EXPLORASELF

ALEXANDRU COJOCARI

THE FOUNDER'S

Growth Manual

A working manual for founders, owners and leaders

8 modules

SELF · PEOPLE · WORK · MARKET · CAPITAL · JUDGEMENT · REPUTATION · LEGACY

THE FOUNDER AT WORK

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The Founder’s Growth Manual

A working manual for founders, owners and leaders

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An interior field manual for founders who want cleaner decisions, stronger relationships and a business that can carry its own weight. The operating work starts here.

FIELD NOTE *Use this as a working manual. A strong answer matters less than an honest one.*

SYSTEM PREVIEW

The manual sits between the founder and the business

Every company eventually reflects the judgement habits of the people running it. The manual treats personal leadership as business infrastructure: visible, practical and open to review. Its companion, Personal Leadership LAB · The Workbook, explores personal leadership principles; this book applies leadership to building and running a business.

1 Self

Pressure, energy, standards and personal judgement before those patterns become company culture.

2 People

Clear expectations, hard conversations, responsibility and respect in every working relationship.

3 Work

Priorities, operating rhythms, bottlenecks and the honest work of finishing.

4 Market

Customer evidence, offer clarity, price discipline and sales that leave dignity intact.

FIELD NOTE *Which of the four domains currently taxes your business most heavily?*

HOW TO USE EVERY SPREAD

Read the idea. Test it against your week. Change one visible behaviour.

The left side of a spread explains a pattern. The right side turns the pattern into an action, a question and a warning. Read with a pen. Do not perform agreement. Notice where your actual behaviour differs. Worked examples are fictional European businesses. Trade prices exclude VAT; cash examples use the stated bank receipts and payments. Use your actual costs, taxes and timing.

1 Concept

A useful distinction or framework written in plain language. Keep it only if it improves a decision.

2 Application

A small action that creates evidence in the real business, not a promise about a future self.

3 Warning

The common way a good idea becomes theatre, avoidance or an excuse for more complexity.

4 Field note

A small place to record a decision, phrase, owner or observation before it disappears.

FIELD NOTE *What would make this manual useful in the next seven days rather than merely interesting?*

EIGHT-MODULE ARCHITECTURE

A leadership system with eight places to inspect

The first four modules follow the original ExploraSelf focus: Self, People, Work and Market. The final four make the system durable when money, pressure, uncertainty and public trust enter the room.

1 **1-2 Self and People**

How you lead yourself and how others experience you while work gets hard.

2 **3-4 Work and Market**

How the company delivers, decides, speaks to customers and earns demand.

3 **5-6 Capital and Judgement**

How you allocate scarce resources and make decisions when certainty is unavailable.

4 **7-8 Reputation and Legacy**

How promises, conduct and systems outlast the convenience of the moment.

FIELD NOTE *Which module would create the greatest second-order improvement if you practised it first?*

THE EXPLORASELF METHOD

P.A.C.E. turns reflection into business action

Pause creates a beat before reaction. Assess separates fact from story. Choose compares the real options with capacity and consequences in view. Execute closes the loop and looks at the result. Reflection without a decision leaves the pattern untouched.

1 Pause

Name the event and your internal pressure before you make the event mean something.

2 Assess

Ask what is known, assumed, missing and costly if ignored.

3 Choose

Select the smallest responsible move that protects the customer, the team and the company.

4 Execute

Give the move an owner, date and review point. Then inspect the evidence.

FIELD NOTE *Where would one deliberate pause prevent an expensive reaction this month?*

MODULE 1

SELF

The founder under pressure

Self leadership begins where automatic behaviour becomes visible. The job is not to erase emotion. The job is to prevent emotion, fear or vanity from quietly setting company policy.

MODULE QUESTION

What does pressure make you do too quickly?

FIELD NOTE *Enter this module with one recent decision in mind. Use it as the case study.*

CONCEPT

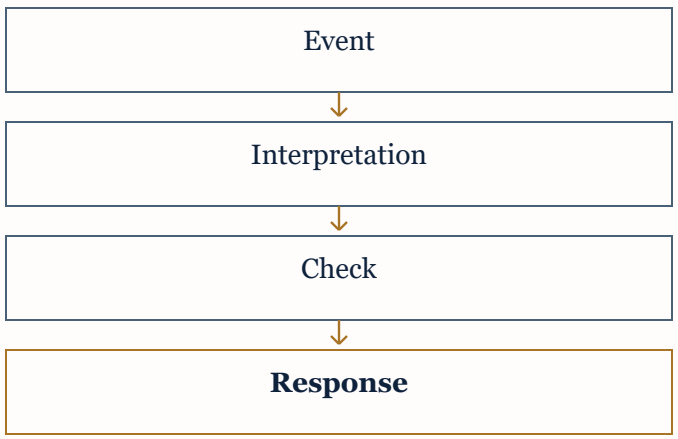
The inner operating system

An event arrives. Your pattern interprets it. Your leadership either checks the interpretation or exports it.

THE FRAMEWORK

The first reaction may be fast and honest, but it is still only a first reaction. Treat it as a signal to examine, not an instruction to obey. The company experiences the action you take after the reaction.

A RESPONSIBLE RESPONSE



APPLICATION / WORKED EXAMPLE

Marta, who runs a Lisbon studio, receives a dispute over a €4,800 invoice. She pauses, checks the signed scope and finds one unfinished item. She offers a completion date and asks the client to confirm the payment date. Use P.A.C.E. on one tense commercial moment; record the facts before deciding what to concede.

COMMON MISTAKE

Do not turn self-awareness into a performance where you describe your patterns beautifully and keep repeating them.

THIS WEEK

Ask one trusted person: What do I make harder when I feel pressure?

FIELD NOTE *Where did you confuse a feeling with a fact in the last two weeks?*

PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

A personal constitution

Values become useful when they prescribe conduct in inconvenient moments.

THE WORKING MOVE

A value without a behaviour is branding. A personal constitution names how you will act when the usual excuses arrive: fatigue, money pressure, embarrassment, loyalty to the wrong person or a desire to look impressive.

WRITE FOUR IF-THEN COMMITMENTS

1. **When I do not know, I will say what I need to check**
2. When I promise a date, I will name the tradeoff
3. When I make a mistake, I will disclose it before it gets discovered
4. When overloaded, I will renegotiate priorities

APPLICATION / WORKED EXAMPLE

Luca runs a Turin workshop. His commitments: quotes state payment dates; unbudgeted purchases above €500 need a cash check; delays are disclosed within one working day; extra work needs a revised quote. Write four if-then commitments for your customers, money, people and attention. Make each one observable.

COMMON MISTAKE

Avoid values that sound admirable but cannot help you decide between two actual actions.

THIS WEEK

Test one commitment in a real conversation and note the cost of keeping it.

FIELD NOTE *Which principle would cost you something to keep this week?*