them leave, is to not train them, and have them stay.” ~ Zig Ziglar

24

FACILITATE TEAM-BASED INSPIRATION

ENGAGE THE PEOPLE IN THE PROCESS

“The problem is most people overestimate the importance of an event and underestimate the power of the process.” ~ John C. Maxwell

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Download a book study script in the “Options to Implement” section!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Implement

*“As a leader, and ultimately a mentor, you have the responsibility and privilege to grow those around you and help them become their absolute best.”
~ Mike Davis*

25

FOCUS ON IDENTIFICATION

IDENTIFY YOUR CULTURE CHAMPIONS

“When I first started coaching, people told me to put my five best players on the court. But I learned early on that this was not the key to success. It wasn’t putting the five best players on the court that was going to cause us to win. It was putting the five players on the court who could work together the best.

We won championships because we put people together. They weren’t always our best players.”
~ Red Auerbach, 9-time NBA championship coach of the Boston Celtics (16 championships overall as coach, general manager, and front office president)

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“A coach will call out the champion in you. They will see your potential. They will speak it over you. And, they will demand it from you.” ~ Tom Mullins

26

SUPPORT INTENTIONAL PREPARATION

TRAIN AND DEVELOP YOUR IN-HOUSE TRAINERS

“When you invest in emerging leaders, it means you’re serious about creating the future rather than just hoping it works out.” ~ Mark Miller

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Learn more about certifying your champions!

Visit: BlueCollarLeadership.com/Certifications

“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

COMPONENT 5

EXECUTION

27

AVOID STAGNATION

**WITHOUT EXECUTION,
THERE WILL BE STAGNATION**

“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

Develop your sales team with Mack’s character-based-selling book:
[Who’s Buying You? Until You Sell Yourself, You Won’t Sell Much](#)

“Above all, success in business requires two things: a winning competitive strategy, and superb organizational execution. Distrust is the enemy of both.” ~ Robert Shaw

28

THE LEADER IS ALWAYS RESPONSIBLE

THE LEADER IS EITHER MAKING IT HAPPEN
(GOOD OR BAD), ALLOWING IT TO HAPPEN
(GOOD OR BAD), OR PREVENTING
IT FROM HAPPENING (GOOD OR BAD)

*“Culture is owned by the CEO,
whether he or she admits it or not.” ~ Edward Schein*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

Help your team learn to put first things first!

Visit: RiaStory.com/TimeManagement

*“Every time you open your mouth, you create culture.”
~ Stephen R. Covey*

29

CREATE THE TRANSFORMATION

POSITIVE CULTURE CHANGE WON'T JUST
HAPPEN, A LEADER MUST MAKE IT HAPPEN

*“If you want to start creating a Leadership Development culture...then do the following:
Champion Leadership—Define and model good leadership. Teach Leadership—Train leaders on a regular, frequent, consistent basis. Practice Leadership—Help emerging leaders to plan and execute, fail and succeed. Coach Leadership—Review new leaders’ performance and correct their errors. Reward Leadership—Reward good leadership with pay, resources, and recognition.”
~ John C. Maxwell*

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*“Create an organization that prizes the development of ability—and watch the leaders emerge.”
~ Carol S. Dweck*

30

CULTURE EQUALS CHARACTER

YOU CAN'T IMPROVE THE CULTURE OF
THE ORGANIZATION WITHOUT IMPROVING
THE CHARACTER OF THE PEOPLE
WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

“Culture and character are built daily, not in a day.”
~ Mack Story

CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

“Vision without execution is hallucination.”
~ Thomas Edison

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Mack has also written [Blue-Collar Leadership®: Leading from the Front Lines](#), [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...don't miss the 45 minute "How to Facilitate a High Impact Book Study" online training video located on the same page as the interview.

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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- ✓ Workshops: Onsite/Offsite Half/Full/Multi Day
- ✓ Leadership Development Support: Leadership, Teamwork, Personal Growth, Organizational Change, Planning, Executing, Trust, Cultural Transformation, Communication, Time Management, Selling with Character, Resilience, & Relationship Building
- ✓ Blue-Collar Leadership® Development
- ✓ Corporate Retreats
- ✓ Women's Retreat (with Ria Story)
- ✓ Limited one-on-one coaching/mentoring
- ✓ On-site Lean Leadership Certification
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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. 5 of 30) from
Blue-Collar Leadership®:
Leading from the Front Lines

THERE IS AN “I” IN TEAM

EVERY TEAM IS MADE OF “I”NDIVIDUALS

“I’m just a plowhand from Arkansas, but I have learned how to hold a team together – how to lift some men up, how to calm others down, until finally they’ve got one heartbeat together as a team. There’s always just three things I say: ‘If anything goes bad, I did it. If anything goes semi-good, then we did it. If anything goes real good, they did it.’ That’s all it takes to get people to win.” ~ Paul “Bear” Bryant

Paul “Bear” Bryant was one of the greatest college football coaches to ever lead a team of young men down the field. He was also a “*plowhand*” from Arkansas. A blue-collar worker. The blue-collar world has produced some of the greatest leaders of all time, so you should be proud and hold your head high. *Without them, the world as we know it would not exist.*

There’s nothing holding you back but you. As my blue-collar friend, Donovan Weldon, stated so well, *“The only person between you and success is you. MOVE! The only person between you and failure is you. STAND FIRM!”* Those are strong words of wisdom. Donovan started on the bottom just like you and me. But today, he’s the CEO of Donovan Industrial Service in Orange, TX near Beaumont.

Donovan’s success didn’t happen by accident. He made it happen. You can make things happen too! He’s a blue-collar leader that believes in and develops his team on a regular basis. I know because my wife, Ria, and I had the privilege of being brought in to speak to his team about leadership in 2014. They are making it happen on purpose for a purpose!

It’s time for you to stop playing small and start playing tall.

A college degree is not required for you to play at a higher level. Not having one is simply an excuse some people use to continue playing small. If you want a college degree, use what you will learn on these pages to find a way to get one. If you don't want a college degree, use what you learn on these pages to make it happen without one.

You are the key to your success. You must believe in yourself. You must grow and develop yourself, which is what you're doing as you read this book. Do not stop growing! And when the time is right, you must bet on yourself.

Understanding your role as a team member is another must. Those on the front lines often underestimate themselves because they can't see the big picture. They can't see the value they have to offer. Far too often, their boss isn't a high impact leader and needs a lot of growth and development too. Bosses are often given the title without any formal development.

When I write about the front lines on these pages, I'm not only talking about the people in entry level positions. They are obviously on the front lines, but they also have leaders that are on the front lines with them and various team members supporting them too. They can all learn from these pages.

This book was written specifically for anyone at any level that visits, interacts with, or works on the front lines.

The principles I share with you must be applied if you want to make a high impact and be recognized for leading from the front lines. Regardless of your position, the more you apply these principles, the more options you will have, and the more positions you will be offered as you climb even higher.

Teams are made up of "I"ndividuals, so there are many I's on every team, regardless of how many times you hear, *"There is no I in TEAM."* As a matter of fact, *you are one of them.* Every person on a team is an "I" and has the potential to lead (influence) the team, positively or negatively.

"Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less."

~ John C. Maxwell

You must understand there are many official and unofficial teams in the organization where you work. They are very dynamic and constantly changing.

When most of us think of which team we are on, we immediately think of our peers, the ones on the same crew, in the same department, or working on the same job. This is our core team, but it only represents the smallest team we're on. We also support other teams too, as others support our team.

When we choose to contribute beyond our immediate team, we are choosing to be part of a bigger team. Often, this only requires a choice to do so. Your choice to get involved in other areas sends a clear message to the high impact leaders.

When you play tall, you choose to contribute because you know it will increase your influence and your impact on the front lines. If you want to play tall, you should want to be noticed, to be selected, to volunteer, to share information, to accept more responsibility, and ultimately, to make a contribution at a higher level.

As a direct result of your choice to step up, your influence increases. You're demonstrating you can lead from the front lines and will be seen and respected by all high impact leaders as a high impact leader. Your actions will not go unnoticed.

When you play small, you choose not to contribute because you don't want to do more. If your goal is to coast until pay day, it won't be a secret you can keep. When you make every effort not to be noticed, not to be selected, not to volunteer, not to share information, not to accept responsibility, and ultimately to not contribute, *you will absolutely be noticed.*

As a direct result of your choice not to step up, your influence decreases. Your influence on the front lines and with your leaders will be diminished. You are more likely to become reactive and frustrated blaming others for what you have chosen. Blaming others will further reduce your influence.

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

"The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable." ~ Peyton Manning

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

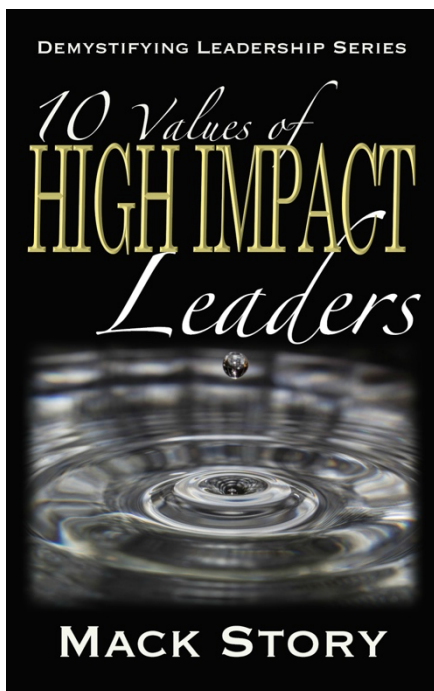
“Our reputations do not come from how we talk about ourselves. Our reputations come from how others talk about us.” ~ Simon Sinek

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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TopStoryLeadership.com



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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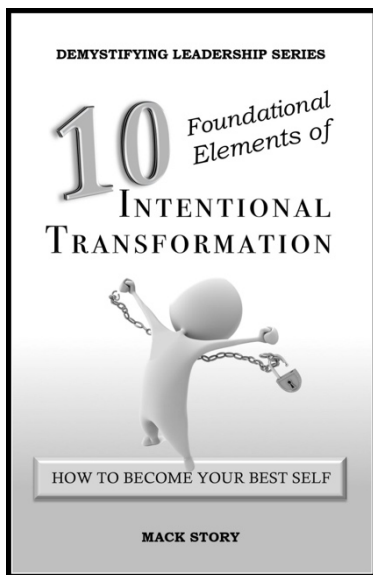


Are you looking for transformation in your life? Do you want better results? Do you want stronger relationships?

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.

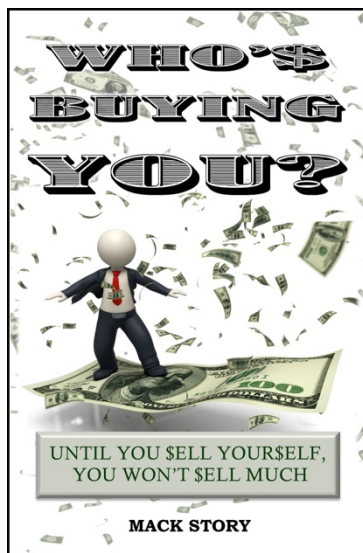
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10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation serves as a source of motivation and inspiration to help you climb your way to the next level and beyond as you learn to intentionally create a better future for yourself. The pages will ENCOURAGE, 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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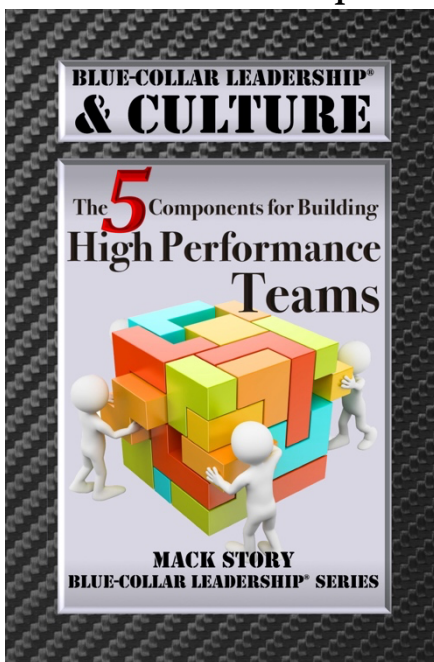


“Sales persuasion and influence, moving others, has changed more in the last 10 years than it has in the last 100 years. It has transitioned from buyer beware to seller beware” ~ Daniel Pink

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



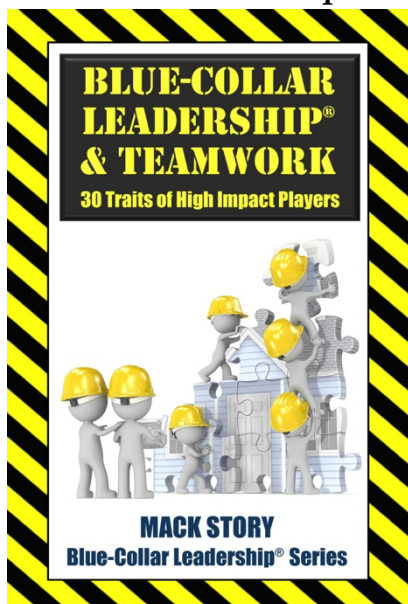
It's easier to compete when you're attracting great people instead of searching for good people.

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?

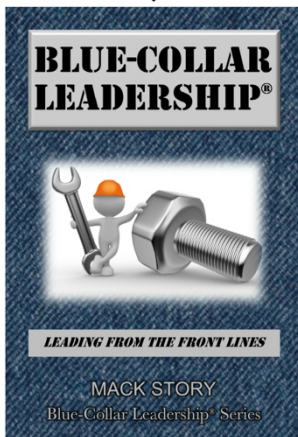
In today's high stakes game of business, the players on the team are the competitive advantage for any organization. But, only if they are on the field instead of on the bench.

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
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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.

**Order books online at Amazon or
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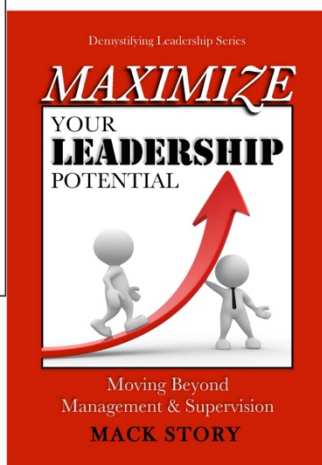
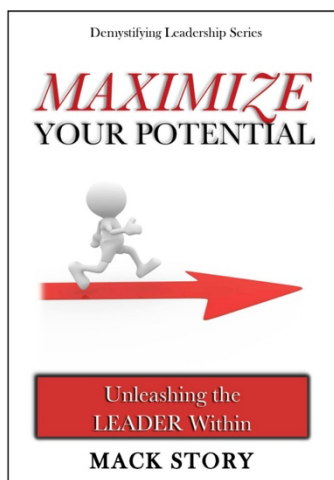


The biggest challenge in process improvement and cultural transformation isn't identifying the problems. It's execution: implementing and sustaining the solutions.

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)

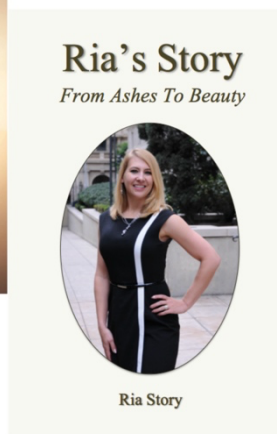
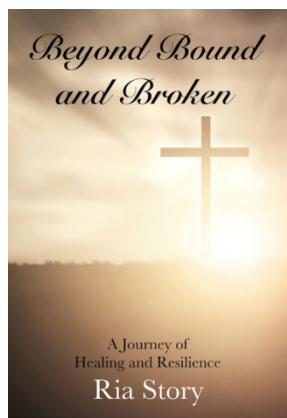
For the first time, Ria publicly reveals details of the extreme sexual abuse she endured growing up. 13 years after leaving home at 19, she decided to speak out about her story and encourage others to find hope and healing.

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

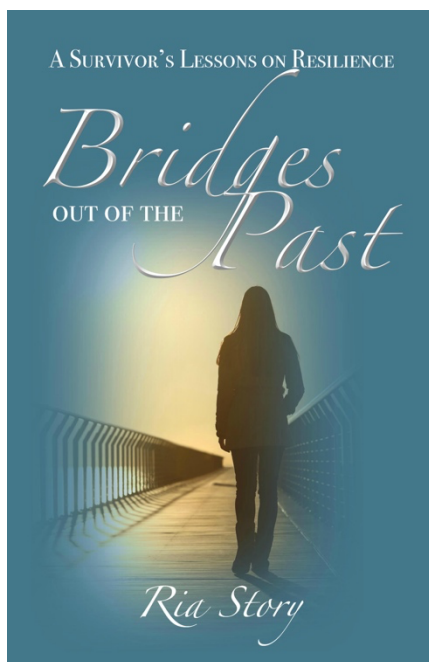
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In *Beyond Bound and Broken*, Ria shares how she overcame the shame, fear, and doubt she developed after enduring years of extreme sexual abuse by her father. Forced to play the role of a wife and even shared with other men due to her father's perversions, 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.

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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.

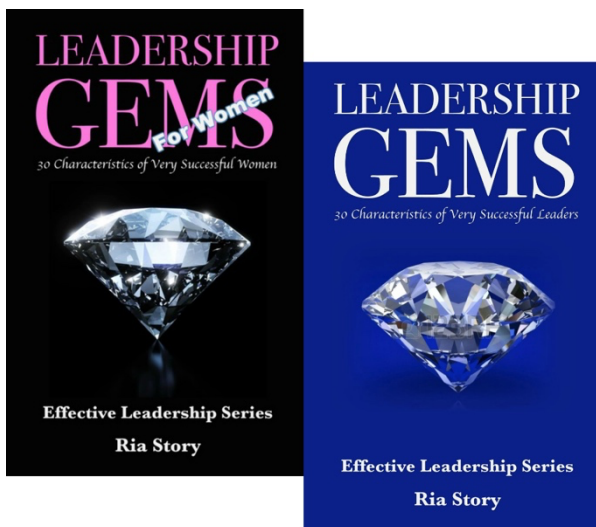
Gain unique insight in, *“Fearfully and Wonderfully Me: Become the Woman You are Destined to Be”* and the accompanying workbook to help you: believe in yourself and your potential; embrace your self-worth; overcome self-limiting beliefs; increase your influence personally & professionally; and achieve 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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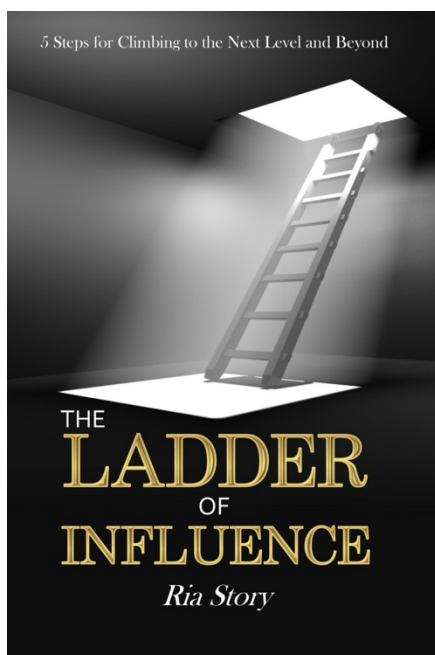


Note: Leadership Gems is the generic, non-gender specific, version of Leadership Gems for Women. The content is very similar.

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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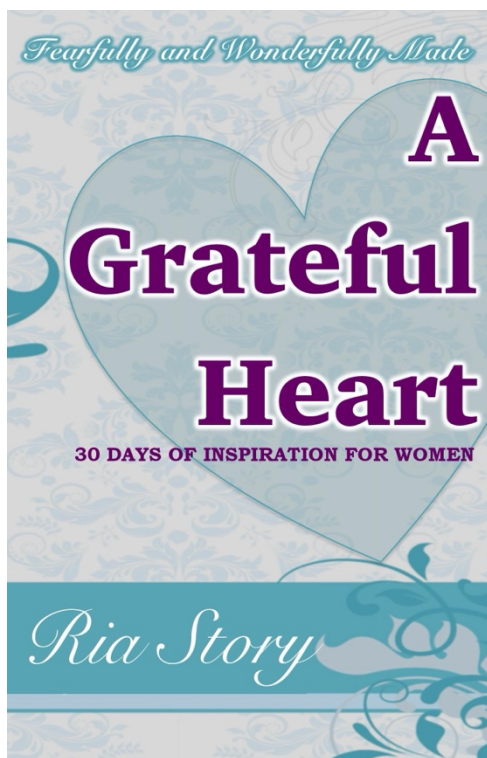


The Ladder of Influence® provides a powerful, yet simple, framework to help you realize the practical steps you can take to increase your influence with the people around you: family, friends, co-workers, your boss, etc.

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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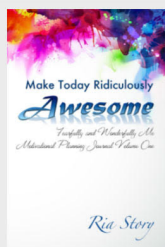


Become inspired by this 30-day collection of daily devotions for women, where you will find practical advice on intentionally living with a grateful heart, inspirational quotes, short journaling opportunities, and scripture from God's Word on practicing gratitude.

Motivational Planning Journals

Choose a theme for the season of your life!

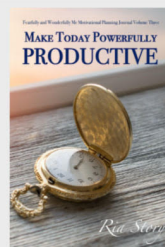
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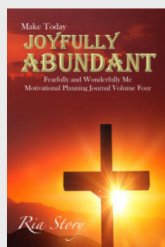
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Purposeful/Living
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Productivity



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Make the Most
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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!**

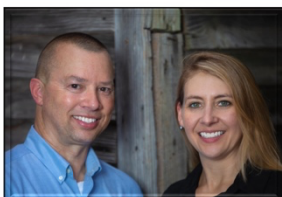
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Ria's *Effective Leadership Series* books are written to develop and enhance your leadership skills, while also helping you increase your abilities in areas like communication and relationships, time management, planning and execution, leading and implementing change. Look for more books in the *Effective Leadership Series*:

- *Straight Talk: The Power of Effective Communication*
- *PRIME Time: The Power of Effective Planning*
- *Change Happens: Leading Yourself and Others through Change (Co-authored by Ria & Mack Story)*

Top Story Leadership



Top Story Leadership simplifies foundational leadership principles into everyday language and easy to apply and understand concepts, so organizations and individuals can turn potential into reality. Mack and Ria Story are Certified Speakers and Trainers. They are published authors with more than 32 books available on leadership development, personal growth, and inspirational topics.

- Equip Organizational Leaders
- Encourage Positive Change
- Educate & Empower
- Engage the Front Line to Improve the Bottom Line

Leadership Speaking & Development

Leadership Made Simple

- Leadership Development/Personal Growth
- Cultural Change/Transformation
- Communication/Trust/Relationships
- Time Management/Planning/Execution



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!"

~ 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."

~ Stephen, President-elect, WCR

"Mack and Ria understand people! The dynamic team made such an impact on our front line supervision that they were begging for more training! We highly recommend Mack and Ria!"

~ Rebecca, Director of Process Improvement, GKN



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~Sam McLamb, VP & COO, CMP

"Joining forces with Mack was a revolutionary opportunity for our company. We have achieved incredible results while witnessing the growth and development of our associates as they have been empowered."

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~ Amir Ghannad, Campbell's Soup & Author of The Transformative Leader

Blue-Collar Leadership® provides leaders with a platform for training and developing their workforce to unleash their potential by taking powerful leadership concepts and packaging them in easy to understand and apply resources for:

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- Equipping the Leaders
- Engaging the Front Line
- Encouraging Positive Change
- Empowering Lean/Kaizen Leaders

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.

334-728-4143

Mack@MackStory.com

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FRONT LINE
To **IMPROVE** the
BOTTOM LINE!



If you're willing to invest in your
Blue-Collar team, I am too!

~Mack Story

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"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, and I stress, not your everyday leadership seminar!" Sam, VP & COO



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