
Lead Yourself First

A Self-Leadership Workbook

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The Self-Image Ceiling

| *"You cannot outperform your self-image."*

Your self-image — the story you tell yourself about who you are — sets an invisible ceiling on everything you do. How you lead. How you show up. What you believe you deserve.

The Scar Experiment

In 1980, researchers at Dartmouth College told participants they had a visible scar on their face, then sent them into conversations with strangers. What the participants didn't know: the scar had been secretly removed before the conversation began.

The result? Participants still reported the stranger was hostile, uncomfortable, and staring at their face.

Their belief about themselves created the experience.

This workbook gives you a 3-step framework to rewrite that story:

- | **1. Define.** Choose who you're becoming.
- | **2. Prove.** Find the evidence that it's already true.
- | **3. Ground.** Anchor it in beliefs that don't bend.

THE INTENTIONAL INFLUENCE FRAMEWORK

Clarity
Self-Influence

→ **Growth**
Team-Influence

→ **Impact**
Market-Influence

STEP ONE

Define Yourself

Leadership starts with identity — not skills, not tactics. Before you can lead others, you need to be clear on who you are when you lead. This section helps you articulate your leadership identity in your own words. Not your job title. Not your LinkedIn headline. The version of you that shows up when it matters.

When I'm at my best as a leader, people can expect me to...

Complete each statement. Be specific. Avoid job titles — focus on how you operate.

1. I am someone who...

e.g., "...stay calm when things go sideways"

2. I am someone who...

e.g., "...say the uncomfortable thing in the room"

3. I am someone who...

e.g., "...give a straight answer, not a corporate one"

4. I am someone who...

e.g., "...ship before it's perfect"

5. I am someone who...

e.g., "...protect their focus, not pile on more"

6. I am someone who...

e.g., "...choose discipline over motivation"

Before → After

Pick your top 3 statements above. Write what you used to believe next to what you're choosing now.

What I used to believe	What I'm choosing now
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>
<hr/>	<hr/>

STEP TWO

Prove Yourself

Saying 'I am someone who stays calm under pressure' is a start. But identity without evidence is just aspiration. Think of 3 real moments where you led well — and use them as proof that this identity is already emerging.

For each moment, answer these three questions:

What was the situation?	What did I actually do?	What does that reveal about me?
01		
02		
03		

Confidence built on compliments disappears. Confidence built on evidence compounds.

STEP THREE

Ground Yourself

Beliefs are the anchor. When pressure hits, you won't rise to the level of your goals — you'll fall to the level of your convictions. Write 3 beliefs that are non-negotiable for you as a leader.

As a leader, I believe...

1. _____
e.g., "Consistency compounds. Motivation fades."
2. _____
e.g., "I don't need permission to lead."
3. _____
e.g., "Clarity before strategy. Always."

My Non-Negotiables

Turn your beliefs into action. Write 3 commitments you'll hold yourself to:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Your Self-Leadership Operating System

This is your summary. After completing Steps 1–3, pull your best answers here. This is the page you photograph, pin to your wall, or revisit before any big moment.

My Top 3 Identity Statements

1. I am someone who _____
2. I am someone who _____
3. I am someone who _____

My Top 3 Evidence Points

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Top 3 Grounding Beliefs

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My Declaration

This is who I am:

The Intentional Influence Framework: Clarity → Growth → Impact

Self-Leadership Prompt

Paste this prompt into ChatGPT or Claude and follow the steps.

Role & Context

Act like an elite executive coach specializing in self-leadership and identity-based leadership development. Ground your coaching in: Maxwell Maltz's self-image theory, Viktor Frankl's values-based motivation, and self-affirmation research. Be practical, specific, and evidence-based.

Objective

Help me create a Personal Self-Leadership Protocol: a single, printable one-page document that defines who I am as a leader, independent of title, role, or company.

Operating Rules (non-negotiable)

- No generic leadership advice. Everything must connect to what I say.
- No jargon, no new frameworks, no reading lists.
- If any line sounds like a motivational poster, rewrite it until it sounds like something I would actually say.
- Keep the final protocol to one page: short sentences, compact bullets.

Phase 1 – Ask only these 4 questions (no advice yet)

- 1) What is your current role, and how long have you been in a leadership position?
- 2) Describe a specific moment when you led well – what happened, what did you do, and how did it turn out?
- 3) When leadership feels hardest for you, what's usually going on? (Be specific: conflict, ambiguity, pressure, isolation, self-doubt)
- 4) Name one leader you admire. What specifically about their leadership resonates with you?

Phase 2 – After I answer, build this in one response:

Step 1) Summarize my leadership profile in 3 bullets:

- My leadership context (role + experience level)
- My natural leadership strength (based on my story)
- My leadership pressure point (based on what I said is hardest)

Step 2) Build my Self-Leadership Protocol with these sections:

A) My Leadership Identity Statement

Complete: "When I'm at my best as a leader, people can expect me to..." – 3-4 statements anchored to evidence from my answers.

B) My Evidence Bank (3 entries)

Entry 1: Use my story → Situation → What I Did → What It Reveals.
Entries 2-3: Suggest likely situations; ask me to confirm or replace.

C) My Leadership Principles (3 "As a leader, I believe..." statements)

After each: "I would hold onto this even when it costs me ___."

D) My Weekly Clarity Check (3 Monday-morning reflection questions)

Each question reconnects to my Identity, Evidence, or Principles.

Final self-check before you send:

- Every line is traceable to my answers.
- The output fits on one page.
- Nothing generic remains.