

CHAPTER 1

You and Your Inner Leader

Coaching business professionals in high-impact industries to maximize their leadership performance is my expertise. This book is the culmination of the real-life experiences that my clients have faced: how they have unleashed their Inner Leader to live their legacies and develop into world-class leaders. The pages that follow are filled with real-life case studies, exercises, and personal stories that can help leaders like you to:

- Identify and leverage individual and team strengths to maximize performance
- Discover and understand how personal values drive your decisions and behavior
- Recognize and promote your career currency
- Take successful risks by discovering personal vision and purpose
- Build a personal brand and maximize both yours and the company's brand to make customers want to work with you
- Learn how to be more productive and how to delegate and empower your team

- Become a better mentor or mentee
- Communicate powerfully by improving your personal language
- Realize the power of networking to successfully evolve your career
- Understand how to better use the interview process to build a world-class team
- Determine and live your Leadership Legacy

Each chapter starts with a scenario (case study) based on a real client with whom I have worked (note that names have been changed to protect client anonymity). Each coaching session demonstrates an issue, challenge, or situation that the client has encountered. Based on this conversation, the pertinent parts of the situation are discussed and matched to a leadership concept. You are then engaged with powerful questioning that will prompt new thinking. The chapter continues with other examples of coaching sessions on related topics and with more discussion. Each chapter concludes with exercises that will help you incorporate this concept into your life. I highly recommend doing each of the exercises. It has been my experience that reading about a concept and thinking about it is the first step, and you will never make the desired change unless you take action and actually go through the steps to effect your own personal change. This is the recipe for lasting change that leads to success.

PART ONE OF THE BOOK

The book is organized into three parts. The first is dedicated to getting to know yourself. The concept being that leaders who are totally in touch with themselves and know what they are good at, what their vision is, and what impact they can make in their world; can begin to lead others and help others make their own impact.

In Chapter 2 you will meet Alexandra, who identified and leveraged her strengths to find her own voice. This then propelled her to negotiate a new position and then lead her new team from a position of strength. A strength is doing what you love to do and what you are good at. Once identified, you can leverage this to be happy in your career.

Understanding that your personal values are the rock that you stand on is one of the first tenets of leadership introduced in Chapter 3. When your environment is in sync with your values, you can produce your best work. When your values are being compromised, you are not on firm footing and your Inner Leader cannot shine through.

Chapter 4 will teach you how to recognize the impact that you have made in your organization. This is your career currency. Most people do not realize how much currency they truly have or how to spend it wisely within their organizations. When you learn how to promote the impact that you and your team have made, then others will understand your value to them and your career will evolve.

Building and maximizing your personal brand is the subject of Chapter 5. It is only once your vision, purpose, and goals become clear that you can begin to take successful risks with your career and your team. Your Inner Leader will have a guiding beacon for knowing what risks are right for you.

The exercises in Part One will be exercises for you to get to know yourself, which can sometimes be the hardest. Do not get discouraged; self-knowledge is an exciting self-discovery journey and essential to unleashing your Inner Leader. The case studies and the additional coaching stories are meant to illustrate the chapter concepts and give you *real-world* examples.

PART TWO OF THE BOOK

Part Two of this book is dedicated to the major topics that my clients have requested coaching on. Being more productive or doing more with less is always at the top of the list. Part of being more productive is learning how to delegate. Most leaders got to their current position by executing results. Once they find themselves in a position of leadership (whether formal or informal), letting go of the job and allowing others to do it is a very difficult thing. There are certain skills and techniques presented in Chapter 6, in the form of exercises to help you with being a successful delegator and improving productivity.

The next chapter is on mentoring. Mentoring is the most underrated key to leveraging your success. Mentoring is the relationship between two people in which there is mutual learning and sharing.

Developing yourself and your team into a world-class group of experts is what leadership is all about. This is the shortest chapter and in some ways the most powerful.

Communication is a leader's best friend, and the concept of examining your personal language is vital. As you will see in Chapter 8, many successful leaders sabotage themselves by using personal language that diminishes their success. You will learn to recognize powerful phrases and questioning techniques to communicate more powerfully.

Most leaders are so busy influencing results that they have little time for evolving their career. The only person whose job it is to evolve your career is *you*. In Chapter 9, you will learn about networking and interviewing. After driving results, when leaders come up for air, they realize that they do not have the appropriate skills to network effectively. Networking is the single biggest key to building your career because it is people who help you get promotions and new positions.

There is also a section on interviewing in Chapter 9. This might seem out of place in a leadership book, but being able to cut through the clutter and interview someone effectively (whether you are the interviewer or the interviewee) can ensure that you have the best people matched to the most important jobs in your organization.

Sustainability of strong leadership is the end goal to unleashing your Inner Leader. I call this *determining and living your Leadership Legacy*. Many of my successful clients came to me after a long (20-plus years) career, wanting more. . . wanting to follow their personal values and brand to still drive results, but in a more compassionate way. This is the time in their career that they want to *build and live* their Leadership Legacy. Chapter 10 will take the individuals from the case study in each chapter, which you will come to know, and extend their story to how they are currently living their Leadership Legacy.

PART THREE OF THE BOOK

The book's Part Three is a huge departure from the first two, in that it is a grouping of inspirational and motivating stories. There is nothing like hearing how "someone else did it" to help motivate and move us forward. While writing this book, I asked my community to share

what inspires them. I received a large number of responses, which told me that inspiration was important to all. The inspirational stories are divided into the following categories:

- Guiding Principles
- Letting Go of *Me* to Get to *Us*
- Reflecting on the Past to Grow into the Future
- When *You* Are the Inspiration

In each of these categories the individual provides his or her inspiration and then tells the story of what makes this inspiration so important to them. It is amazing to feel all the changes that others have gone through and see the results of how they have handled their specific circumstances. In all these inspirational stories, having a clear goal for your behavior and your work gives clarity to living your Leadership Legacy.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

The way that you choose to read this book is, of course, up to you. If you want to read the whole book to get an overview and then go back and do the exercises, that is great. If you want to read it in spurts with the outcome of *you* immediately completing the exercises in each chapter, that is also a good strategy. The exercises will help you deploy the concepts and change your behavior within your leadership role. This is noted because the principles described in this book are about gaining unmistakable clarity about yourself to become a highly effective leader. I urge you not to gloss over the exercises but to truly commit to take the time to invest in yourself.

Another suggestion is to do the exercises with a friend, mentor, coach, or professional development group. A friend or mentor could be helpful while completing the self-knowledge exercises in Part One, because they know you well and could give you confirmation as you make self-discoveries. A coach or a professional development group could be helpful in discussing any of the techniques in Part Two with specific emphasis on changes in “process-oriented” personal interactions.

CHANGE MODEL: UNLEASHING YOUR INNER LEADER

Human behavior is one of the hardest things to change. Therefore, some of the exercises might be hard for you, because they are going to ask you to *change*. I tell the story of remodeling my kitchen. The trash container was moved five feet to the right of where it was previously. For more than a month, every time my husband and I went to throw something out, we literally went to the old spot. How ridiculous! My husband got furious with himself that he could not break such a simple habit. Yet, the research shows that you must consciously do something consistently for at least 30 days to build a new habit. Then, four months later, when I was especially stressed and went to throw something out, what did I do? You guessed it; I went to the “old” spot. The bottom line is that change is *hard*, and it takes a long time consistently implementing the new behavior for the change to become a constant.

I say this to encourage you to heartily embrace the changes discussed in the book and to understand that change is *hard*. Over the years I have built the following Change Model that I use for coaching, and it can also be used for any individual or organizational change (see Figure 1.1).

The first step is *Awareness*. Although the place where the awareness happens in each case study and chapter may be subtle, it will be found in every chapter of the book. As you read the case studies and concepts, begin thinking about your own life, and try to note how applicable this idea of awareness is for you. The exercises are designed to make this process easier and to ensure that you are very aware of the applicability of the leadership concept in your life. You might not

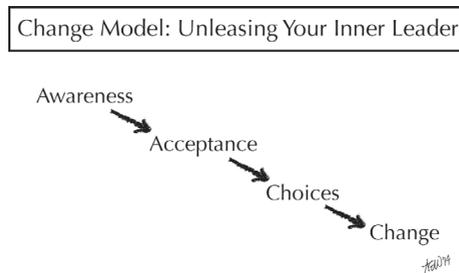


Figure 1.1 Change Model: Unleashing Your Inner Leader

be aware at first, and the exercises and case studies are designed to make you mindful of it.

The second step of *Acceptance* is much bigger than initially meets the eye. Say, for example, that you become aware that one of your underlying strengths is that you are extremely competitive. This is a great strength and should be used when right for the situation. You might have known this at some level before, but after doing the strengths exercises, you might find that this could actually be holding you back in certain instances. Accepting this fact may be difficult, and it is essential to you making a change to truly use your leadership powers and accept what you discover in the exercises.

The third step, *Choice*, might also be challenging for you. Earlier steps will show your awareness and personal commitment, which will in turn ensure your acceptance, but will you make the choice to change your competitiveness? Are you truly ready to change that behavior by accepting that only by changing you will get to the next level of leadership? Congratulations to you when you make that choice. Then and only after you have gone through these first three steps will you be able to successfully make a lasting change in your leadership behavior.

The last step, *Change*, is the final goal. Once you have gone through the first three steps, you might think that change is easy, yet remember the moving of the trash can. Change takes lots of effort over time to really make it a part of you. By going through these first three steps, you can be clear that you have chosen the right change for you, and your change efforts will be highly rewarded.

ABOUT YOU

As you absorb case and client studies in the pages that follow, the exercises in the book will challenge you to recognize the opportunities to lead that you may have not recognized in the past. To that end, have you ever asked yourself something similar to one of these questions?

- Have I ever wanted to stand up and lead someone and did not?
- Have I ever left a meeting wondering why it was someone else who voiced the important point, when I was thinking the same thing all along?

- Have I ever been late in volunteering for a lead role, only to have it given to someone else?
- Have I ever been in the position to take a calculated risk and at the last minute decided against the move?
- Have I ever wanted to be a better leader and not known where to start?

If any of these situations resonate with you, then I would ask you the following questions: What made you hesitate? What got in your way?

As my years of coaching more than 4,000 business professionals in 17 countries shows, the answers have been as varied as the individuals and the industries that they work in. However, the resulting concept is always similar; everyone has a leader within him or her, and with some help, everyone can unleash that leader to become powerful and impactful. That is what this book will show you how to do—unleash your Inner Leader.

In Chapter 2, you will meet Alexandra. As you absorb her story, look for parallels from her experience to apply to yourself. Make the commitment to know yourself, understand your strengths and weaknesses completely, and find clarity about yourself and the value that you have to offer. Peeling back these layers will reveal for you that when you truly know yourself and you have unmistakable clarity on who you are and what your value is, then you become a highly effective business professional, and your Inner Leader will be unleashed.

YOU AND YOUR INNER LEADER CHAPTER SUMMARY

- This book is the culmination of the real-life experiences that my clients have faced: They have unleashed their Inner Leader to live their legacies and develop into world-class leaders.
- Part One is dedicated to getting to know yourself, because only when you know yourself can you begin to lead others and help others make their own impact.
- Part Two is dedicated to the major topics that my clients have requested coaching on: improving productivity, delegation,

mentorship, personal language, networking, interviewing, and living your Leadership Legacy.

- Part Three is inspirational stories about guiding principles, letting go of *me* to get to *us*, reflecting on the past to get to the future, and when *you* become the inspiration.
- When you read this book, completing the exercises is essential. Whether you read it all the way through and then go back to do the exercises or do them as you read, I encourage you to actively participate in the exercises.
- Change is hard. To let your Inner Leader show through, you must be ready to make some changes to your behaviors, your actions, and potentially your beliefs.
- The Change Model consists of four steps: Awareness, Acceptance, Choice, and Change.
- After coaching more than 4,000 business professionals in 17 countries, the resulting concept is always similar: Everyone has a leader within them, and with some help, everyone can unleash their Inner Leader to become powerful and impactful.

