

5 STEPS TO STAND IN YOUR POWER AS A LEADER

The Hidden Leader is highly skilled, often well-liked and works tenaciously. However they frequently get lost in the shadows, battle with self-doubt and lets those who shout the loudest run the show. With uncertainty becoming the norm, these leaders face getting left behind.

These 5 steps will help you lead with confidence, certainty and conviction.

This framework will:

- Build your certainty in YOU
- Empower you to find your voice and take risks
- Drive your team cohesion by enhancing communication and trust
- Increase your influence and elevate your value
- Provide your unique blueprint to implement inner change
- Put you in the driving seat for where you want to take your career

1. There is no such thing as failure it is feedback

We all put limiting beliefs on ourselves which prevent us from progressing forward within our role and developing our leadership style. Changing our limiting beliefs is possible and the good news is you have full control to do this. It is time you called them out and challenged them.

A common limiting belief in leaders is: 'I better not do that as I may fail and be judged'. This is a huge obstacle, as it immediately moves leaders out of a place of learning and growth into safety, and ultimately, inaction. When you shift the thinking around this, re-word it and instead deliver it as: 'There is no such thing as failure it's feedback', it is transformed. This new belief creates huge potential for growth, risk-taking and innovation.

Exercise one:

- 1: Think of up to 3 future challenges that are coming up (stick with short-term for now) and making you feel apprehensive. E.g. Speaking on a company-wide video meeting to 100 people next week
- 2: Consider the worst thing that could happen for each scenario: e.g. I could panic and lose my words
- 3: Ask yourself whether you can handle this or not

Future challenges:

The worst thing would be:

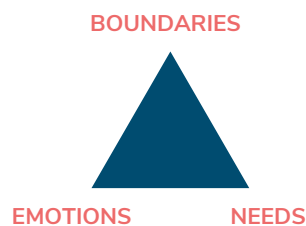
Can I handle it? YES / NO:

2. Build your certainty in YOU

This is a two-step process. The first step is increasing your self-awareness. A lot of time is spent looking at your external world and worrying and guessing what people think of you. Not enough time is spent looking inside, 'your internal world' and what you think of yourself. How are your thoughts, feelings and the stories you tell yourself shaping who you are? Are you 'being' the person you want to be or are you conforming and playing a role to fit in and be accepted?

The second step is to build your self-esteem so that you fully trust and back yourself.

The Self-esteem Triad:



Boundaries

All relationships need boundaries. A boundary is an imaginary line that separates you from another. They separate your physical space, your feelings, needs, and responsibilities from others. Your boundaries also tell other people how they can treat you – what's acceptable and what isn't.

Needs

We have 6 universal core human needs. These are:

- Certainty - assurance you can avoid pain and gain pleasure;
- Uncertainty/Variety - the need for the unknown, change, new stimuli;
- Significance - feeling unique, important, special or needed;
- Connection/Love - a strong feeling of closeness or union with someone or something;
- Growth - an expansion of capacity, capability or understanding;
- Contribution - a sense of service and focus on helping, giving and supporting others.

How many are currently being met resourcefully or unresourcefully?

Emotions

Our emotions come from our subconscious brain. They are the starting point from which we create our thoughts and feelings. Being able to label our emotions and allowing ourselves to experience them is the start of finding out what you truly value and what is important to you. The 8 core emotions are: joy, trust, fear, surprise, sadness, anticipation, anger, and disgust.

Exercise two:

For you to live your life on your terms and feel confident to challenge the status quo, you need to spend some time working through what boundaries you need to have in place. You must uncover what your needs are, if they are being met, and question how you respond to emotions.

Reflection:

Using the space below firstly reflect on what boundaries you want to introduce in your life. Then review your needs and how they're currently being met. Take the time now and this week to notice your emotions and label them, this will be the first step in beginning to understand them.

Boundaries:

Needs (score between 1-5 with 5 being high, if your needs are being met in personal and work life):

Certainty:

Uncertainty:

Significance:

Connection:

Growth:

Contribution:

Emotions:

3. Raising your standards

Our personal standards set the benchmark for who we can become. Although many leaders feel like their personal standards are their driving force in how they conduct business and lead their teams, there are day-to-day behaviours many exhibit that can undermine this.

Look at the following and notice if you did any of these in the last two weeks:

- Turned up to meetings late
- Agreed in a meeting and then disagreed with a smaller group afterwards
- Avoided difficult conversations
- Treated all your team the same and expected them to deliver
- Used your phone in meetings
- Cancelled your 1-2-1's with your team

These 'small' moments can have a big impact on your ability to advance in your leadership journey. Each one of these represents a low personal standard that you have displayed not only to yourself, but to your team.

Instead, look at the people who are having the success you want to be achieving and delve into the standards that drive this success. This is called modelling excellence, and is an easy way to identify what personal standards you need to make central to your leadership.

3. Raising your standards

Exercise three:

1: Think about where you are aiming to be in your career. Think of a leader who exists within that world who you admire.

2: Write down the standards this leader has. Eg. The standards I have modelled to achieve success include: show up 100%; be fully present when someone is talking to me; give feedback to help people grow

3: Choose 1 that you identify with and commit to applying this standard into how you lead this week

Standards I want to have:

The one standard I will model this week is:

4. Be kind to yourself

To change and grow you need to ensure you have self-care rituals in place to look after your mind and body.

The essential self-care step when it comes to being kind to yourself, is to notice how you talk to yourself. The voice in your head can have a lot of power over the decisions and choices you make for your life and career. Ultimately it can determine the success levels you achieve.

Being aware that you can control the voice is your starting point. You are then able to understand that the voice is ultimately trying to keep you safe. When we are trying to change, our ego (our subconscious brain), doesn't want us to. It's very happy with where we are, as we have taught it that this is what is safe for us. The biggest thing to note is that the subconscious brain doesn't know the difference between what is good and bad for you, it learns that what you do on a repeated basis must be what you want.

When you begin the process of changing the voice, you are letting yourself know that you are okay to grow.

4. Be kind to yourself

Exercise four:

1: It's time to get to know your inner critic. In the space below, give it a name and a character; either draw or describe how you see her/him existing. You have full creative freedom to go wild here! Ask yourself how she/he looks? How does she/he sound? What is she/he wearing? etc...

2: Next time your inner critic pipes up, address them directly by their name. Listen to what they have to say, thank them for trying to help you and then give them permission leave.

Eg. My inner critic is called Spike, he has a penchant for piña coladas. When he shows up I thank him. I acknowledge that he is just trying to look out for me but I tell him that I'm ok. I can handle this, and he can go back to enjoying cocktail hour.

My inner critic:

5. Take action

Steps one to four are very important but without taking action beyond reflection, and starting to change how you show up for yourself and your team, you will remain a Hidden Leader.

It doesn't need to be a big dramatic overnight change. The process of emerging as a courageous leader, one who operates with certainty, courage and resilience, is an evolving process which takes time.

Change often begins in small ways. Small movements gather momentum, making way for far-reaching sustained change. Below are some examples of how you can begin to activate this day-to-day in your leadership:

- Speak up in a meeting if you disagree with what is being said
- Have the difficult conversation and not find reasons to be busy to avoid it
- Share your ideas
- Give feedback to peers if they are misaligned to the culture of the company

5. Take action

Exercise five:

- 1: Go back through this workbook and pick the 3 areas you commit to doing differently this week
- 2: Make a note of them below and hold yourself to account

First change:

Second change:

Third change:

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WE CANNOT BECOME WHAT WE WANT
BY REMAINING WHAT WE ARE

- Max Depree

Joanna Howes



These 5 steps transformed my life. From lacking in confidence and self-belief to backing myself and leading a successful business.

You are able to do exactly the same if you are committed to be the best version of yourself and step into your power as a leader.