

# RELENTLESS AF

**Chris Jones**

Leadership Development Companion Workbook



*“Success is going from failure to failure without loss of enthusiasm.”*

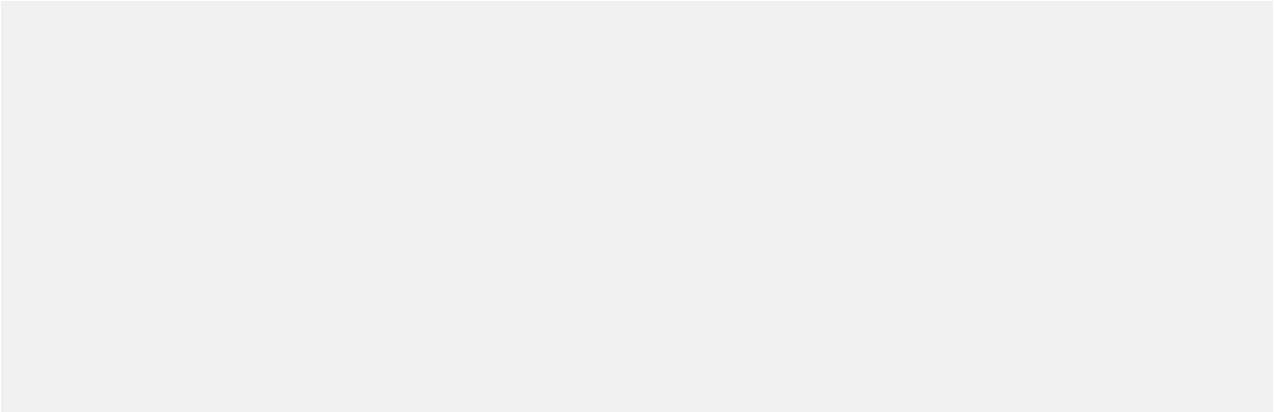
Sir Winston Churchill

# CHAPTER 1

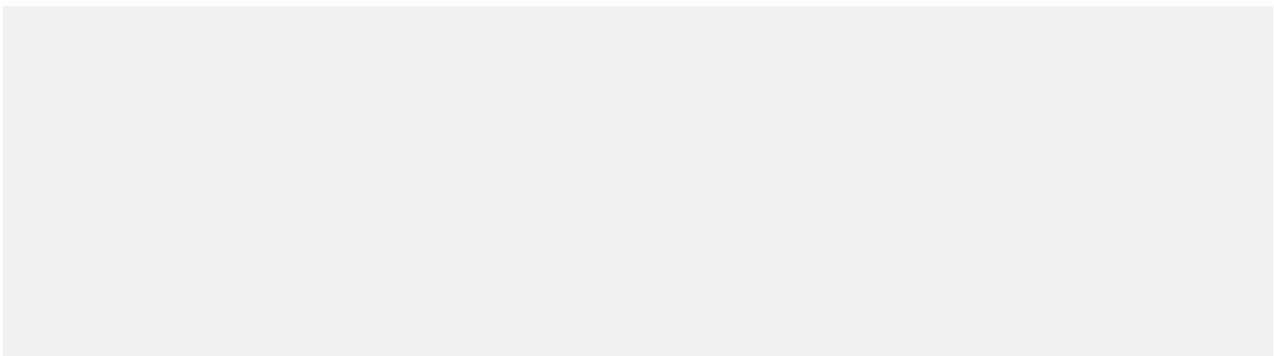
## Get to Know Your Game

Take a moment to think back and enjoy your own journey down memory lane.

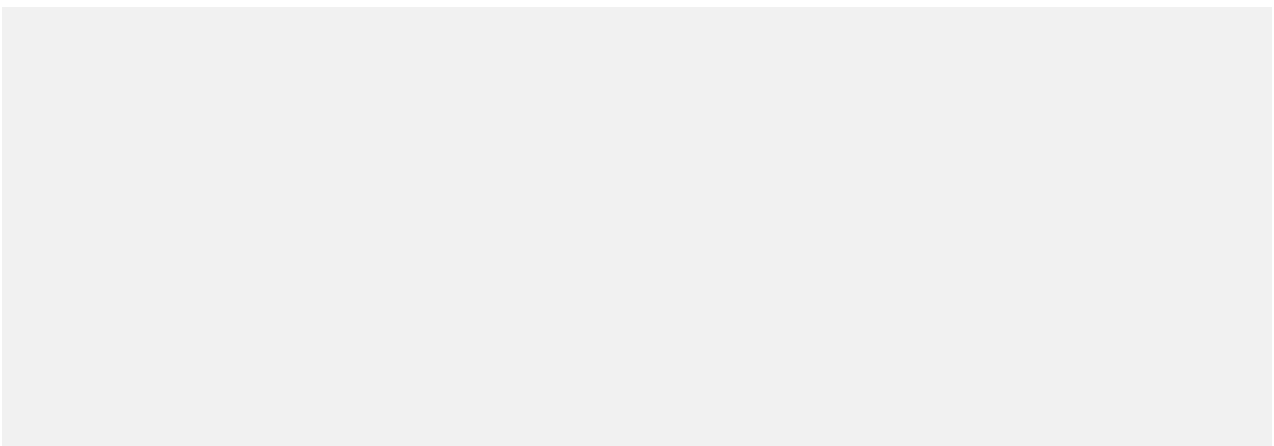
- 1 Look back at your history and think about what lessons you've learned along the way. Youth is often quite the roller coaster ride. Think of the big wins and toughest moments.



- 2 Think about your natural strengths and weaknesses and how those drove your decisions.



- 3 Reflect on the conversations that directed your major decisions. Once you've completed the reflection, take a second run-through by looking for patterns, trends, and key lessons learned.

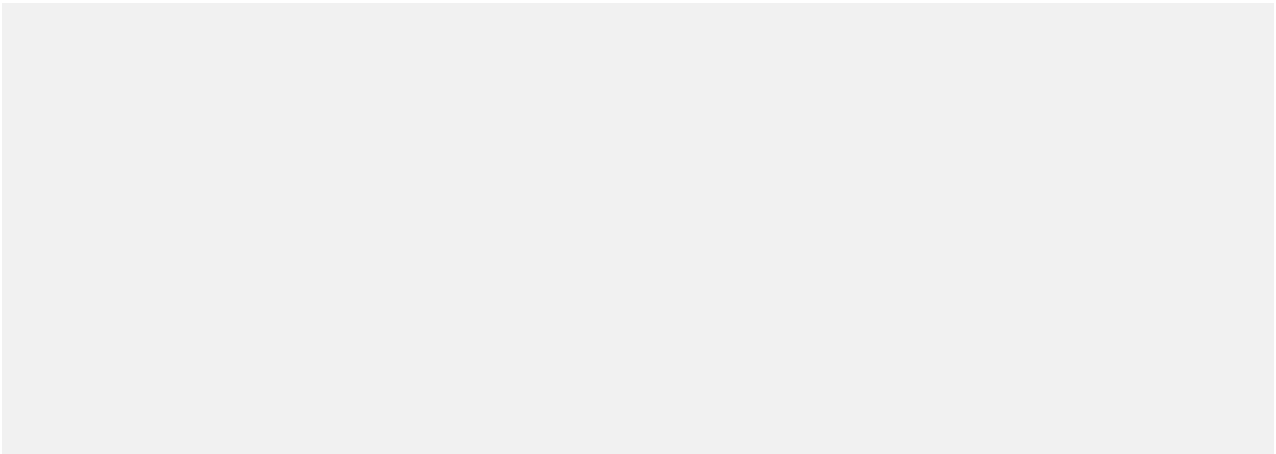


## Growth Exercise: Get to Know Yourself

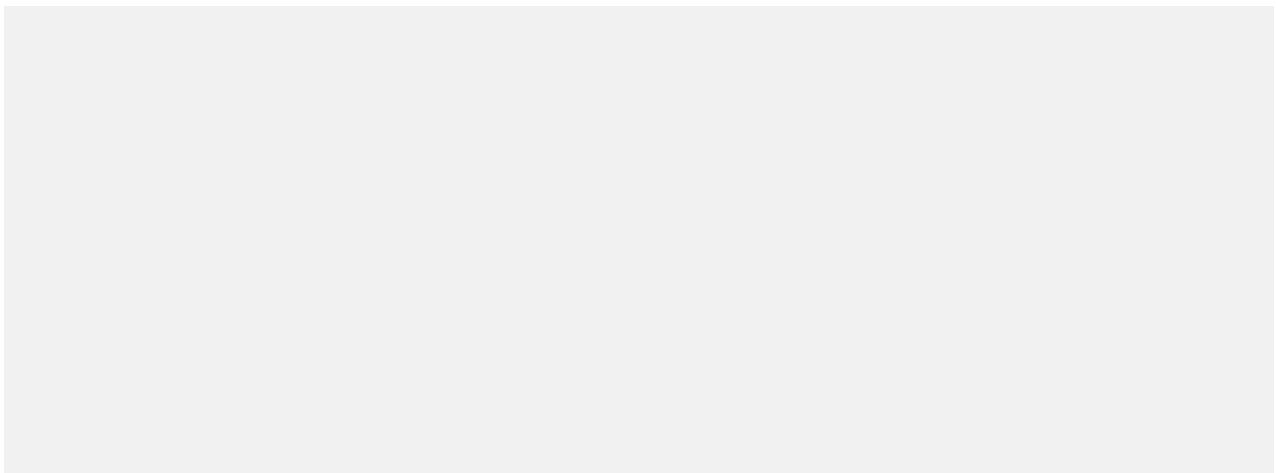
If you want to grow more as an entrepreneur, you can start with these exercises. These questions will help you figure out what lights your fire, what your strengths and weaknesses are, and what you can learn from your mistakes.

Before we get started, can we allow ourselves to get real? Do these exercises with absolutely no rules attached. I encourage you to write freely with exploratory, random, incoherent ramblings. There are no wrong answers. Just get out a notepad, business log, or voice recorder, and get all your thoughts out. Be silly, be goofy, be creative. Take as much time as you need to complete these questions in as much detail as possible. You won't regret the effort. I can promise you that.

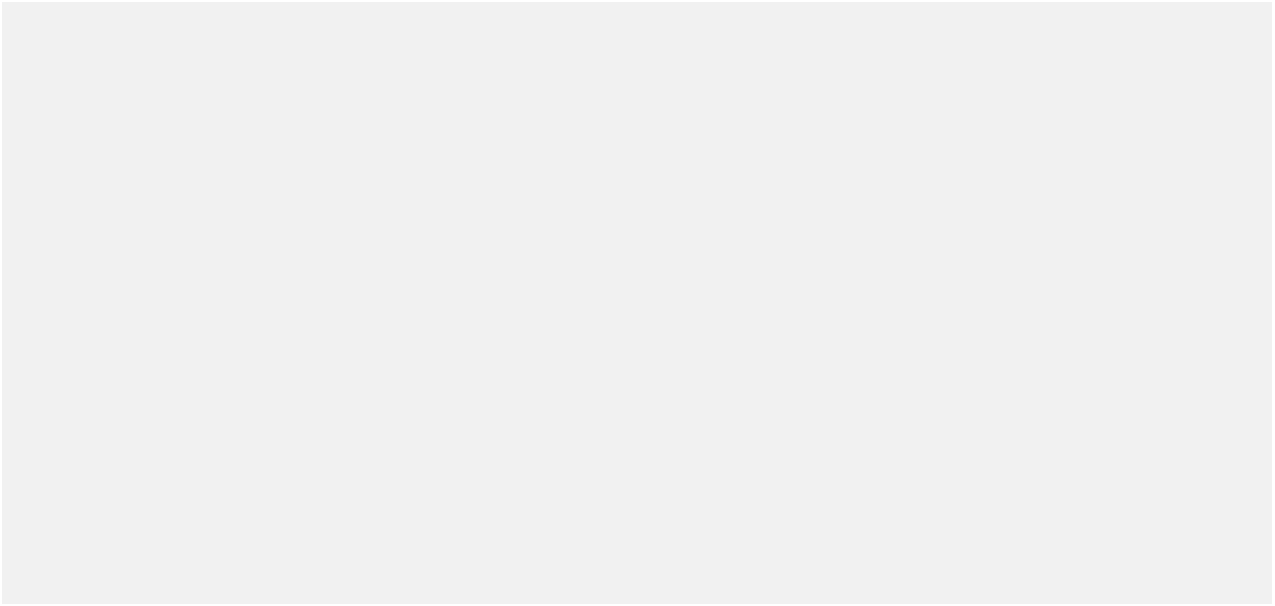
- 1 Discover your strengths and weaknesses. What do you love to do? What replenishes your energy? Alternatively, what steals your energy?



- 2 What is one mistake you've made (in business or otherwise) that you can reflect on and see that it happened because you didn't know your strengths and weaknesses? What did you learn from that situation?



3 Figure out where to go next. Figure out what lights your fire, what you are good at, and what your gift to the world is. Pour your efforts into those things. Decide on one next step in your new direction.



# CHAPTER 2

## There Is More Than One Path to the End Zone

1

It's important to realize ability can be negatively impacted if confidence is low. Confidence and fit are critical to success in both our business and personal lives. Sometimes it's not there and it's on us to do the work of making the changes we need to make to own our future results.

2

Let's also make sure as leaders that we're not the reason someone is achieving below their ability because of how we treat them. Our behavior and words have power, and it's important to recognize this both for ourselves and our teammates.

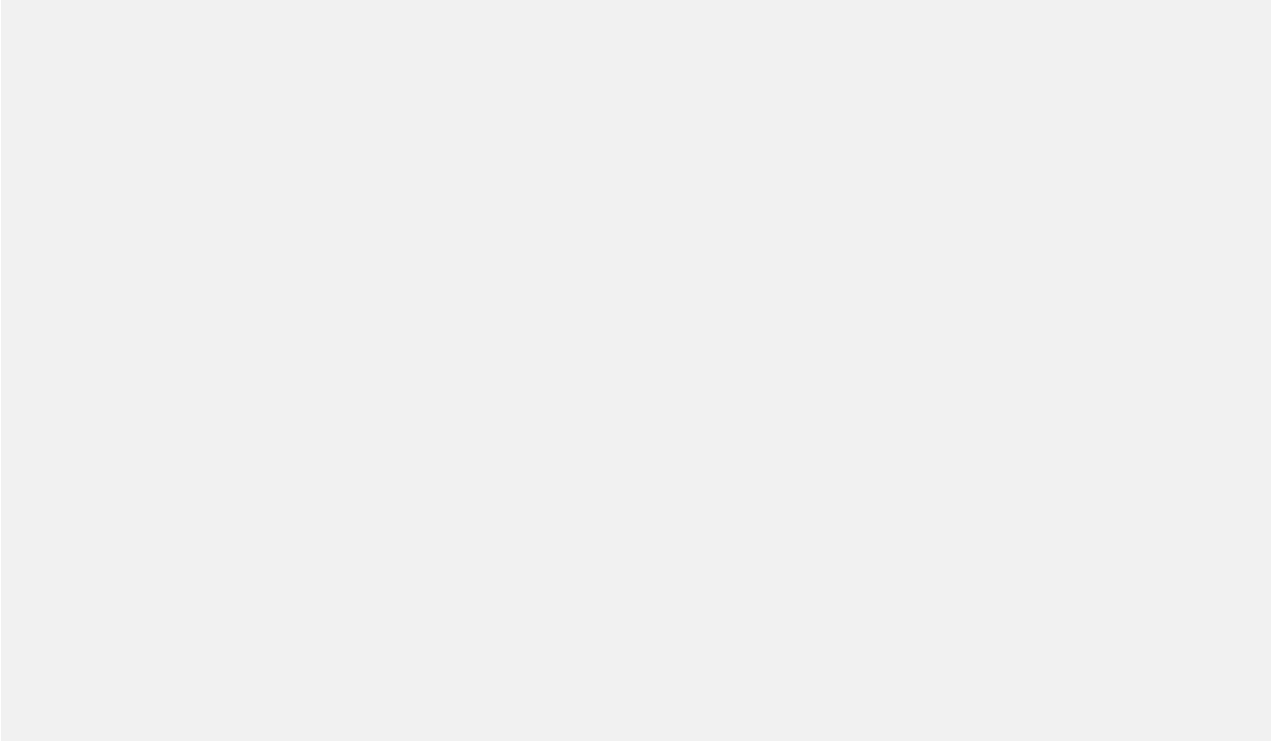
3

It's also important when we think we're seeing clearly to ask direct questions to other people and ask them to give us an honest, unbiased assessment of our situation.



4

Finally, goals are there to serve us, not the other way around. Goals are critical to achieving success, but there can be a dark side of goals. They can limit our growth if they're stopping us from pursuing something else more important. Sometimes, it's necessary to pivot away from a goal and choose something new, more exciting, and more meaningful.

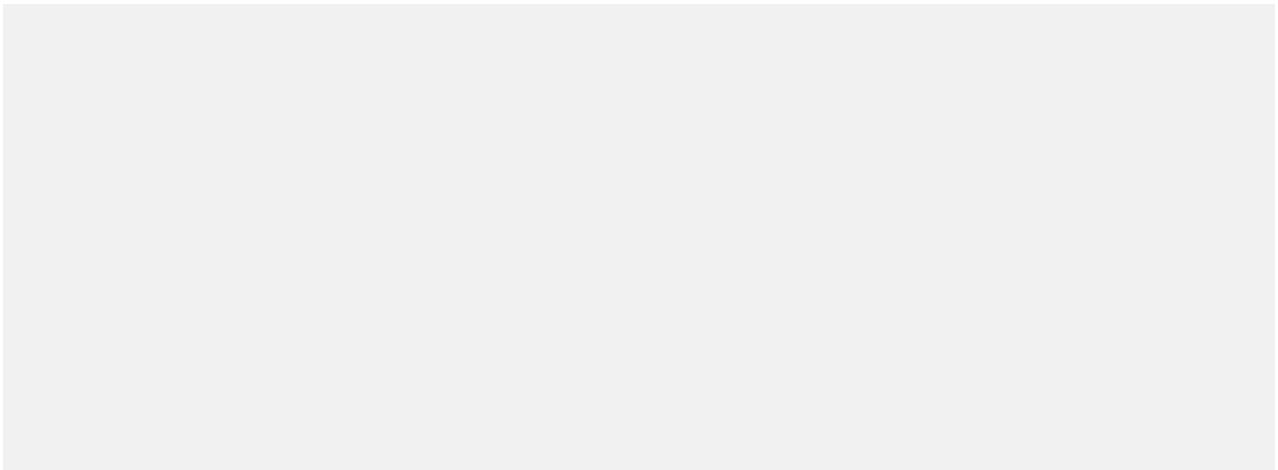


## Growth Exercise: Busting Out of the Boxes

Get curious! These questions will start your journey by helping you identify limiting beliefs, dream bigger, and combine what you learned in the previous chapter to start figuring out what's possible and what your purpose might be.

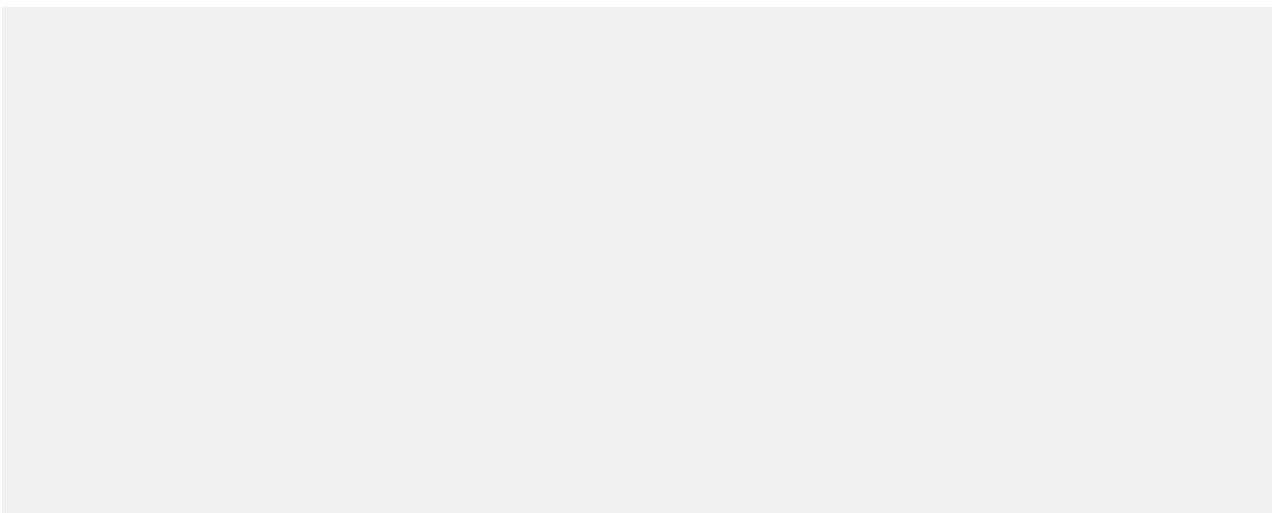
1 What is a box, title, or story you've told yourself is a part of you but seems to be holding you back?

- Example: My box was "I have to be a pro athlete to be a success." No, I sure don't!



2 Every box, title, and story has a kernel of truth in it that gives it power. But if you look around that scrap of truth, you'll find a whole bunch of bullshit. Take what you've written down from No. 1 above and pull apart the truth from the rest of that crap.

- Example: My box was that I had to be a pro athlete to reach my goal. The kernel of truth is I love sports. I am a person who is high energy and works well with a team. It feeds my competitive fire. The BS was that the only legitimate way to be seen as successful was to achieve pro-athlete status.



- 3 Use these kernels of truth, plus what you learned about yourself in the previous chapter, and write new statements about your potential and your purpose. Have some fun exploring. Creative rules apply. The crazier the better

Before we get started, can we allow ourselves to get real? Do these exercises with absolutely no rules attached. We do best with exploratory, random, incoherent ramblings. There are no wrong answers. Just get out a notepad, business log, or voice recorder, and get all your thoughts onto paper. Be silly, be goofy, be creative. Take as much time as you need to complete these questions in as much detail as possible. You won't regret the effort, I can promise you that.

- 1 Discover your potential. What do you think you could be great at? If you are at the developmental stage, what could you be amazing at? You might already have some talent. If you put more intentional effort into that you could grow to be exceptional. What are the opportunities for growth?



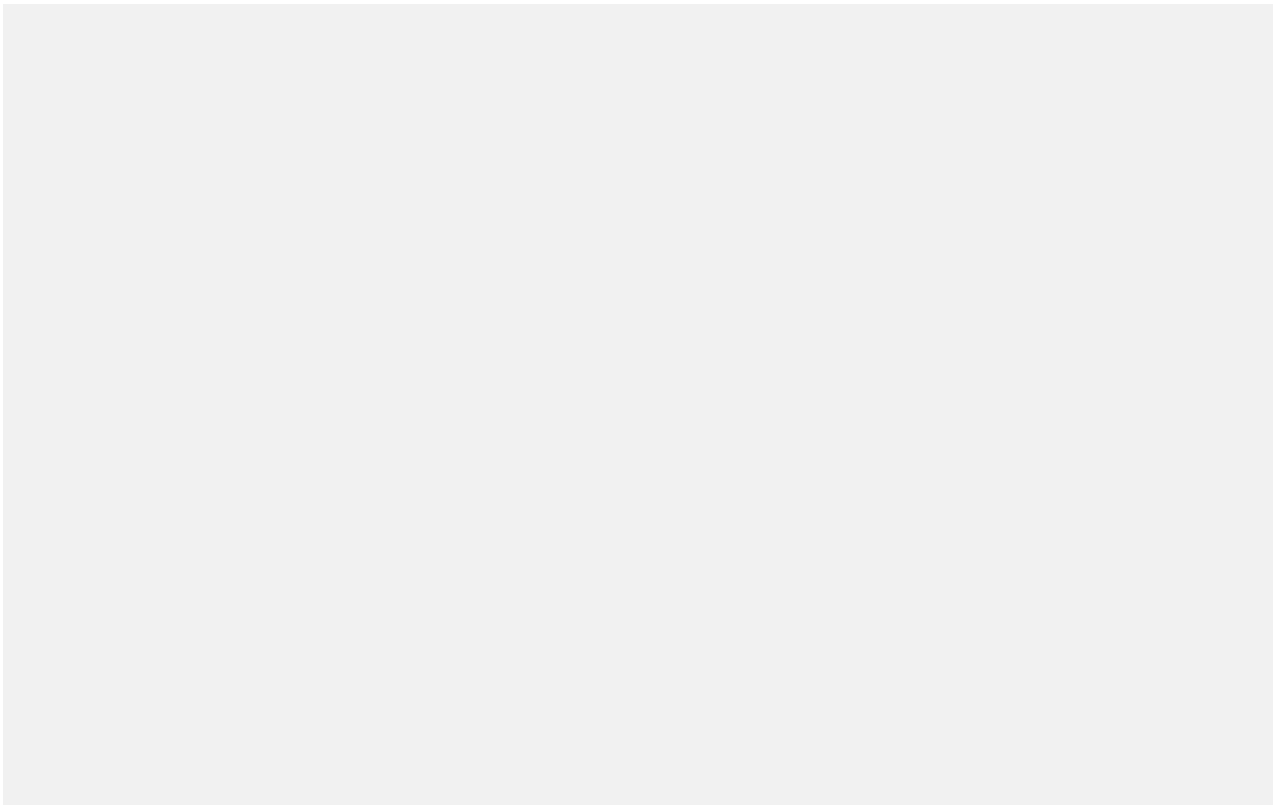
2 Discover your strengths and weaknesses. What do you love to do? What replenishes your energy? What are you good at that you don't like to do? What steals your energy? What lessons have you had to learn over and over? What are things you love to do but probably will never be great at?

3 Go ask someone who knows you very well to answer those same questions. Don't tell them what you wrote and invite them to be open and honest. What qualities do other people praise you for?

4 What is one mistake you've made (in business or otherwise) that can you reflect on, and see that it happened because you didn't know your strengths and weaknesses? What would you do differently in that situation now that you know yourself better?

5

Figure out where to go next. Figure out what lights your fire, what you are good at, and what your gift to the world is. Pour your efforts into those things. Can you expose opportunities for future development?



# CHAPTER 3

## A Whole New Game and a Whole New Player

- 1 Freedom from one focus creates space to open up new channels for our energy. This space can create innovation more aligned with our energy. This innovation will bring about challenges, one after another, but they can be tackled, one after another.
- 2 Being an innovator means we have to get creative and become comfortable with imperfection. If we wait for the perfect opportunity or product, nothing will ever happen. We have to get comfortable with repeated failures in order to find a workable solution.
- 3 Business plans are important when developing a business, but we can go overboard and waste too much time on them if we aren't careful.
- 4 Sometimes getting bold, sticking out our chin, and standing some place we don't feel we belong is necessary to grow to the next level. Soon, we will feel we belong there, and we can look for the next level of growth. We have to find ways to create new connections and find financing while constantly iterating our product or service.
- 5 Making it real, helping people understand the impact they can have, can take learning to another level and inspire others along the way.
- 6 Finally, key influencers in our target market are key to setting up our company for future growth, and we have to be creative to get in front of them. We need to summon a certain level of courage to be bold and do things that are outside our comfort zones if we want to do something unique and amazing.

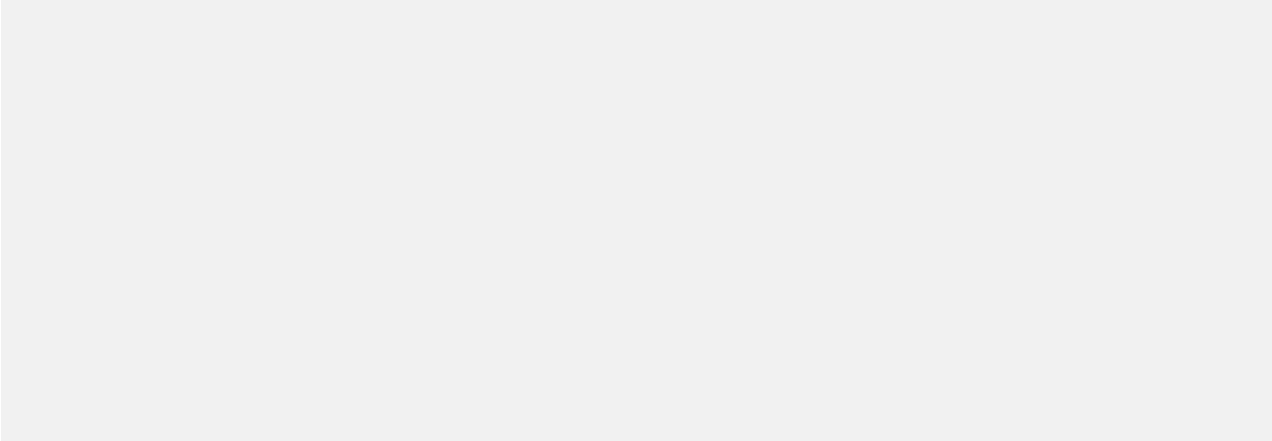
## Growth Exercise: Find the Energy & Get Inspired

These questions will help you identify where you get your energy from, incorporate the element of innovation into your business, recognize and foster your key connections, and push beyond your comfort zone to build new relationships.

- 1 Where do you get your energy? What is the most fun you've ever had in a learning environment or in business? Did it energize you?

- 2 In your current business, where are these same elements of fun and energy? Does your current role in business capture these, or are you stuck with life-sucking roles?

3 Businesses are built on relationships. Who are your key connections? These relationships bring value and benefit your company. Have you shown them value in return? What are you doing to solve problems and create value for them?



# CHAPTER 4

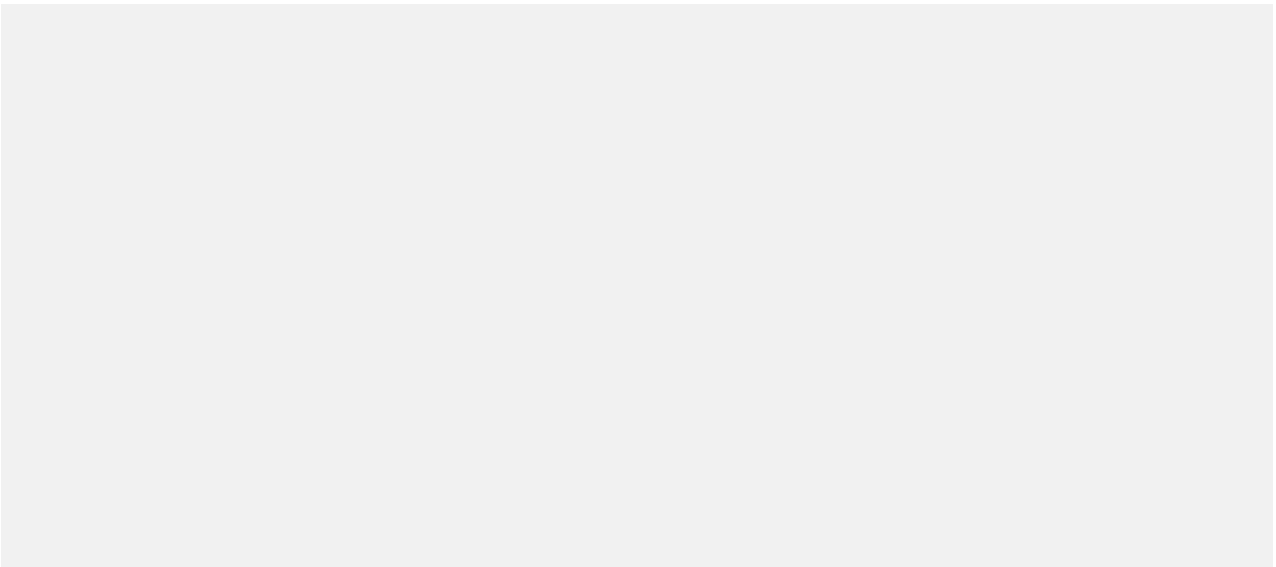
## Becoming Tackle-Proof

- 1 Get clear on your values so you can choose the right people to join you on your journey and guide you in overcoming challenges.
- 2 Recognize that the competition might come from unexpected places. They might play dirty and pretend to be something they aren't. Their actions speak to who they really are, and words are cheap.
- 3 Never slow down and wait for a deal to happen. Keep moving forward. If a deal works out, great, but you won't have lost any momentum in the meantime.
- 4 An essential element of becoming a great leader is to build a great supporting cast. We need people in our corner to offer different perspectives, support, and ideas.
- 5 Never underestimate the value of your spouse or life partner. Their role is bigger than you may think.

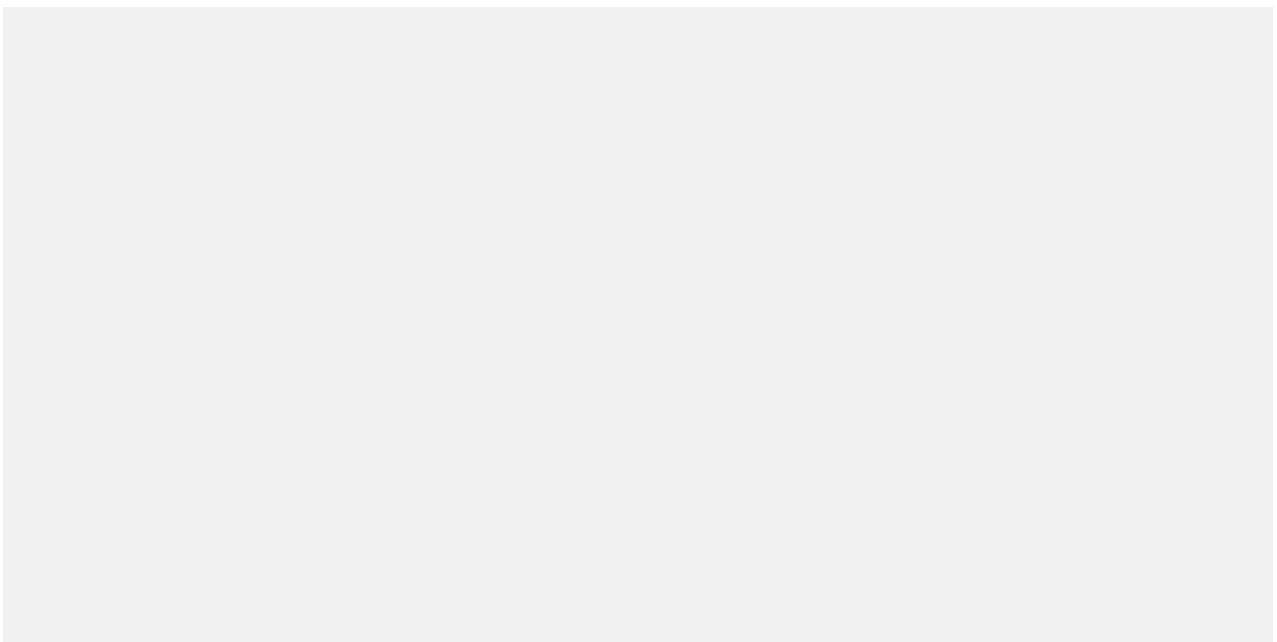
## Growth Exercise: Clarity on Core Values

If you are not already clear on your core values, these exercises will help you identify them. They will also help you align your business relationships with those values.

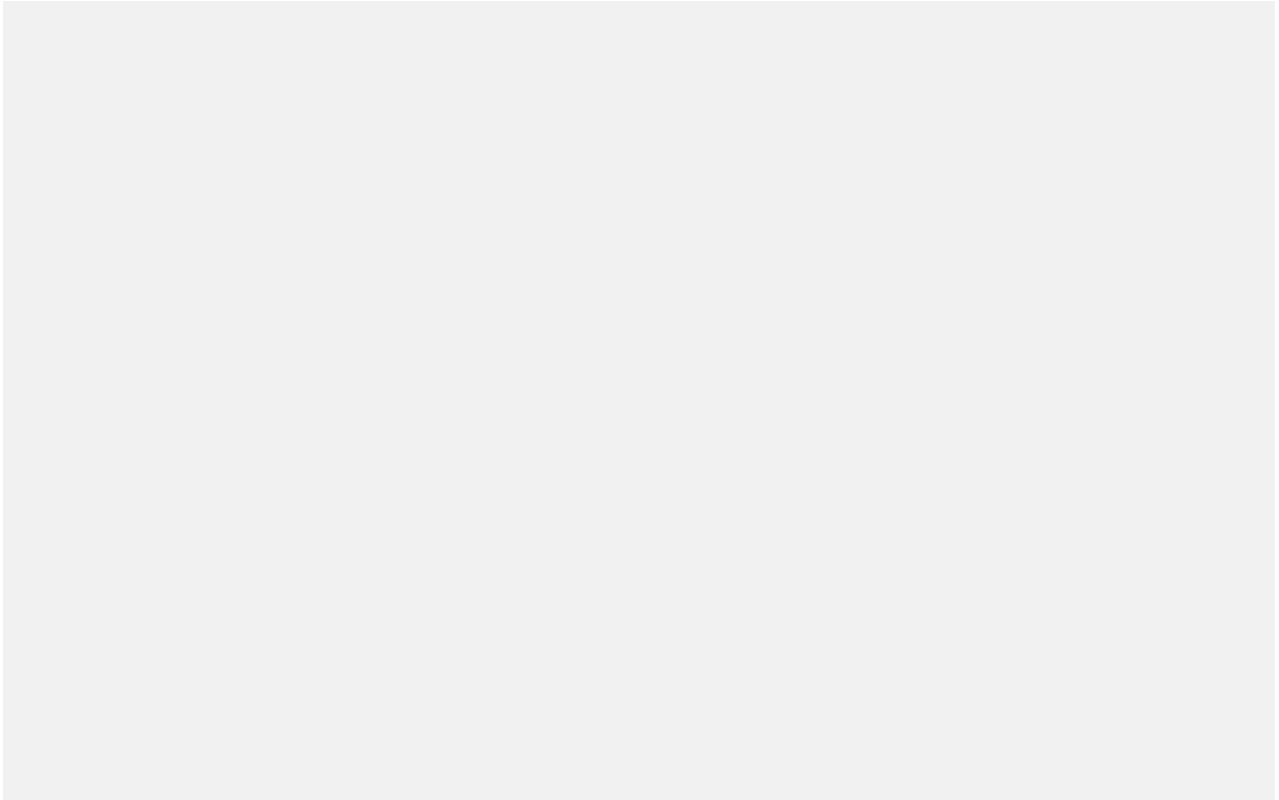
- 1 It's not what we get done, it's how we do it. What's important to you? What are your nonnegotiables? Make a list of your potential core values.



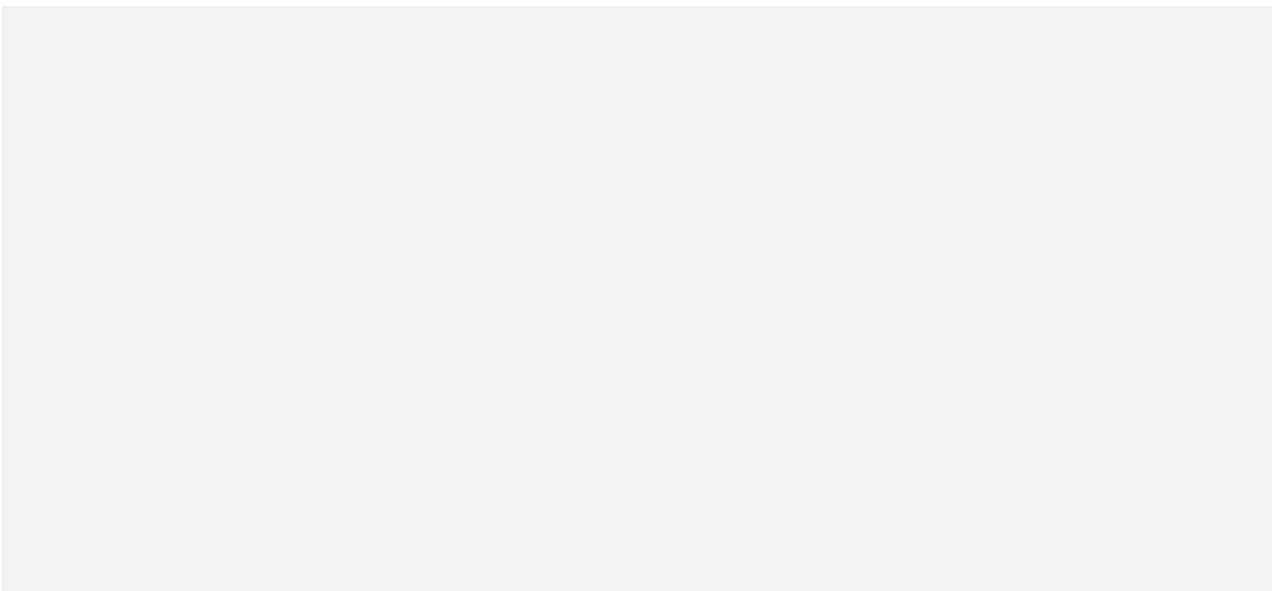
- 2 From this list, choose what you believe are the most important values for you. It's a personal thing, and no one has to agree or approve of your work.



3 Examine your business relationships and activities, including customers, suppliers, and teammates. Are these activities and relationships (people) in alignment with your values?



4 Are there customers you would fire if you could? Why? Are there teammates who tick you off? Is it because you are crossing paths in your values in that moment of frustration?





# CHAPTER 5

## From a Green Rookie to Team Captain

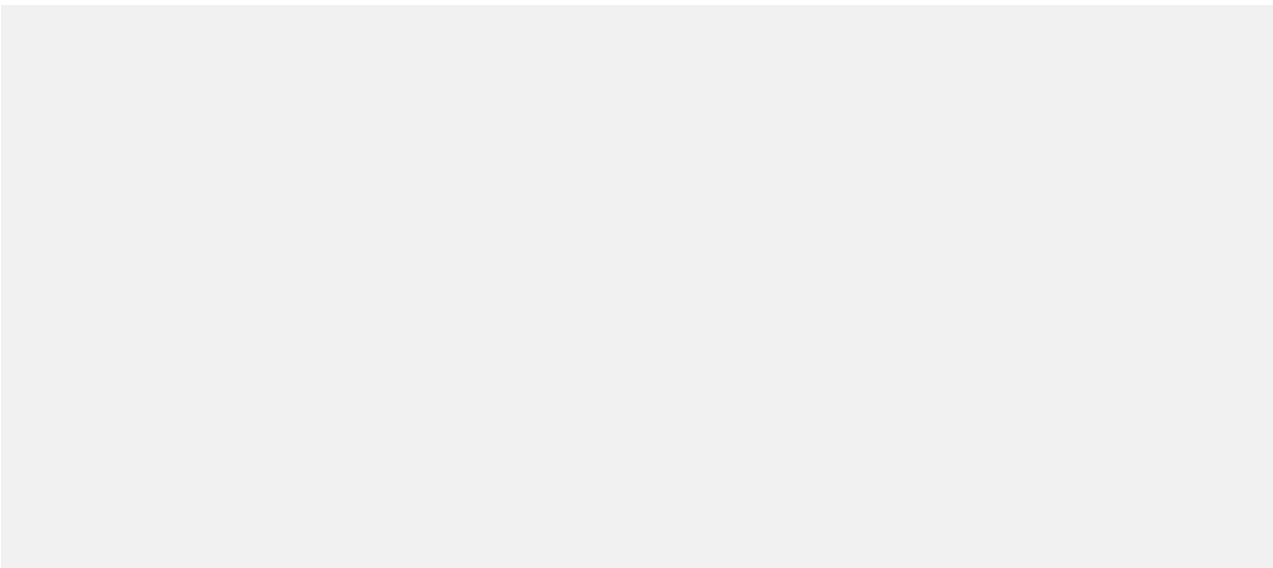
I learned some big lessons as I evolved from green rookie to team captain.

- 1 Get real with who you are and seek opportunities to develop your leadership abilities. Develop your own style and embrace your quirks.
- 2 Find a mentor so you can learn from their wisdom, and find a peer group to put your skills into action.
- 3 Spend time on strategy: doing it right can help you win big, and skipping it can be costly. Sometimes we need to slow down and do our research before jumping at an exciting new opportunity.
- 4 To avoid getting crunched, know your numbers, know your market, and don't fall in love with your own work
- 5 Don't let others' excitement influence your spending decisions. Momentum is critical to your success, but it's not the same as having free cash flow.
- 6 Find an assistant captain to offset your natural tendencies to create more balanced decisions.
- 7 Finally, you may have "necessary evil" parts of your business, but you can use effective time management techniques to make sure they don't take more time than they should.

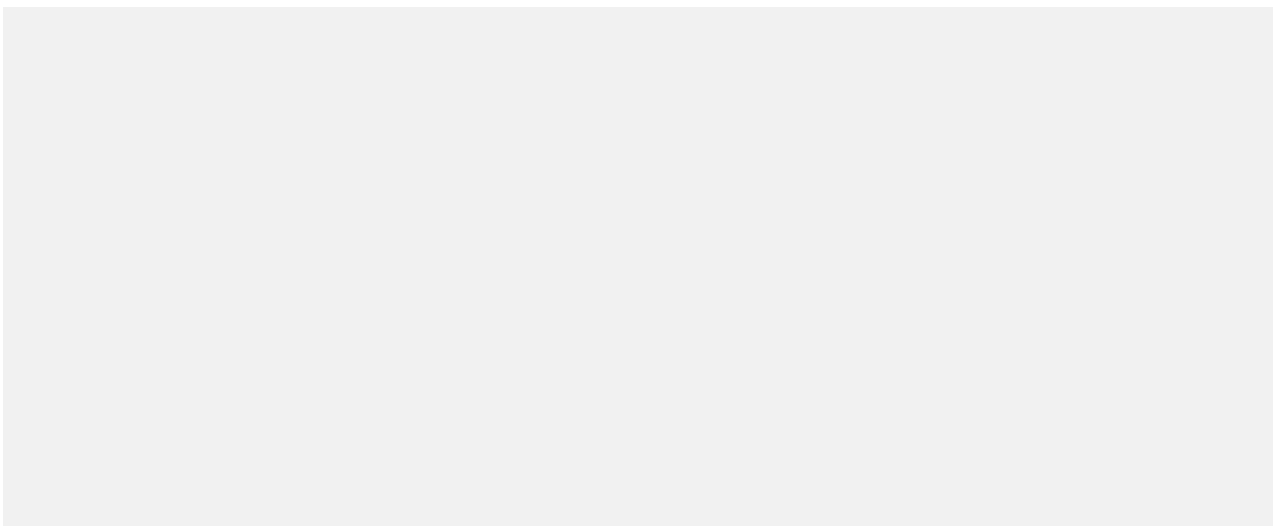
## Growth Exercise: From Rookie to Team Captain

Regardless of where you are in your journey, these exercises will help you go from solopreneur to the leader in your business. These questions will help you clarify your vision, look at the potential for diversification, figure out which skills you need to develop, and get clarity on your numbers and your market. They will also address what you need to think about when hiring and how to manage your team's priorities

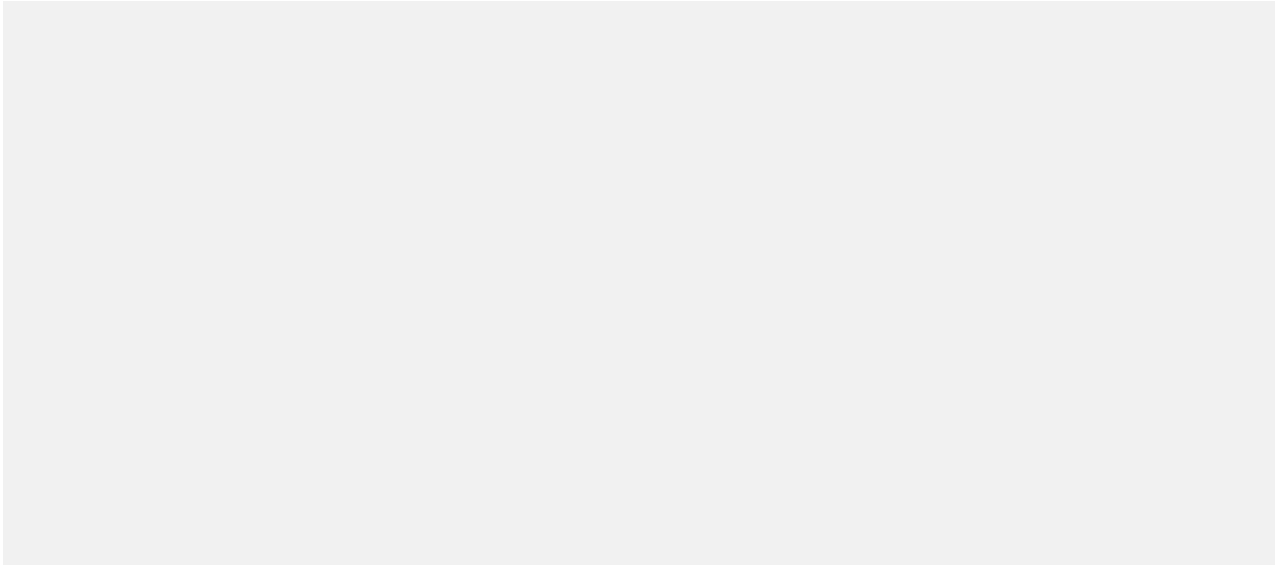
- 1 What is your vision for your business? Get clear on where you want to go and your intentions for your business, and figure out the skills you need to develop to get you there.



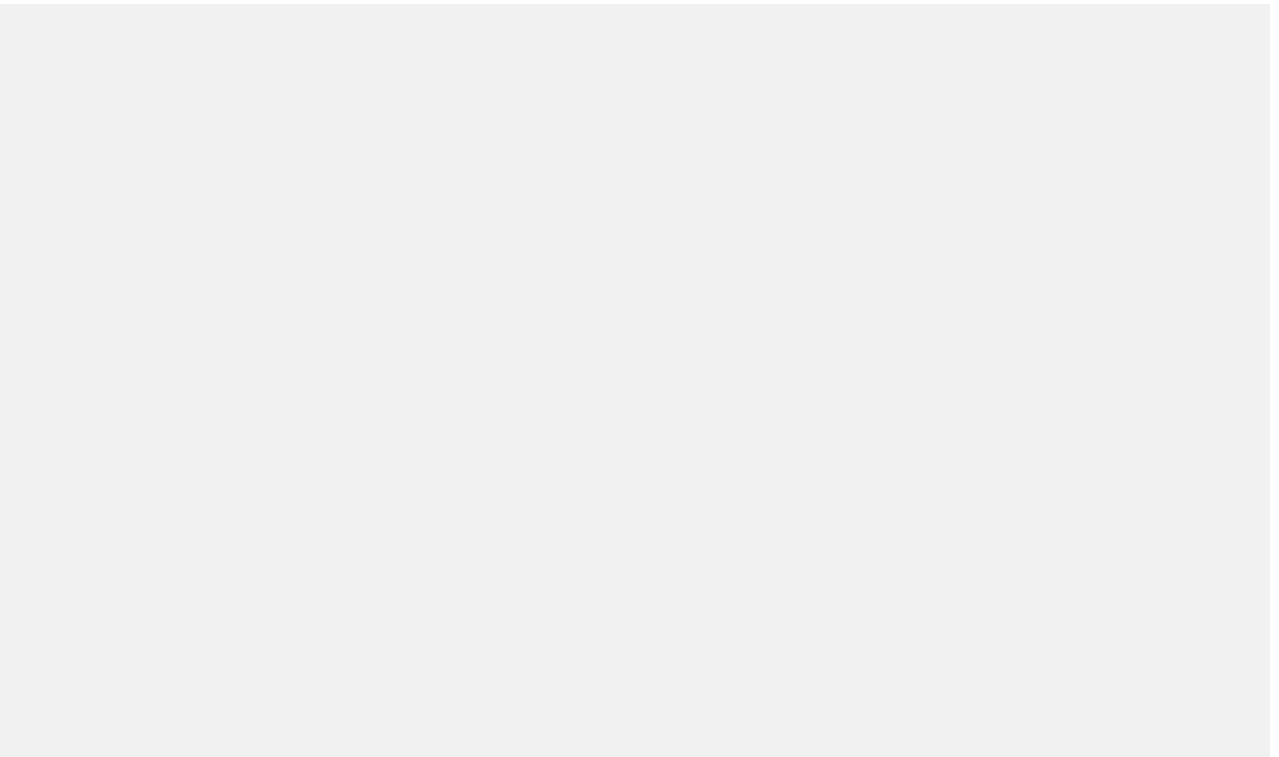
- 2 What are you doing to grow your leadership skills? Make a list of local mastermind groups, business groups, associations, or peer groups; do some research; and attend as a guest to see if the group is a fit. If reading is more your style, consider Warren Rustand's book *The Leader Within Us: Mindset, Principles, and Tools for a Life By Design*.



3 What are the diversification opportunities that could apply to your customer base?



4 Are you managing your time effectively? Are you getting distracted by lower-priority activities that you could put into a Friday at 4:30 p.m. category? Can you eliminate that activity completely?



# CHAPTER 6

## Harnessing Human Energy

- 1 We all know micromanaging is a bad practice as it crushes our teammates. It's on us to delegate effectively or we become the barrier to growth.
- 2 Building a strong culture is strategically important and is created by unearthing our core values and using them regularly with our team.
- 3 To help us delegate effectively to our good people, we need to document the critical processes in our business. Documenting too many processes for an entrepreneurial business can do more damage than good, so focus on only the most important ones. Don't overdo it so you can keep the whole system relevant.
- 4 Finally, get real about what you're good at and what your weaknesses are. Embrace what you suck at and make sure you're freeing yourself up to work on the most important things, like growing your company.

## **Growth Exercise: Defining Culture, Simplifying Processes, and Developing Excellence**

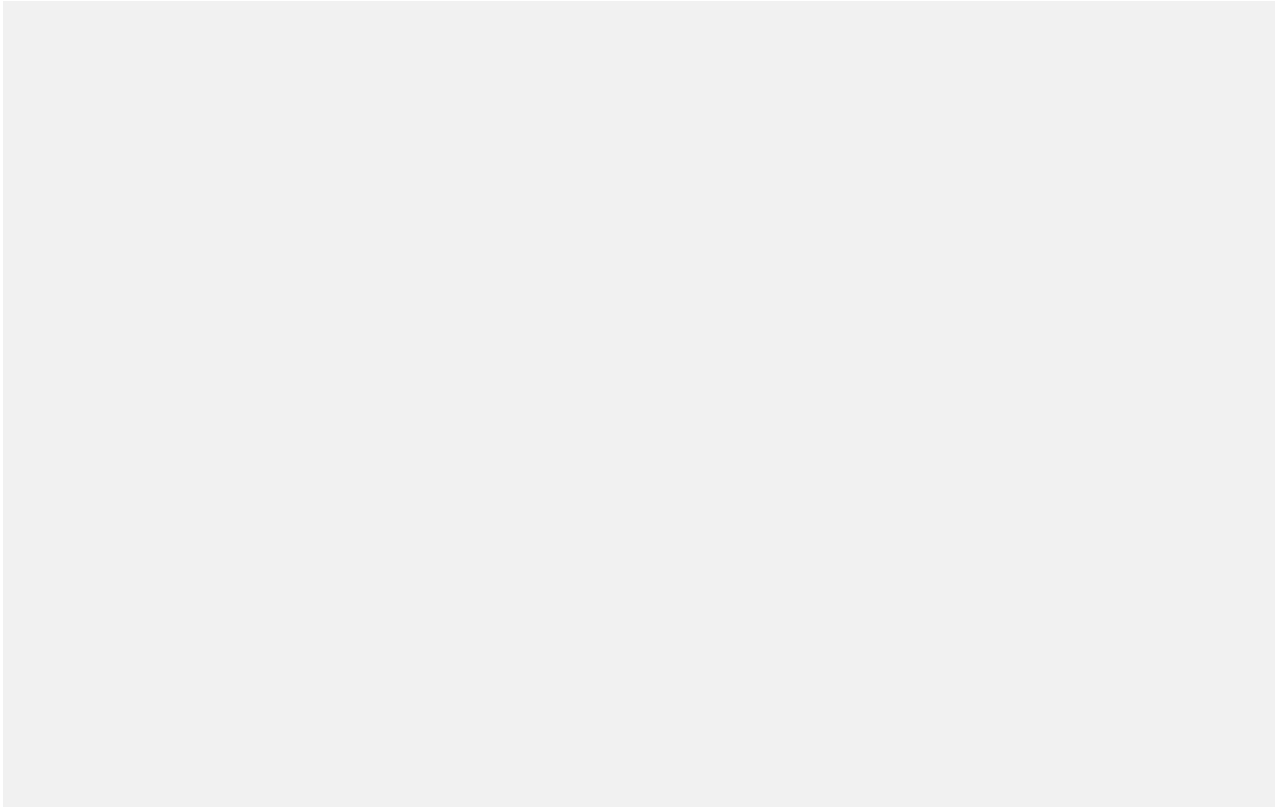
These questions will help you figure out the type of culture you want to build and the systems you need in place, while recognizing the abilities of your team members so you can help them focus on strengthening those skills.

- 1 Have you created a culture of micromanagement? Things to look for: Do you trust your team members' capabilities? Do you find yourself correcting work your team does because it's not "perfect"? Does your team have to come to you before making any decisions?

- 2 Do you have good, documented processes that are both relevant and updated? Things to look for: Are you running into the same issues over and over again? Are there processes that could be simplified or improved?

3

Do you know what your team members' strengths are? Have you created an environment where they feel safe talking to you about their weaknesses? What is your development plan for your teammates?



# CHAPTER 7

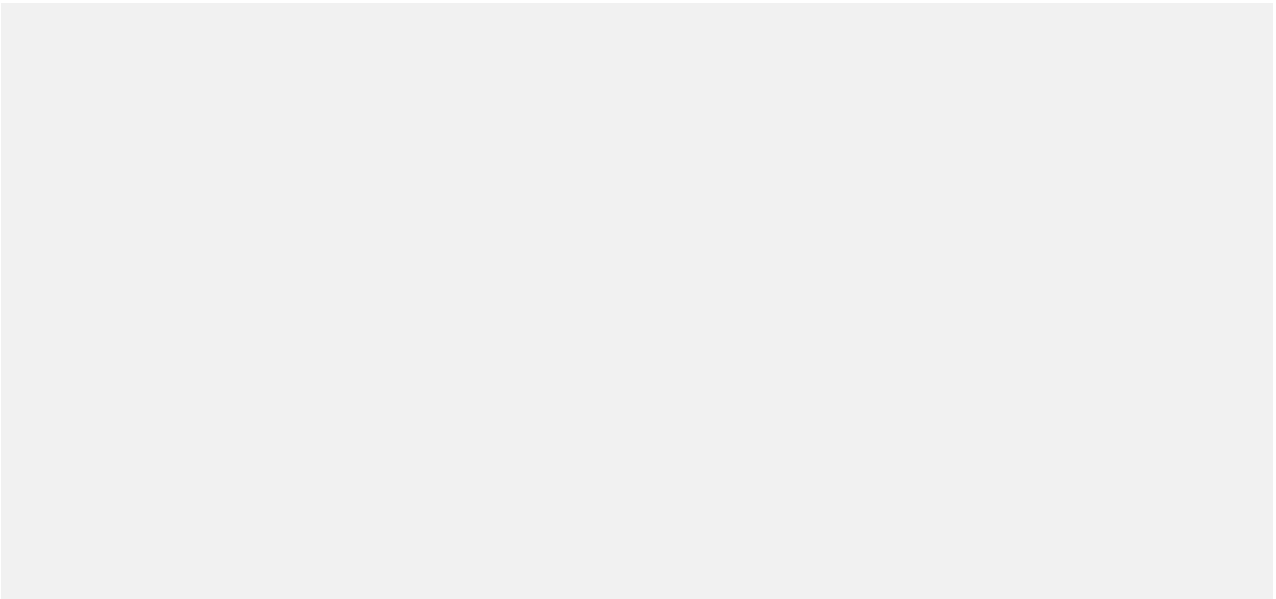
## Teaming with Talent and Learning to Let Go

- 1 Letting go can be scary, but it's critical for our company and our people to grow. If we don't figure out how to let go, we can become the primary barrier to growth.
- 2 The Karpman Drama Triangle is a cyclone of dysfunction, and we need to be aware of it and teach our team how to avoid it. As leaders, we can fall into the trap of being a Hero, and it's on us to elevate to the coaching role instead.
- 3 As a Coach, we need to learn the difference between managing effectively and undermanaging. We can swing too far and "let go" when we shouldn't.
- 4 Finally, great coaches ask great questions and get people to think for themselves.

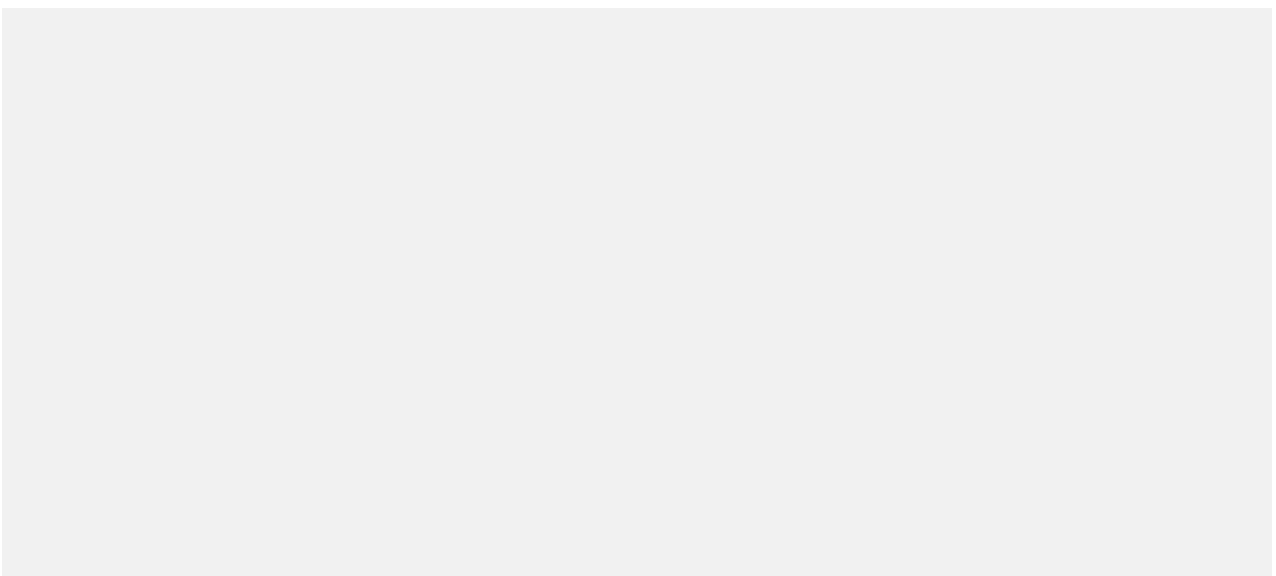
## Growth Exercise: Reflect and Take Action

This exercise will help you reflect on yourself as a leader and manager. It will help you avoid the Drama Triangle and build toward freeing yourself up to lead, rather than being involved in every aspect of your business.

- 1 What leaders have you had that you admire? How did they make you feel? What did you accomplish together because of their coaching?



- 2 Take stock of yourself. Where do you stand in the way of growing your business? Reflect on your evolution to this point.





- 3 Where are you playing the Hero in your business? Where are you playing the Victim and/or the Villain? Assess your company for possible Karpman Drama Triangle situations. What will you change from now on?

- 4 Read How to Be a Great Boss by René Boer and Gino Wickman to further understand the difference between being a manager and being a leader.

# CHAPTER 8

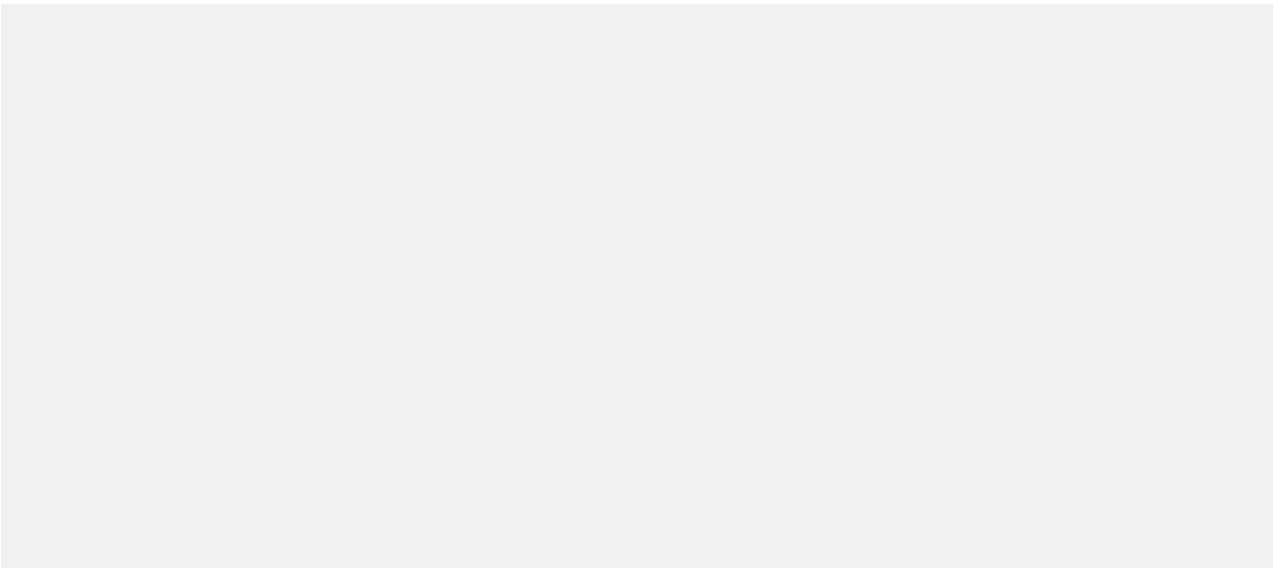
## The Best Offense Is a Good Defense

- 1 If we want to be unstoppable, relentless leaders, we need to develop ourselves. We need to learn to see both the big picture and the details. We may not do both well, so it's paramount to see things from different perspectives.
- 2 To find these different perspectives, we need to slow down and take time away to think.
- 3 We will also need to recognize that we need to find mentors to challenge us on another level.
- 4 Finally, we need to find a way to balance offense with defense, the yin to our yang, so we can make good decisions to enable growth. The growth exercises will help prepare you for the next steps to make this happen.

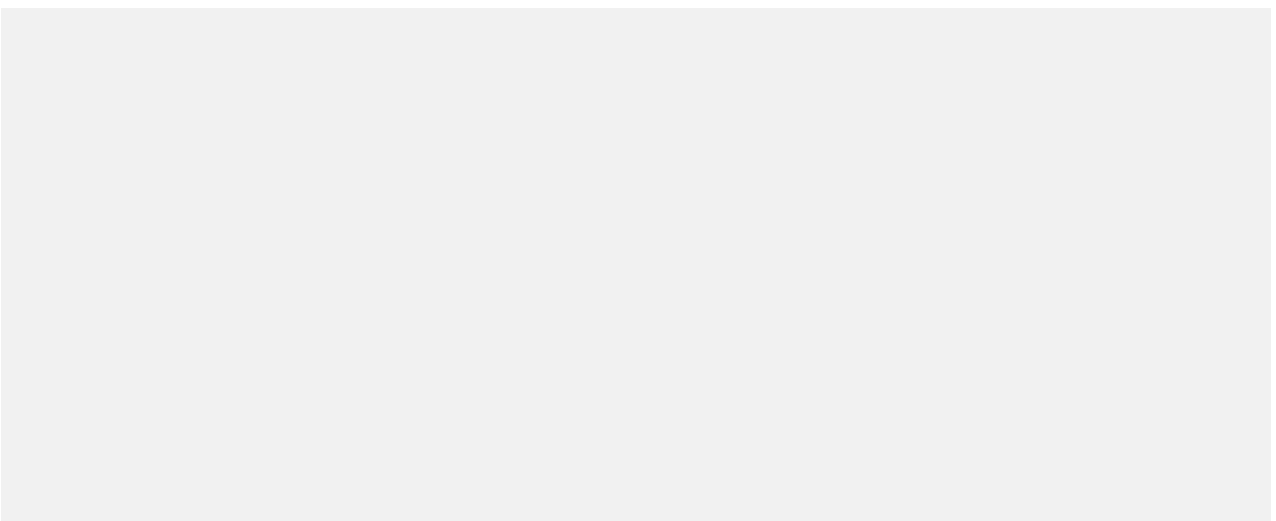
## Growth Exercise: Predicting Change

These exercises will help you think more about your business and get outside perspectives.

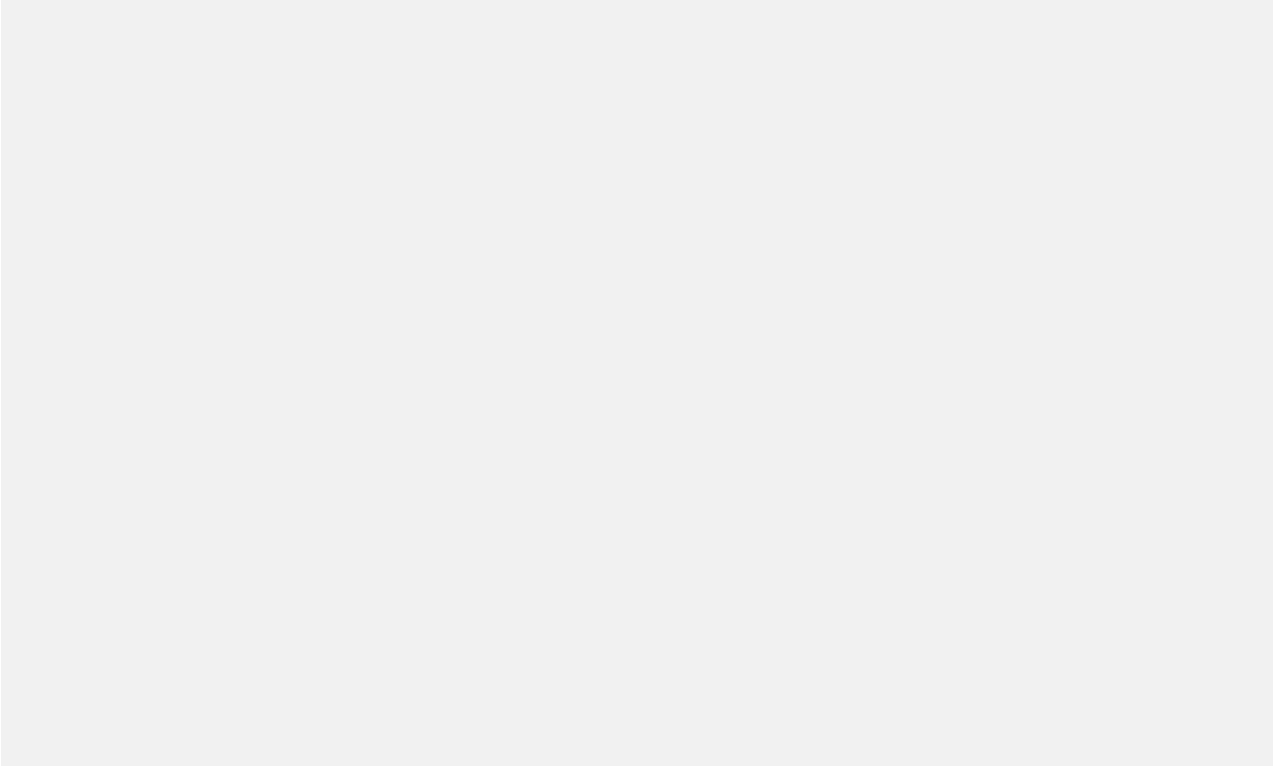
- 1 Take time to pause and think about your business. Just sit quietly, phone off, and ponder about it in general. If anything is bothering you, write it down. Clarify your future vision for where you want to take the company.



- 2 Once you are clear on your future vision, seek out a mentor who has already been there. Find someone who has “put the ball in the end zone” relevant to your future path. Ask them to mentor you. Offer to pay for their time and be prepared to invest in your future.



3 Are you all offense or all defense? Explore the concept of the Integrator and Visionary in the book Rocket Fuel by Gino Wickman and Mark C. Winters. Do you have someone in mind who is your Integrator or Visionary? Spend intentional time with them to build the relationship, brainstorming issues and thinking about solutions and challenges.



# CHAPTER 9

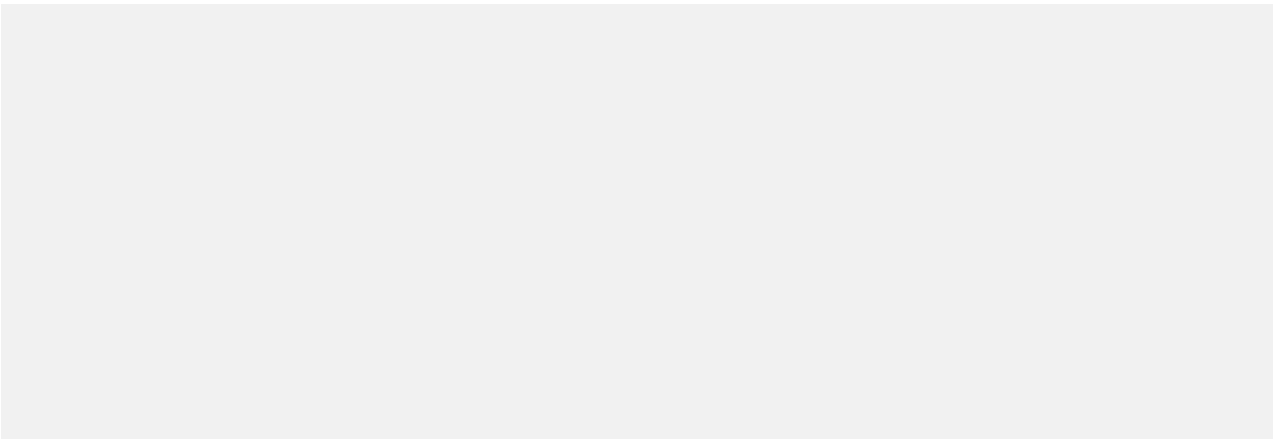
## Navigating Crisis

- 1 Crisis is an inevitable part of business. If you can spot a potential crisis brewing on the horizon, take the time to create a solid contingency plan or Plan B when your head is cool.
- 2 When you end up in crisis, as difficult as it is, try to put things into perspective and calm your head. Recognize that your capacity to make decisions in a state of high stress will be diminished, so have a little self-compassion.
- 3 Having a great support network consists of three levels: personal, mentor, and peer. All three give valuable perspectives, and it's important to ask for help when you need it.
- 4 Finally, when it's time to act on your Plan B, make the best decisions you can and take action. If you act with compassion, vulnerability, and honesty, your team will be more likely to respond positively.

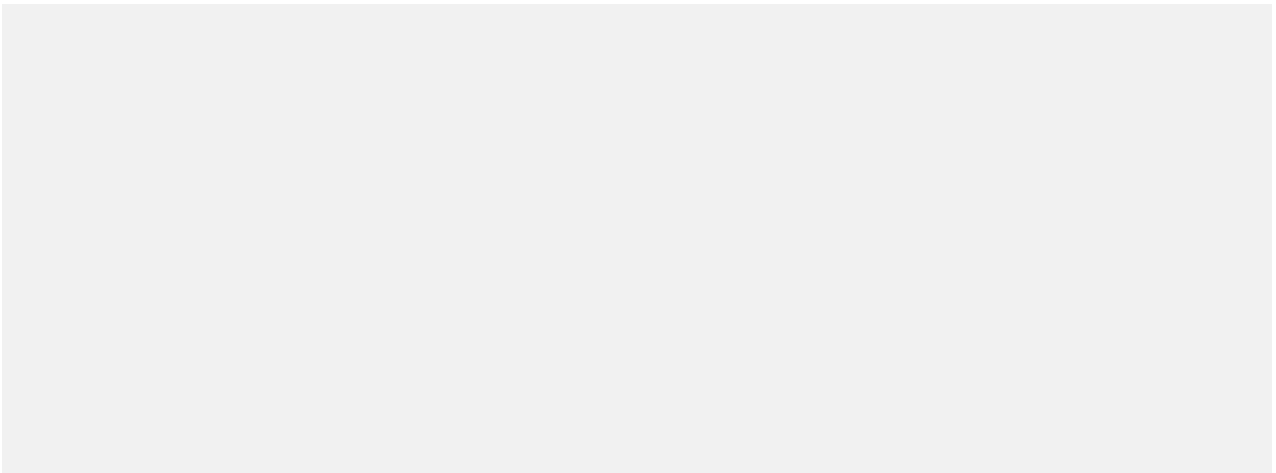
## Growth Exercise: Protect Your Blindside

These exercises will help you explore what crisis might look like and how to make it through by creating your own Plan B for the worst-case scenarios.

- 1 Take the crises that you predicted in the last chapter and figure out if there is an imminent problem where you need to develop a written Plan B. Go through "The Six Step Plan B Framework" included in this chapter.

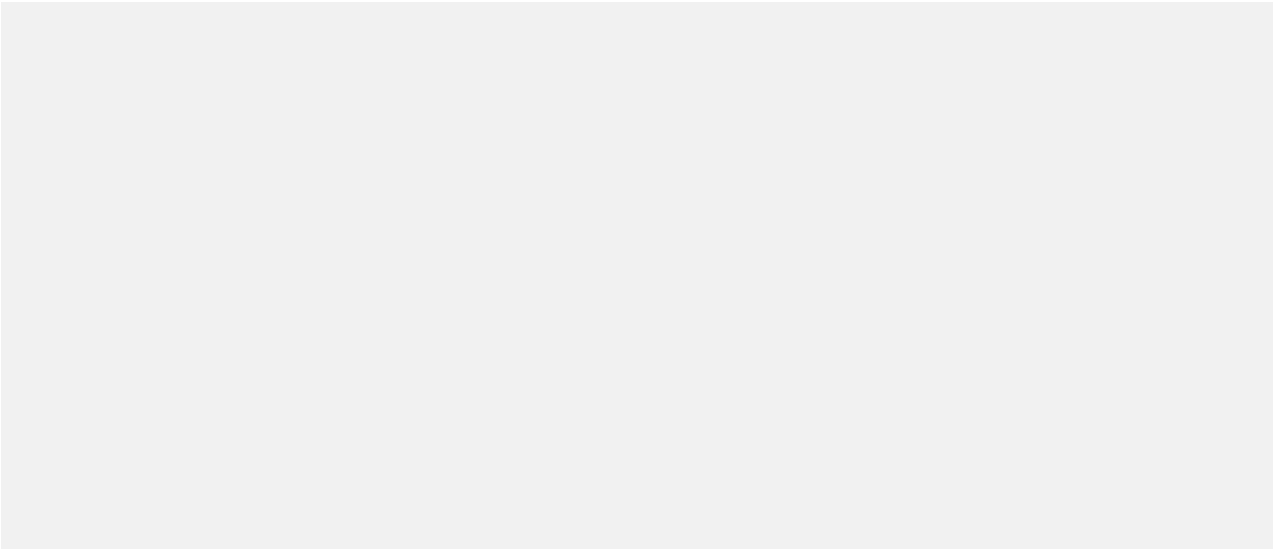


- 2 Review your Plan B with a mentor or trusted colleague and ask them to poke holes in the plan..



3

Do you need a mentor to guide you through an area of growth as a leader?



# CHAPTER 10

## How to Rebound from a Devastating Loss

In this chapter, I focused on how to recover from a crisis and rebuild stronger. I'm going to go deeper with this replay to lay out my steps to come back from a business loss or crisis. Consider these steps an adaptable guide. Sometimes you'll need all the steps, and other times you'll only need a few, but you can use them as a recovery guide.

1

Rip the Band-Aid off.

Everyone deals with crisis differently, and I'm sharing what worked for me. Whatever journey you are on, do your best to accept it. Recognize that you will need some dedicated time to deal with your own sh!t that's invariably going to spring up from the situation. Have a little self-compassion; crisis is hard to deal with for everyone. Maybe you need some therapy, mentorship, or coaching. Whatever you need, don't hide from the pain. Face it quickly so the future can be free.

2

Look for the gift.

It's not always easy to see the gift(s) in a crisis, especially when you are in the thick of it. Searching for what you can learn from the situation or what opportunities have arisen from it can be rewarding, and this is the key to moving from a place of scarcity to a place of abundance. You might not see the gift yet, but it's there. Keep looking until you find it.

3

Double down on good habits.

Exercise regularly, get enough sleep, eat healthily, and take care of your mental health. Fight the urge to ignore self-care. It's normal to think there is not enough time in the day to do these things, but the benefits of following these disciplines will decrease anxiety, depression, and stress hormones. Taking care of your physical and mental well-being is more important in crisis than ever to ensure you are physically and mentally able to deal with everything you need to do to make your comeback.

4

Review and revise your plan.

Figure out how far you can see and what type of plan you can make, and then focus on a handful of priorities. Ideas for recovery will start to materialize. You have to be ready to sort them out and prioritize them so you don't get overwhelmed or thrown off track pursuing things that keep you busy but aren't the most productive use of your time.



5 Communicate with key people.

Have the hard conversations with your family, your team, your investors, your bank, and your key support network to make sure everyone is on board, or at least understands your game plan. Let them know you don't know all the answers and then share your game plan. Transparency, vulnerability, and honesty are key to maintaining these relationships after crisis hits.

6 Ask for help.

This is the time when your close circle becomes extraordinarily valuable. Lean on them, rely on their expertise, bounce ideas off them, depend on your support network, and ask them for what you need.

7 Watch cash like a hawk.

It is absolutely crucial that you manage your cash flow. Create a realistic weekly budget to manage your money. Don't make any unnecessary expenditures, and find backup sources of cash. Bottom line: don't run out of cash!

8 Use strategy and focus.

Spend some time determining your strategy and then focus on value-creating activities. What activities will get you the desired results? Generating new business, taking care of your customers, etc.

9 Implement an operating system.

I've learned it's important to implement an operating system in your business, whether it's in crisis mode or not. Someone else has done the work on "how to run a business." Use their knowledge, follow their systems, get an operating system, and run it. I'm partial to EOS, but there are lots of good ones out there. Get one and use it to free up your valuable energy for more important things.

10 Learn from battle scars.

Don't forget the lessons you've learned. If you're too desperate and take any opportunity to recover, you could make the same mistakes you did in the past. Embrace the blank slate and do it the right way this time.

11 Celebrate how far you've come.

Entrepreneurs tend to forget to celebrate and often say, "Okay, we hit that goal, what's next?" Take a moment to reflect on how far you have come, and celebrate it.

## **Growth Exercise: Bouncing Back from a Devastating Blow**

These exercises and methods will help you through crisis recovery, help you find the gift(s) in crisis, and remind you to celebrate how far you've come.

- 1 If you've had a loss, tragedy, or crisis, pull this chapter out and work through the 11 steps.
- 2 Examine a recent struggle in your business and find a gift in it. Don't stop looking until you find one.
- 3 Examine a recent struggle in your business and find a gift in it. Don't stop looking until you find one.
- 4 Start a practice of celebrating victories, even small ones. Do it with yourself, your team, and your loved ones. The more you acknowledge the little wins, the more they will multiply and become big wins.
- 5 If you'd like a copy of the big graphic on the end pages to reinforce your learnings throughout the book, download the image for free at [www.RelentlessChrisJones.com/RAFdownload](http://www.RelentlessChrisJones.com/RAFdownload).

## Overtime

The journey through crisis led me to a wonderful new place in life. That's what I help people do now.

\*\*\*

The global pandemic hit while I was writing this book, and I lost half of my revenue in April 2020. I thought, Wait, haven't I been here before? Instead of experiencing panic and fear as we got locked down, I got inspired and energized. I felt uniquely equipped to handle the situation.

If you'd like to join me on that journey, please reach out. I'd be happy to have a conversation.

To work with me and grow your business toward its best future, connect at [RelentlessChrisJones.com](https://RelentlessChrisJones.com).