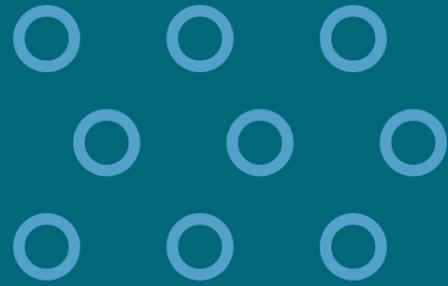


10



LESSONS FROM A MENTOR



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1

GET TO KNOW YOURSELF AT THIS POINT IN TIME

Before you can lead others, you must understand yourself. This means acknowledging your current strengths, weaknesses, motivations, and fears, without judgment. Your identity is not a fixed state, it's a living, evolving process. Where you are at today is your starting point for your tomorrow.

A powerful tool to help you with this is the Identity Compass. This framework is centered on you, helping you reflect on the different building blocks that make up your personal and professional identity. It's a way to create a clearer map of your inner world, so you're not navigating your life blindly.

The compass is divided into four quadrants, representing the key influences in your life:

- **Biology:** These are your non negotiable needs—your health, sleep, and natural rhythms. They are the fixed points on your compass, the foundation you must respect to function well.
- **Non-negotiables ("Have Tos"):** These are your essential commitments, like your job and family obligations. They are the anchors that give your life structure.
- **Interests:** These are your passions and what energize you. They are the pursuits that bring you joy and help you grow.
- **Negotiables ("Good to Haves"):** These are your desires and aspirations—the things that add pleasure and are part of your vision for the future.

WORK OUT YOUR PURPOSE AND DEFINE YOUR 'WHY'

2

This is your core purpose. It's the reason you do what you do that goes beyond financial gain or a job title. Your 'Why' is your compass, guiding your decisions and providing resilience during tough times.

This is perhaps the most fundamental step in your journey toward intentional leadership. Your 'Why' is your core purpose, cause, or belief. It's the reason you get out of bed in the morning, the driving force behind your actions and decisions. As Simon Sinek famously posits, truly inspiring leaders and organizations Start with Why.

Sinek's model is about shifting your focus from the what and how to the why.

- The Why: This is your purpose. It's your deep-seated belief or cause. For a leader, this isn't about personal gain, but about the impact you want to have on the world. It's what you stand for.
- The How: This is your process. It's the specific actions you take to bring your 'Why' to life. These are your unique values or principles that guide your work.
- The What: This is your product or service. It's the tangible result of your 'Why' and 'How.'



3

WORK OUT WHAT YOU ARE GOOD AT (YOUR UNIQUENESS)

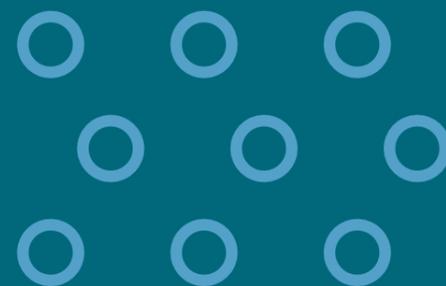
This lesson is about identifying your unique talents, skills, and perspectives—the things that set you apart as a leader. Your true value isn't just in what you can do, but in what you do differently and how you apply your personal strengths. This self-awareness is crucial for building authentic confidence and a leadership style that is uniquely your own.

To uncover your unique strengths, you can use several methods:

- Leadership Style Modelling - This involves reflecting on leaders you admire. By studying their styles, you can identify traits and approaches that resonate with you.
- Personality Tests - Tools like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or the DISC assessment can provide a framework for understanding your innate preferences and how you interact with the world. While these tests aren't definitive, they offer valuable insights into your natural tendencies, such as whether you gain energy from social interaction or quiet reflection.
- Reflection on Past Achievements and Satisfaction - Think back to moments when you felt a deep sense of satisfaction and achievement. These moments often reveal where your natural talents and passions intersect.

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PLAN OUT YOUR LIFE IN DIFFERENT TIME HORIZONS

4

Break down your goals into actionable steps across various timeframes. Think in terms of 10 years (vision), 3 years (major milestones), and 1 year (specific projects). This approach makes big goals feel manageable and keeps you focused on consistent, daily progress.

This is a practice that quiet leaders, in particular, excel at—they are meticulous planners who find clarity in structure.

- **10-Year Horizon (Vision):** This is where you define your long-term, audacious vision. It's not about the specific steps you will take, but about the future state you want to create for yourself and your community.
- **3-Year Horizon (Milestones):** With your 10-year vision in mind, you can define the major milestones you need to achieve over the next three years to get there. These are the big projects or significant shifts that will serve as stepping stones.
- **1-Year Horizon (Specific Projects):** This is where you get granular. Based on your 3-year milestones, what specific projects do you need to complete in the next 12 months? These are measurable, time-bound goals that you can actively work on.



5

EMBRACE BOTH YOUR SUCCESSSES AND FAILURES

A truly resilient leader understands that both success and failure are not final destinations but are essential parts of the same journey. Your successes build confidence and provide valuable feedback on what's working, but your failures often offer the most profound lessons and opportunities for growth. It's crucial to learn how to recognize and celebrate the former while learning from and moving on from the latter.

Recognize and Celebrate Your Successes – isn't always about a massive win or a major promotion. It's also found in the small, daily victories that build momentum and validate your efforts. To get better at this, you can:

- Practice Gratitude
- Reflect on the Journey
- Share Your Wins

Learn from Failures – the key is to shift your mindset from "I failed" to "This didn't work, and here is what I will do differently next time." This is a crucial skill for a quiet leader, who may feel the sting of rejection more acutely.

- Remove Emotion from the Equation
- Conduct a Post Mortem
- Accept and Move On

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6

SEEK OUT AND BUILD YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

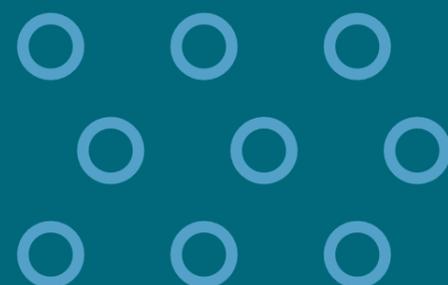
No one achieves greatness alone. Actively build relationships with people who encourage you, challenge you, and align with your values. Your network of mentors, friends, and collaborators is your most valuable asset.

Your support system is not a single entity; it's a dynamic group that fulfills different needs:

- **Mentors:** These are individuals who have traveled a path you wish to take. They offer wisdom, guidance, and can help you avoid common pitfalls. A mentor's role is to challenge your thinking and provide strategic insight, helping you see the bigger picture.
- **Peers:** These are people on a similar journey to you. They are invaluable for sharing experiences, celebrating small wins, and offering empathy during tough times. Your peer network provides a sense of belonging and helps you realize you're not alone in your struggles.
- **Sponsors:** This is a more formal role, where a powerful individual advocates for you in professional settings. A sponsor is someone who knows your work and is willing to put their reputation on the line to open doors for you. This is a critical relationship for career advancement.

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PRACTICE INTENTIONAL COMMUNICATION

7

This lesson is about understanding that communication is a skill, not just a natural ability. As a leader, your words and actions have significant impact. Practicing intentional communication means being mindful and deliberate with your message, ensuring it is understood as intended. It is about fostering an environment of clarity and trust. Trust comes from collaboration.

The Power of Listening to Understand involves:

- Giving your full attention to the speaker.
- Asking clarifying questions to ensure you've understood their perspective.
- Reserving judgment and creating a safe space for others to share their ideas.

Clarity Over Volume – A quiet leader knows that volume doesn't equal influence. Intentional communication is about crafting a clear, concise message that resonates with your audience. Before speaking, consider:

- What is the core message? Distill your idea down to its simplest form.
- Who is my audience? Put yourself in their shoes to understand their priorities and what they care about.
- What is the desired outcome? What do you want them to feel, think, or do after hearing your message?



8

NORMALISE FEELING STUCK OR UNCERTAIN

It's a natural part of any journey. Instead of fearing these moments, learn to see them as signals for reflection and change. It's a lack of clarity, not a lack of direction, and it's a call to re-evaluate your compass. Too often, we see these feelings as a personal failing, leading to frustration or self-doubt. A resilient leader, however, learns to see them for what they truly are: a lack of clarity, not a lack of direction.

The feeling of being stuck is often your inner compass telling you to pause and recalibrate. It's a signal to take a step back and engage in honest self reflection. Instead of pushing through mindlessly, this is the time to ask yourself key questions:

- What quadrant of your Identity Compass feels most out of alignment right now?
- Are your current actions and commitments truly serving your 'Why'?
- Are you in a state of comfort that is preventing you from growing?

When you normalize feeling uncertain, you can embrace the fear that comes with taking a calculated risk. This is the fear of the unknown, which is natural, but it's a fear you can work with. In contrast, the comfort of staying put often masks a deeper fear of change and potential failure.

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DON'T WAIT FOR THE PERFECT MOMENT

9

We often fall into the trap of waiting for the ideal conditions—more time, more money, more confidence, or the stars to align—before we take a leap. The truth is, that perfect moment rarely arrives. A leader's job is not to wait for certainty, but to embrace a level of calculated risk.

This involves being opportunistic. Many great things start with a simple "yes" to an opportunity before you have the full plan figured out. It's about having the courage to lean into an unknown. This mindset requires a balanced approach. It's not about being reckless, but about being resilient.

- Take calculated risks by asking:
- What is the worst-case scenario?
- Can I recover from this setback?
- What are the lessons I will learn, regardless of the outcome?

By embracing the fear, planning for potential consequences, and accepting that some of the best opportunities appear when you're just willing to start, you transform yourself from a passive observer into an active creator of your own journey.



10 CONTINUOUSLY PREPARE YOURSELF

This final lesson is a culmination of all the others. It's the understanding that your journey is not about reaching a final destination but about being in a constant state of growth and readiness. The opportunities you want to seize in the future aren't just a matter of luck; they are a direct result of the skills, resilience, and passions you are building today.

Think of your life as a workshop. Every experience you have—both positive and negative—adds another tool to your kit. The skills you hone in your job, the lessons you learn from a failed project, the resilience you build from a challenging conversation—all of these are preparing you for the opportunities that lie ahead. This means:

- **Never Stop Learning:** Stay curious and invest in acquiring new skills, whether it's through formal education, online courses, or just by reading widely.
- **Stay Passionate:** Nurture your interests. The things that bring you joy are often the same things that will provide unique opportunities and a sense of purpose later on.
- **Cultivate Resilience:** Embrace challenges as a chance to strengthen your ability to recover and adapt. A setback isn't a roadblock; it's a test of your character and a chance to learn.

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