EXPLORASELF

A NEW WAY OF WINNING

THE LINK TO LEAD MANUAL

12 **PRINCIPLES**

Four stages. Four domains.

Personal leadership for a business worth building and a life worth living.

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A living manual

A New Way of Winning is the parent manual for the personal leadership work of ExploraSelf and Link to Lead. It joins principles, business context, worked situations and practical decisions in twelve main chapters. The book is written for founders, solopreneurs, small business owners, mentors and people preparing to carry greater responsibility.

THE EXPLORASELF APPROACH

Equip the leader and understand the context. Work through purpose, evidence, people and economic reality together. Twelve chapters connect personal leadership to decisions you can carry into the week.

How to understand the examples

Named cases are invented illustrative situations. They are not client testimonials or claims about actual ExploraSelf results. Financial figures are teaching assumptions in USD, not benchmarks, recommended targets or the reader's numbers. Replace them with your own records before making a decision.

Principles, models and research

The twelve working visuals were created for this book. They organise questions and decisions; they are not validated assessments or scoring systems. P.A.C.E. and the seven clarity points are carried forward from the supplied ExploraSelf material. External research and the standard break-even relationship are credited in the reference notes.

This is an educational manual. Its examples cannot determine the accounting, legal, tax, health or other professional requirements of a specific situation. Where those requirements matter, involve an appropriately qualified person. Responsibility includes knowing when the problem exceeds the tool.

Prepared from the supplied Blueprint workbooks, author material and Link to Lead programme. Leading is developed here as an additional lens of stewardship; the supplied programme contains Building, Growing and Scaling routes.

The work beneath the work

A business gives practical form to choices. It decides which problems receive attention, whose labour is valued, which promises are made and how responsibility is carried when the plan goes wrong. The founder influences those arrangements through visible decisions and through the habits that are rarely discussed. That is why personal leadership belongs at the centre of this manual.

A founder needs context as well as conviction. Courage without economic understanding can create promises the business cannot fund. Technical skill without honest conversation can leave a team unable to act. A beautiful strategy can remain motionless if the person leading cannot choose what to stop. The four domains keep these parts of the situation in view together.

Lead yourself concerns attention, identity, judgment and follow-through. Lead your people concerns relationships, expectations, trust and authority. Lead your business concerns work, money, capacity and reliability. Lead the market concerns the people served, the value promised and the evidence that the promise matters. Each domain changes the others. An unclear offer can create operational chaos; an avoided conversation can become a margin problem.

The book asks you to become more precise about what winning is for. It takes ambition seriously enough to examine the bill: financial, personal and human. It makes room for a life of genuine meaning, including work done well, relationships honoured, faith or conviction lived responsibly, and useful contribution beyond the founder's private success.

You will find twelve main chapters arranged in four parts. Building establishes purpose and an honest promise. Growing gives attention, standards and relationships a workable shape. Scaling develops ownership, economic clarity and reliable systems. Leading examines growth, develops other leaders and carries responsibility through review and repair. These are contexts for learning, not ranks of human worth.

Read with something real beside you: a calendar, a delivery record, a customer message, a question that has remained unresolved. Use the principle to understand the situation and the fieldwork to change one part of it. A written answer becomes useful when it reaches the week and returns with evidence. That is where this book intends to meet you.

The first business you lead

I have come to believe that the business asks something of the person long before it asks for a better marketing plan. It asks you to keep your word, look at what you would rather avoid, speak plainly with people and decide what you are willing to carry. You can learn a great deal about strategy and still leave those questions unanswered.

In my earlier work, I wrote about learning through mistakes: orders, money, promises and the responsibility of being the person in charge. I also wrote about training, mentorship and the seasons in which effort takes a different shape. Those experiences sit behind a conviction I return to: the leader needs equipping as carefully as the business.

I do not want you to become impressive at a life you have never chosen. I want you to understand what you are building, who it serves and what kind of person your way of working is helping you become. There is room for serious ambition here. There must also be room to ask what that ambition is for.

A founder is a father in the sense that bringing something into existence creates a responsibility to care for it. The metaphor matters to me because it joins creation with duty. It calls for patience, provision and the willingness to help what you build mature beyond its dependence on you. The people in a company remain adults with their own agency; leadership honours that agency as it develops it.

Building is also being. Your repeated choices give shape to your standards. Leading is lived in the ordinary: the update sent when promised, the fair price, the difficult conversation, the decision another person is finally allowed to make. I want these pages to help you see those moments with greater clarity and use them with greater care.

You will not need every tool in every season. You will need an honest account of where you are, a reason for the next move and the courage to review what happens. Start there. Keep the person, the people and the economic reality in the same room. Build something you are willing to stand behind.

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About the author

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Alexandru Cojocari is the founder of ExploraSelf and a leadership mentor based in Rome. His work connects the person behind the business with the people, operating choices and markets they lead.

Twelve main chapters

BUILDING / FIND A REASON AND A USEFUL PROMISE

01 Decide what winning is for 015
Lead yourself

02 Become someone you can rely on 020
Lead yourself

03 Meet reality and make a useful promise 026
Lead the market

GROWING / GIVE THE WORK A HUMAN SHAPE

04 Give your attention a job 032
Lead yourself

05 Make your values operational 038
Lead your business

06 Tell the truth with care 044
Lead your people

SCALING / BUILD CAPACITY YOU CAN TRUST

07 Give ownership somewhere to live 050
Lead your people

08 Read the cost of your promises 055
Lead your business

09 Build systems that keep promises 060
Lead your business

LEADING / STEWARD WHAT YOU HAVE BUILT

10 Choose the growth you can stand behind 066
Lead the market

11 Grow people who can lead 071
Lead your people

12 Review, repair and hand on 076
All four domains

Programme connections 081-083 / ninety-day practice 084-085 / mentor guide 086 / sources 089 / decision index 091 / invitations 093

Four stages. Four domains.

The book contains twelve core principles, organised as three chapters in each of four stages. The four domains run through every chapter. Their intersection creates sixteen contexts for judgment; it does not create sixteen additional chapters or a score you have to pass.

DOMAIN	BUILDING	GROWING	SCALING	LEADING
Lead yourself	Purpose and honest commitment	Attention and workable boundaries	Judgment and founder capacity	Meaning, example and stewardship
Lead your people	Clear expectations and support	Truth, standards and agreements	Ownership with usable authority	Leaders and continuity
Lead your business	A deliverable, economic promise	A dependable working rhythm	Money, capacity and systems	Resource choices and resilience
Lead the market	A real problem and useful offer	Customer understanding and trust	A repeatable promise at greater volume	Responsible growth and lasting value

Emphasis changes; the whole remains

Building gives special attention to the founder and the people the offer serves. Growing emphasises attention, agreements and consistent work. Scaling deepens economic and operational capacity alongside shared authority. Leading examines purpose, judgment, continuity and consequence. All four domains remain relevant in each context.

The parts are useful starting points, not a demand to pursue endless expansion. A solopreneur can practise stewardship while remaining small. A large company can need to rebuild an offer or restore an elementary standard. Choose by the work required, then follow its dependencies.

LEADING

Leading is the book's fourth context. It develops stewardship, succession, contribution and the freedom to choose an appropriate scale. It is an editorial extension of the three supplied programme routes, not a claim that a fourth online route is already available.

From a reaction to a responsible move

P.A.C.E. supplies a pause in which judgment can work: Pause, Assess, Choose, Execute. The programme opens that movement into seven clarity points. These points are held in the same order throughout the manual and workbooks. The relationship is practical, rather than a validated measurement model.

CLARITY POINT	THE WORK IT ASKS FOR
Name it	State the issue in plain language. Give the work a visible subject.
Evidence	Open, count, observe or quote something another person could inspect.
Gap	Compare the statement with the record. Include what remains uncertain.
Cost	Name the consequence in time, money, people or missed work.
Decision	Choose the part that is yours to own. State the boundary.
Move	Make the proportionate action specific, owned and dated.
Review	State what you will check, when, and with whom.

Keep the answer attached to a source

A remembered impression can begin the inquiry. It should not impersonate a record. Write whether a number is actual or approximate, give the period and currency, and preserve missing information as missing. Ask how the evidence was obtained and whether it can answer the question being asked.

A machine can total hours, compute a margin or draft a summary. The founder still chooses what the figure means for a promise, a boundary or a person. Every calculation in this manual points back to an owned decision. A clear decision is then tested through action and review.

Start where the responsibility is

Read Chapters 1-3 to establish the shared foundation. Then use the decision index and the stage map to choose the issue most relevant to the work in front of you. Return to earlier principles when a later move depends on something still unresolved. Reading selectively is different from pretending a dependency has been completed.

YOUR SITUATION	START HERE	WHAT TO CHECK FIRST
You are finding a useful offer	Chapters 1-3	Purpose, named people, evidence and delivery economics
Demand exists, but the week is unmanageable	Chapters 4-6	Attention, standards and avoided agreements
The work needs more capacity or other owners	Chapters 7-9	Authority, money, capability and reliability
You are choosing what the business becomes	Chapters 10-12	Purpose, growth consequences, leadership and continuity

Do now, prepare next, postpone deliberately

Do now means the move that protects an obligation or addresses the demonstrated constraint. Prepare next means creating the conditions a later move will need. Postpone means a conscious decision with a reason and a review date. It is not an elegant name for avoidance. Each chapter gives a practical distinction among the three.

Do not use the order of a book to delay an urgent safety, cash, legal or conduct issue. Stabilise the immediate obligation and involve appropriate expertise where necessary. Then return to the causes and arrangements the incident revealed.

The book can support a twelve-module teaching sequence, one main chapter per module. In independent use, pace it according to action and review. Existing online levels and workbook gates remain as supplied; the reference section links their exercises to the principles here without silently changing the live programme.

WHAT COUNTS AS PROGRESS

An inspectable answer, a decision someone owns, an action that happened and a review that made the next commitment clearer. A filled page alone is not evidence of a changed business.