

5 Steps for Climbing to the Next Level and Beyond

THE
LADDER
OF
INFLUENCE

Ria Story

The Ladder of Influence

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WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING ABOUT RIA AND HER BOOKS:

"I want to start by saying thank you... You made me want to try at life because you made me realize that you can make it anywhere you want, no matter where or what you are from. THANK YOU SO MUCH!" JONATHAN,
HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT

"Ria's book (Beyond Bound and Broken) is full of hope and inspiration, and she shows us that despite experiencing horrific trauma as a young adult, that if we choose to, we can get past anything with the attitude that we bring to our life... Her book is full of wonderful quotes and wisdom."
MADELEINE BLACK, AUTHOR OF UNBROKEN

"I am using your material to empower myself and my female clients. Thanks for sharing your story and a wonderful journey of growth."
SUE QUIGLEY, LICENSED CLINICAL THERAPIST

"Very few 'victims' would be willing to share such a personal story. However, nothing about Ria is average. She chose to rise above her painful past and now positions it in a way to offer hope and healing to others who've been through unspeakable abuse. Ria's faith and marriage keep her grounded as she reveals the solid foundation which helps her stand as an overcomer. Read this story and find yourself and your own story strengthened."

KARY OBERBRUNNER, AUTHOR AND FOUNDER OF
AUTHOR ACADEMY ELITE, ON RIA'S STORY FROM
ASHES TO BEAUTY

"Thank you, Ria, for bringing our conference to a close. You were definitely an inspiration to all of us! Awesome Job!"
MELINDA, PRESIDENT AGS

The Ladder of Influence

"Beyond Bound and Broken is a deeply inspirational book; one that will stay with you for years to come. The lessons are deep, yet practical, and her advice leads to clear solutions. This is a profoundly hopeful book. We all face pain, difficulty, and doubt but with resilience, we can lead vital, flourishing lives. Ria's story although sometimes painfully difficult to read because of the trials she endured is a story of great courage and compassion both for herself as victim and for those who betrayed her. Forgiveness is a strong theme as is courage. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is struggling to move forward after experiencing a great trial." AMAZON CUSTOMER

"...it was awesome! Ria has a real gift. I came away with so many helpful tools! Thank you, Ria."

STEFANIE, CONFERENCE ATTENDEE

"May God continue to bless your efforts. Your triumph is a great joy, and a gift to all that would hear or read it."

LOUIS O., HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCATE

"What an inspiration you are to all of us especially the women audience. Your book is a clear example & step by step guide on how to become an effective leader. It is so easy to read and simple yet meaningful which is the beauty of this book."

K. POONWALA, CUSTOMER SUCCESS MANAGER, ON LEADERSHIP GEMS FOR WOMEN

"I was truly inspired by your presentation and the life lessons taught."

JENNIFER, CONFERENCE ATTENDEE

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riastory.com/testimonials*

For those who have the courage to climb
to the next level and beyond.

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INTRODUCTION

We all want, and at some level need, to be successful in life.

Regardless of whether we are a CEO of a multi-billion dollar organization, a mid-level manager in a small company, or a front-line associate, we want to be successful at what we do. And, we want to be successful at influencing the people around us at home, at work, and within our circle because, let's face it, life gets better when we have more influence with other people.

When we have more influence with other people, we get more opportunities. When we have more influence, we have more options. When we have more influence, we have more choices.

Life will always be better with more options, more opportunities, and more choices.

Influence is one of the most profoundly complex, and at the same time, incredibly simple concepts. We all have some influence, yet we all want more influence. Simple. But who, how, where, when, and why we influence as well as how we in turn are influenced by others is incredibly complex because people are incredibly complex. Situations are different. People are dynamic. Relationships are complicated.

For example, we can't influence our boss the same way we influence our children. (We would never attempt to bribe our boss the way we bribe our children to get them to behave in the grocery store!) We may not be able to influence our next-door neighbor in the same way we would influence our mother. We can't influence our teammates the same way we influence our spouse.

And, we can't influence anyone else in the same ways as we influence *ourselves*.

The Ladder of Influence

In 2008, I read my first real “leadership” book. It cracked open a door to the brand-new-to-me concept of influence being a skill **I could develop** instead of being a trait I was either born with or born without.

That book helped me understand **we all have the ability to increase our influence and how much better our lives will be when we do.**

The Ladder of Influence represents 5 Steps we can use to climb as we strive to reach the next level and beyond, personally and professionally. What will this book mean to you? Only you can answer that. Maybe you are dreaming of a better relationship with your kids. Maybe you are dreaming of more influence and more options in your career. Maybe you are dreaming of both of these things and much more.

I want you to dream of “something better” because that dream is the inspiration and starting point for change. As Amy Tan said, *“We dream to give ourselves hope. To stop dreaming, well, that’s like saying you can never change your fate.”*

Most of the time, “something better” is possible. The question is, are you committed to putting in the work to achieve it? In other words, are you willing to sacrifice what is necessary to make your dream a reality? Hope starts with dreams, but you must put in the work to turn your dreams into your reality.

As Colin Powell stated so well, *“There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.”*

Any time you are climbing, effort and work will be required. You will struggle at times. Trust me, no one ever accidentally ended up on top of Mt. Everest. Climbing the Ladder of Influence will require energy, focus, time, and dedication, as you invest into yourself, your future, and your success.

If you are looking for shortcuts, there aren’t any. This

isn't a "get rich quick" book, or a "become a 7-figure sales person in 7 days" program you can enroll in for just \$99. This isn't a "get skinny, popular, and successful in 12 steps" video series.

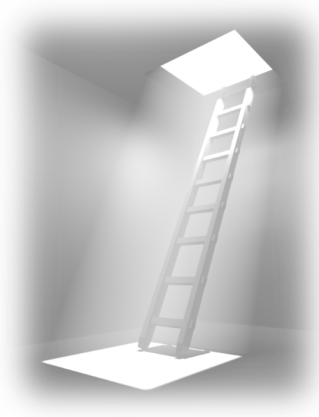
This is a road map, a guide. When using any road map or guide, you must still do the traveling yourself. I can show you the steps, but you must do the climbing.

The steps I'll be sharing are principles. And, much like gravity always applies (at least, here on earth!), the principles here will always apply. I will also be sharing some practical application tips for increasing your influence both at home and at work. These applications are my suggestions based on my experience but are simply that: suggestions. You know your situation best, so take my suggestions, use what you can, and don't be afraid to think beyond what is in this book. If you find yourself struggling, revisit the principle and consider a different way to apply it. There are many ways to apply and benefit from a principle.

Along the way, there will be detours. You will encounter challenges. You will make mistakes. But, the beauty of a journey without end is there is no timeline. You may climb as fast or as slow as you choose.

The key is to keep climbing. Much like driving across the country, you cannot see the entire journey ahead before you begin. But, if you drive to the first bend in the road, you will be able to see a bit farther. And, as you drive a bit more, you will see a bit more.

Stay your course. Keep going. Keep growing. Keep learning. And above all, keep climbing.



Chapter One

THE LADDER OF INFLUENCE

“Influence is ultimately an outcropping of trust - the higher the trust, the greater the influence.”

~ Dale Carnegie

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: friends, family, followers, co-workers, your boss, team members, community members, children, spouses, and maybe even ex-spouses too!

There are three truths you must know:

- 1) **You can't change anyone except yourself.** This isn't a book about how to change others, fix others, or make other people listen to you. This is a book about accepting responsibility for what you can change. And then, having the courage, making the choice and taking the action to do so. Most of the time, you can increase your influence with someone. However, you must stop blaming them and start working on what you can change – yourself.

This is not easy to do. The reason we blame other people is it's easy. If it's “their fault,” then we don't have to do anything to improve the situation. We blame others because there is only one alternative. The moment we stop blaming others is the moment we must accept responsibility. Humans naturally want to externalize blame. But, that doesn't serve us. What if we always believe it's up to the other person to change the situation, but they never do? The greatest limiting belief is the victim mindset.

Playing the victim will not take you forward in life.

Playing the victim won't help you be successful.

Playing the victim won't allow you to realize your potential, fulfill your purpose, or achieve your goals. Avoid the victim mindset at all costs. You cannot change everything, but you always have the power to change yourself. Find the courage to change yourself, and develop the wisdom to understand that changing yourself changes the world. *Your* world.

- 2) **There will be people you simply cannot influence.** These people do not share your values. Perhaps that near-retirement, fussy, been-there-forever person you work with isn't interested in being influenced by a 30 year old with new ideas. They simply aren't going to change, for you or anyone else, because they don't value growth, change, or seeing things "get better."
- Perhaps the fairly new, young front desk associate you hired won't read the personal growth book you recommended to her, although she won't stop complaining about not being promoted quickly enough. She simply doesn't value sacrificing her Netflix-every-night habit to invest in her own development. You will be able to influence most people, but there will be a few who don't want your influence. Don't hate them, blame them, or fight them. They are heading in a different direction in life. It's their life, and they get to choose the path they will travel.
- Stay positive, stay true to your course, and keep climbing. You may be surprised one day to discover you've gained influence with them simply because you refused to give up on doing the right thing and staying positive.

- 3) **You will never stop climbing.** That's because you will be at different places at different times in different relationships. You may climb to the fourth step in one relationship. Then, you meet someone new and have to start again at the bottom as you begin developing that relationship.

There are five "steps" on the Ladder of Influence. You will find yourself striving to climb to different levels at different times with different people. And, just like a real ladder, you can't skip steps. On a real ladder, you must use the step below to climb to the one above. You cannot stand on the third step of a ladder until you've climbed past the second step. Even in long term relationships where you have achieved a certain level of influence, you must never forget that your influence was built from the ground up – and with every interaction, you must remember to start with the bottom step, *Control of Self*.

If you fall off the Ladder and lose all influence, you may be able to rebuild the relationship but only by going back down to step one and starting again. And even then, you may not be able to repair the relationship. Relationships are built on trust, and trust is like an egg. Once dropped, it's difficult to put Humpty Dumpty back together again without some permanent damage. Remember, relationships should never be taken for granted.



Chapter Two

WHY A LADDER?

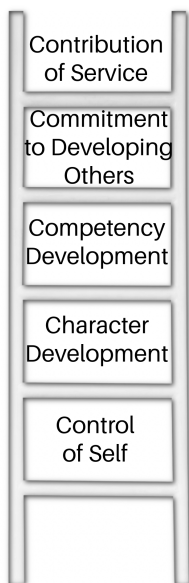
The Ladder of Influence

“When you increase your influence, you increase your options.”

~ Mack Story

Influence is incredibly dynamic. You can obtain some influence simply from having a title or position of authority such as manager, owner, or police officer. But, this type of influence is limited, because people who follow you because they “have to” only do what they “have to.” In this book, I will focus primarily on authentic influence – that is, influence based on who you are as a person, how you interact with people, and the relationships you have with others.

Why do I use the framework of influence as a ladder? To begin with, it’s clear there are different degrees of influence. I use the framework of a Ladder because the degrees of influence stack on top of one another.



You can build influence with people around you simply because you are proactive and have *Control of Self*, or you can

lose influence if you don't. This is easier to understand when you consider the following. I bet you've never lost your temper, yelled at someone, and thought, "I think they'll like and trust me more now!" Or, have you ever had someone get mad and blame you for something, and you trusted them MORE as a result? Most likely, the answer to this question is no.

As time passes, your *Character* will strengthen or weaken relationships. For instance, you'll generally have much more influence with your spouse than you will with someone you have just met. However, if you have developed a bad relationship with your spouse, you may not have a lot of influence in that relationship either.

You will also develop a certain amount of influence based on your *Competency*. For example, if you are excellent at your job, have a reputation as being an expert, or perhaps have become highly skilled after years of gaining experience, you'll have a degree of influence with someone who comes to you for help at work.

If you've ever had a trusted mentor pour into you for an extended period of time, they likely had a high degree of influence with you. Perhaps they took time to mentor you, counsel you in difficult times, or gave you good advice. They built a high degree of influence with you based on their *Commitment to Developing Others* (namely, you).

Someone like Mother Teresa still has tremendous influence long after her death, even with those she has never met. She has influence based on her *Contribution of Service over Time*, the highest step on the Ladder of Influence.

You move to a higher degree of influence as you climb higher on the Ladder. And, you can't simply jump to the top step. You must start climbing from the bottom. This applies whether you are in a professional environment at work or a personal environment at home.

Authentic influence is based on relationships which are determined by character and values. In other words, relationships are built on trust. The more trust you have in the relationship, the more influence you will have.

Developing trust takes time.

Developing a high degree of influence takes time.

It's important to note that influence can be positive or negative. There are, and have been throughout history, some powerful influencers who used their influence in negative ways. Hitler for example. The difference is whether influence is used to manipulate and control or to motivate and inspire others to achieve positive results.

Remember, my focus in this book is to help you develop *authentic* influence which is based on who you are as a person. I'm not concerned with the amount of *artificial* influence you may have because of your title, position, rank, or a specific situation.

To truly develop your influence and leadership as a person in a position of authority, I highly recommend a book written by my husband Mack Story, "*Blue-Collar Leadership & Supervision*®." Even if you don't consider yourself "blue-collar," the content will be relevant.

Of course, I'm biased because I'm married to him. But, his book explains how to excel at leadership and influence as a person with a title or position far better than most "leadership" books I've read. Download free excerpts from this and most of his other books at BlueCollarLeadership.com/download. No email required. No subscription or registration. No signing up for a spammy sales pitch or newsletter. Just another resource we provide to help you climb.

RESOURCES APPENDIX

Download free chapters from most of Ria and Mack's books at:
RiaStory.com/Download

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Fearfully and Wonderfully Me: Become the Woman You are Destined to Be, Ria Story
- 2) PRIME Time: The Power of Effective Planning, Ria Story
- 3) 10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation, Mack Story
- 4) Blue-Collar Leadership®: Leading from the Front Lines, Mack Story
- 5) Defining Influence, Mack Story
- 6) The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, Stephen R. Covey
- 7) The Five Levels of Attachment, Don Miguel Ruiz, Jr.
- 8) The 5 Love Languages, Dr. Gary Chapman
- 9) Leadership and Self-Deception, Arbinger Institute

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Straight Talk: The Power of Effective Communication, Ria Story
- 2) Change Happens: Leading Yourself and Others through Change, Mack and Ria Story
- 3) Creative Followership, Jimmy Collins
- 4) The Speed of Trust, Stephen M. R. Covey
- 5) Who's Buying You?, Mack Story
- 6) Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork, Mack Story

IDENTIFYING YOUR PASSION/PURPOSE

- 1) ACHIEVE: Maximize Your Potential with 7 Keys to Unlock Success and Significance, Ria Story
- 2) Put Your Dream to the Test, John C. Maxwell
- 3) The Purpose Driven Life, Rick Warren
- 4) Start with Why, Simon Sinek
- 5) The 8th Habit, Stephen R. Covey

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- 1) Leadership Gems/Leadership Gems for Women, Ria Story
- 2) Blue-Collar Leadership® & Culture: The 5 Components for Building High Performance Teams, Mack Story
- 3) Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision: Unleash Your Team's Potential, Mack Story
- 4) 10 Values of High Impact Leaders, Mack Story
- 5) The 5 Levels of Leadership, John C. Maxwell
- 6) Leaders Eat Last, Simon Sinek
- 7) The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership, John C. Maxwell
- 8) It's Your Ship, Captain Michael Abrashoff

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[*The Ladder of Influence: 5 Steps for Climbing to the Next Level and Beyond*](#) is available at

RiaStory.com or
on Amazon

RESOURCES FOR PERSONAL GROWTH AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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RiaStory.com/Podcast

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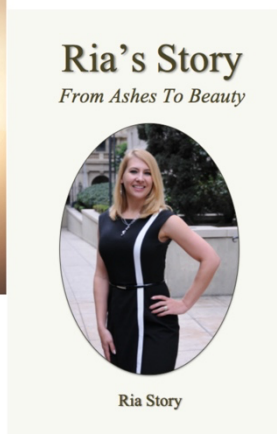
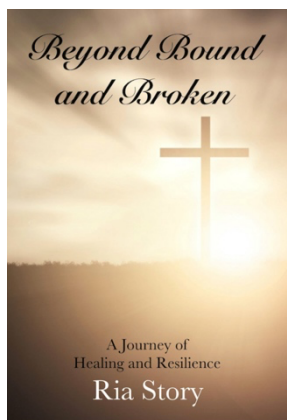
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LinkedIn: linkedin.com/in/riastory

Instagram: instagram.com/ria.story

**Or email Ria at:
Ria@RiaStory.com**

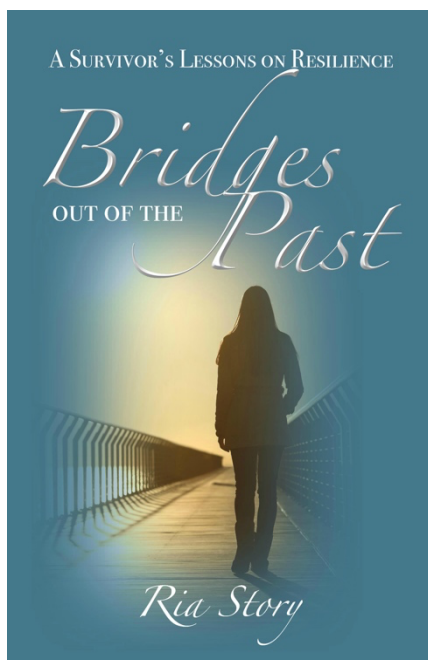
Read more books by Ria



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

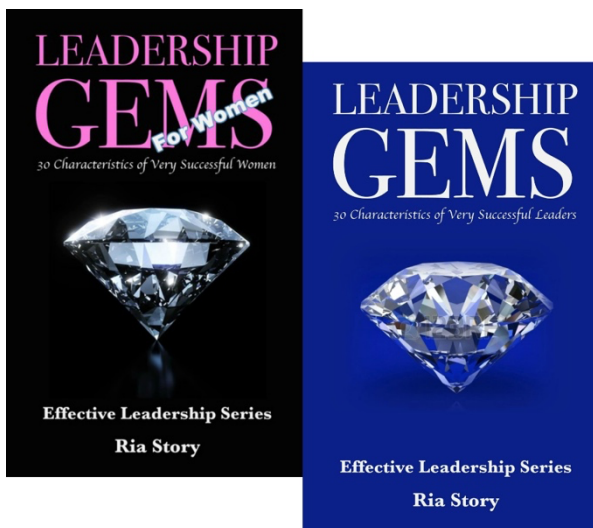
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It's not what happens to you in life. It's who you become because of it. We all experience pain, grief, and loss in life. Resilience is the difference between *"I didn't die,"* and *"I learned to live again."* In this captivating book on resilience, 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)

**Order books online at Amazon or
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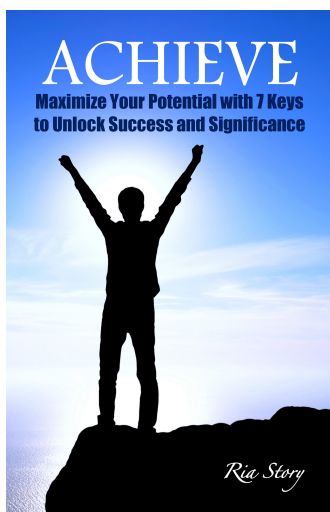


Note: Leadership Gems is the generic, non-gender specific, version of Leadership Gems for Women. The content is very similar.

Women are naturally high impact 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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You have hopes, dreams, and goals you want to achieve. You have aspirations of leaving a legacy of significance. You have untapped potential waiting to be unleashed. But, unfortunately, how to maximize your potential isn't something addressed in job or skills training. And sadly, how to achieve success and find significance in life isn't something taught in school, college, or by most parents.

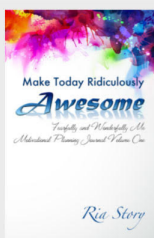
In *ACHIEVE: Maximize Your Potential with 7 Keys to Unlock Success and Significance*, Ria shares lessons to help you become more influential, more successful and maximize your potential in life. Three-page chapters are short, yet powerful, and provide principles on realizing your potential with actionable takeaways. These brief vignettes provide humorous, touching, or sad lessons straight from the heart that you can immediately apply to your own situation.

The Ladder of Influence

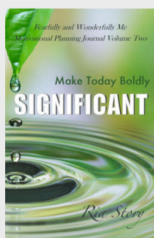
Motivational Planning Journals

Choose a theme for the season of your life!

Now available at Amazon.com or RiaStory.com



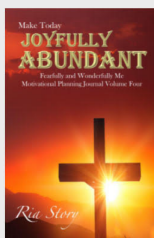
Motivational



Purposeful/Living
Your Legacy



Productivity



Joy/Faith



Resilience



Make the Most
of Today

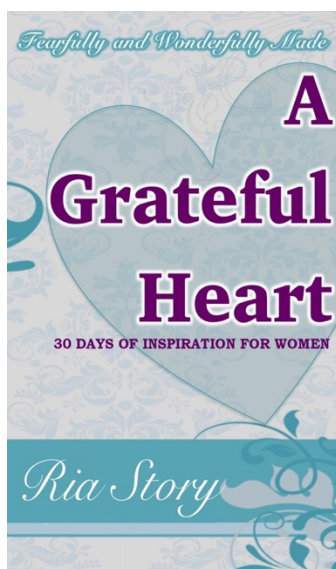
Start each day with a purposeful mindset, and you will achieve your priorities based on your values.

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

Each journal in the series has different motivational quotes

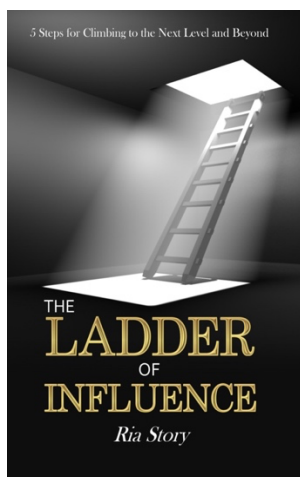
and a motivational theme. Choose one or get all six for an entire year's worth of **Motivational Planning!**

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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.

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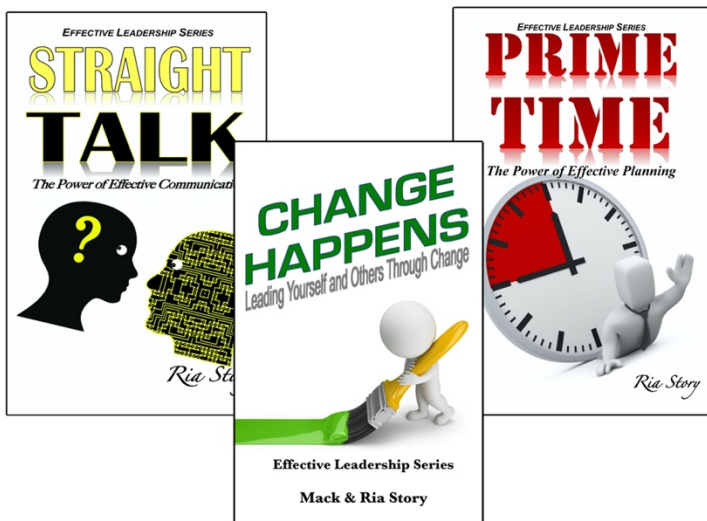


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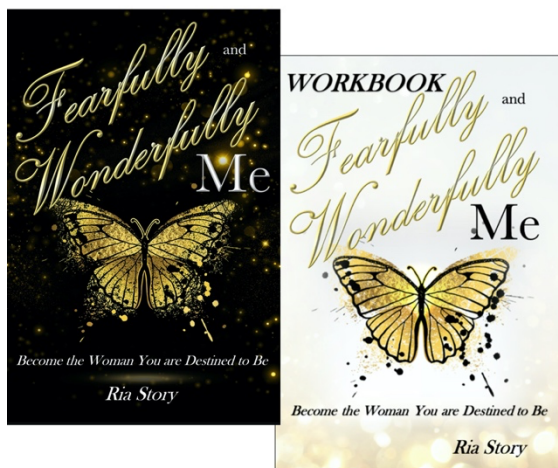
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Ria's *Effective Leadership Series* books are written to develop and enhance your leadership skills, while also helping you increase your abilities in areas like communication and relationships, time management, planning and execution, leading and 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)*
- *Leadership Gems & Leadership Gems for Women*

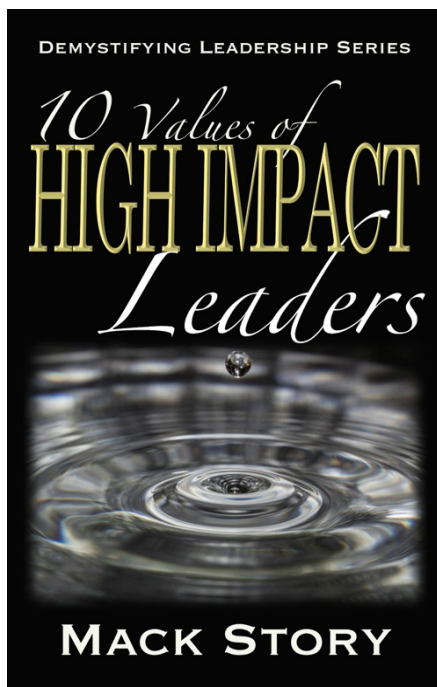
Read more books by Ria



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.

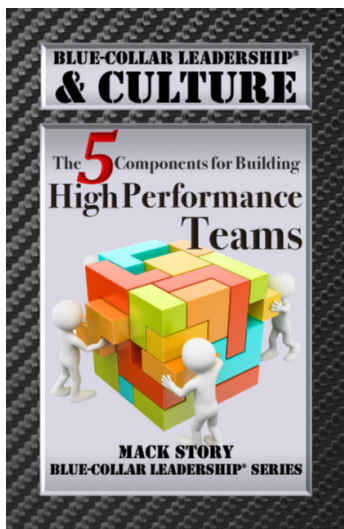
Ria Story brings unique insight in her book, “Fearfully and Wonderfully Me: Become the Woman You are Destined to Be” and the accompanying workbook to help you: believe in yourself and your potential; embrace your self-worth; overcome self-limiting beliefs; increase your influence personally & professionally;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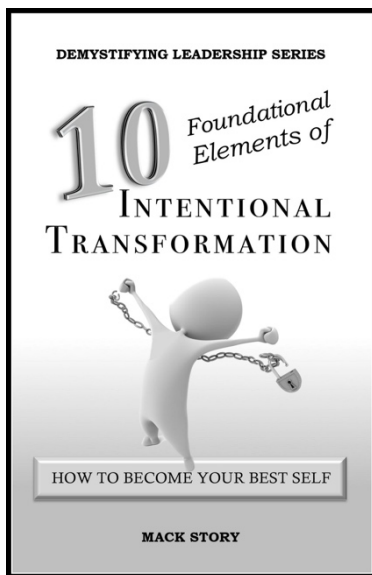


Are you looking for transformation in your life? Do you want better results? Do you want stronger relationships?

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.

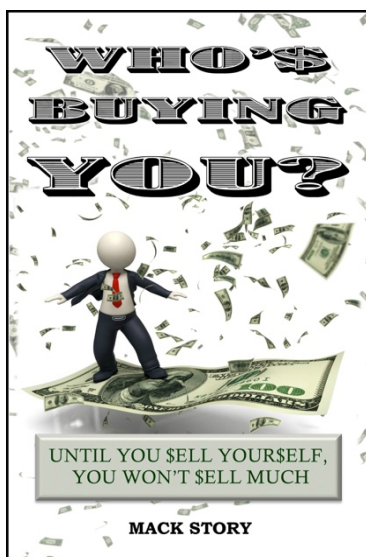
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10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation serves as a source of motivation and inspiration to help you climb your way to the next level and beyond as you learn to intentionally create a better future for yourself. The pages will ENCOURAGE,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

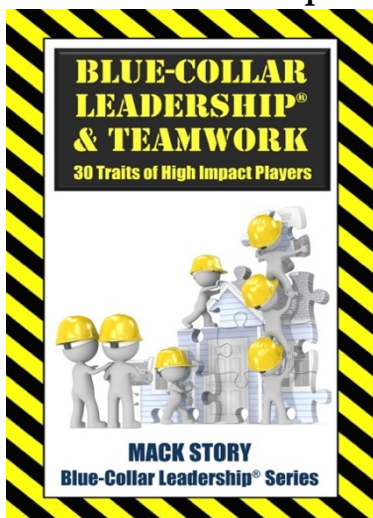
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“Sales persuasion and influence, moving others, has changed more in the last 10 years than it has in the last 100 years. It has transitioned from buyer beware to seller beware” ~ Daniel Pink

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.

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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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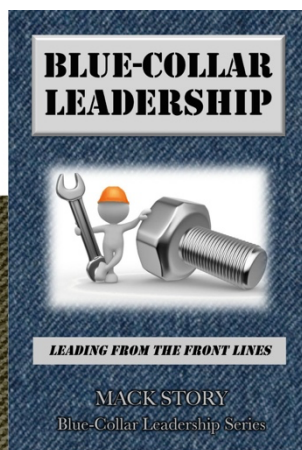
**Fast and Effective Workforce & Leadership
Development for Team Members and Leaders at
Every Level**

Leaders are **BUSY**. The greatest challenge High Impact leaders face in leadership development is the struggle to find time.

Workforce development is **critical** for creating a leadership culture that attracts, retains, and engages top talent. Unfortunately however, opportunities for growth, team building, and leadership development are often pushed aside, second to project deadlines, customer needs, and urgent job details.

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

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"I wish someone had given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career on the front lines. They would have changed my life then.

They can change your life now." ~ Mack Story

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

**Down load the first 5 chapters of each book FREE at:
BlueCollarLeadership.com**

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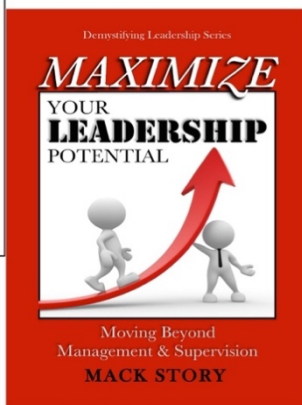
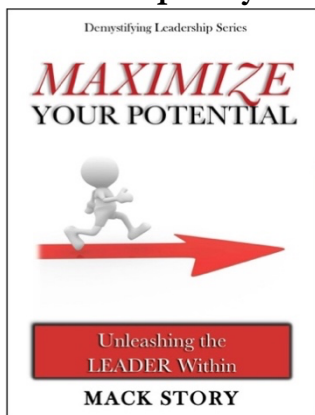


The biggest challenge in process improvement and cultural transformation isn't identifying the problems. It's execution: implementing and sustaining the solutions.

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.

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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.

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 20 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



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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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