

EXPLORASELF

WORTH BUILDING

The Founder's Playbook

32

Leadership Frameworks

to Turn Grit into Growth
and Build a Business That Lasts

ALEXANDRU COJOCARI

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THE FOUNDER'S MANUAL

*32 frameworks to lead yourself, your people, your
business and your market*

ALEXANDRU COJOCARI

SELF Lead yourself	PEOPLE Lead people	WORK Lead the business	MARKET Lead in the market
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MY PROMISE TO YOU

YOU WILL NOT FINISH THE SAME

This manual will not make your decisions for you. No book can. What it will do is put the right question in front of you, at the right time, on one clear page.

Spend one honest hour with it each week. Within a season you will know what you want, who you need beside you, what your business really runs on and who you are built to serve.

Every tool here is one I use with founders and business owners. Use what works. Leave the rest for the season you need it. Do the work, and you will not finish this manual as the same person who opened it. That is my promise.

Alexandru

HOW TO READ THE PAGES



Empty square or box: write here



Numbered square: how to use the drawing



Bronze: your priority, the one that matters most



Navy band: the domain you are in

ABOUT THE EXAMPLES

The worked examples are realistic composites written to show each framework in use. Names, places and figures are illustrative, not real clients.

CREDITS

ExploraSelf frameworks are original to the author. Classic frameworks are credited on their own pages to the people who created them, and appear here rewritten in ExploraSelf form. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version. Quotations from Seneca are from the translation by Richard M. Gummere, from Marcus Aurelius from the translation by George Long, and from Sun Tzu from the translation by Lionel Giles.

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WHY THIS MANUAL

PRINCIPLES THAT NEVER GET OLD

Tools change every year. Today a machine can write your emails, analyse your numbers and draft your strategy. It cannot decide for you who you want to be, what you can carry, where you go and how big you are willing to grow. That is leadership, and it has never been worth more.

This manual holds 32 frameworks I use with founders and business owners. Some are mine; some are classics I have tested and rewritten. Each fits on two pages: the tool on the left, and on the right how to use it, a worked example and a few thoughts that will still be true in fifty years.

Do not read it like a novel. Use it like a toolbox. Open the page your week needs, work with a pen, and come back in 90 days.

ONE THING TO DO THIS WEEK

Read the contents and circle the three frameworks your business needs most right now.

Alexandru

ALEXANDRU COJOCARI · ROME

PHOTO 01

Portrait, at least 1,300 × 2,800 px
Natural light or black and white

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HOW THIS MANUAL WORKS

Four domains, three layers of wisdom and four rules to hold before you pick up any tool.

FOUR DOMAINS

SELF PERSONAL INTERNAL <i>Who am I, and who am I becoming?</i>	PEOPLE PERSONAL EXTERNAL <i>Who am I for others, and who are they to me?</i>
WORK BUSINESS INTERNAL <i>What do I truly care about, and does it pay?</i>	MARKET BUSINESS EXTERNAL <i>What does the world want and need from me?</i>
PERSONAL	BUSINESS

THREE LAYERS ON EVERY SPREAD

- PRINCIPLE · WHY**
The bold line at the top of each framework. The law that does not change.
 - STRATEGY · WHAT**
The drawing and the five moves: the method you can repeat.
 - TACTICS · HOW**
The worked example, the questions and your quick note: what you do this week.
- ### HOW TO USE IT
- ONE FRAMEWORK A WEEK**
Pick the page your week needs. Work with a pen, on the page or on a separate sheet.
 - DECIDE WITH P.A.C.E.**
Pause, assess, choose, execute. Every framework ends in a decision and a date.
 - RETURN EVERY 90 DAYS**
Your answers will change, because you will.

FOUR RULES BEFORE THE TOOL

1 IDENTITY RULES EVERYTHING You will act like the person you believe you are. Start there.	2 MASTERY IS THE WAY, NOT THE END There is no final level. There is only the next honest step.	3 THE OASIS IS COMING Every desert season ends for those who keep walking.	4 WHAT YOU NEED TO START IS ALREADY IN YOU Tools help. Decisions, courage and character are yours.
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PHOTO 02

Portrait, at least 1,300 × 2,800 px
Natural light or black and white

ON LEADING YOURSELF

THE FIRST BUSINESS YOU RUN IS YOU

In my late teens I built kitchens and wardrobes to measure. I loved the work and the clients. I did not manage the money, the orders ran late, and my father closed the business. The lesson took three years: the business was never stronger than the person running it.

Years later, in 2019, I won in Classic Physique at an IFBB competition. Nobody can lift the weights for you, eat for you or sleep for you. Business is the same. Your team can do many things. Leading you is not one of them.

This part is about the founder’s inner operating system: goals, decisions, identity, focus and discipline. Start here, even if you are tempted to skip to sales.

ONE THING TO DO THIS WEEK

Score yourself on the Five Forces before you read any further.

Alexandru

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01

SELF

LEAD YOURSELF

Who am I, and who am I becoming?

Your goals, decisions, identity, energy and discipline: the founder’s inner operating system.

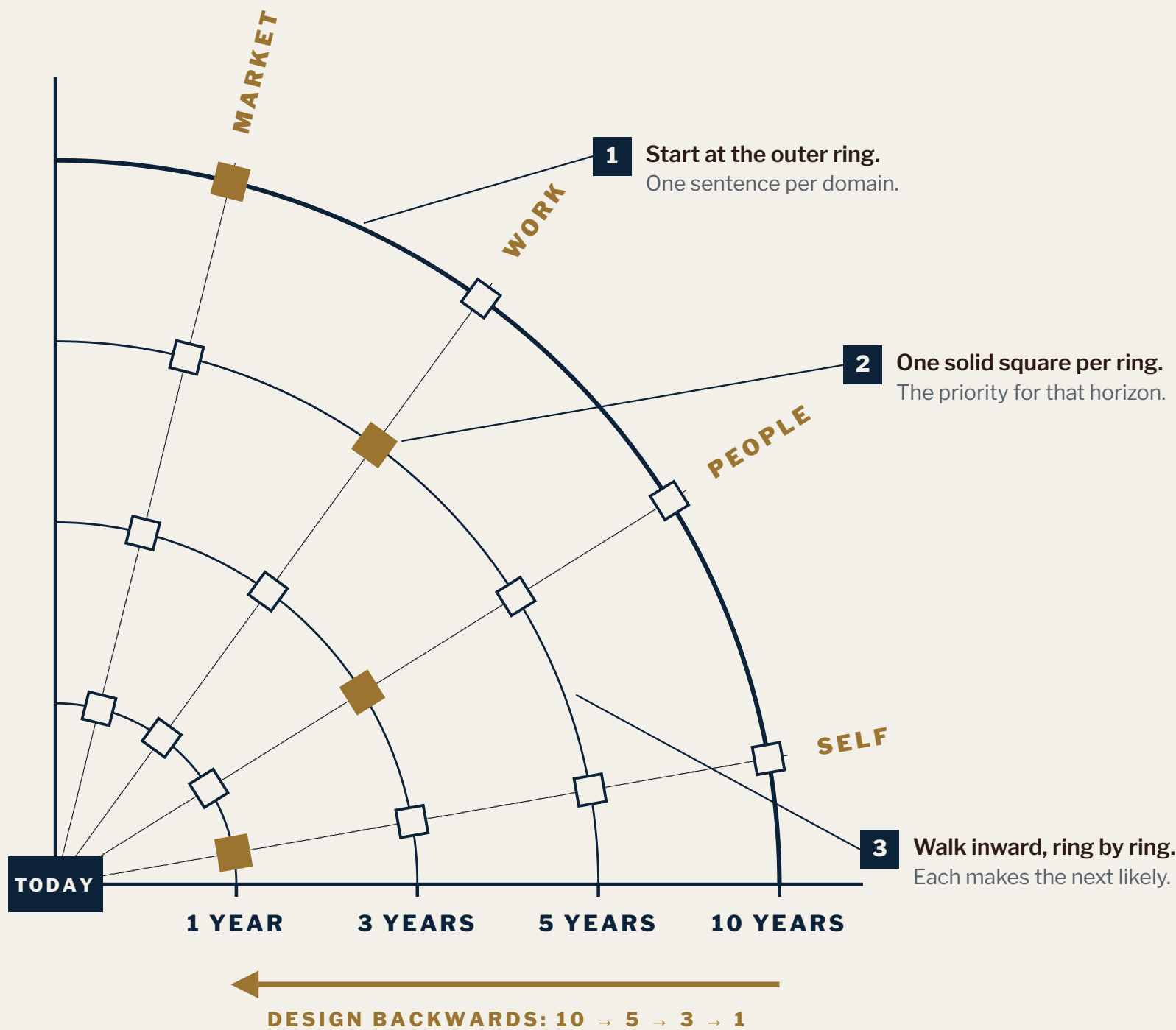


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THE 10-5-3-1 GOAL LADDER

See the summit before you choose the next step. Decide where you are going in ten years, then walk back to what this year must prove.

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□ Empty square: one goal, one domain, one horizon ■ Solid square: the one priority on that horizon

Worked example opposite →

FIVE MOVES

45 minutes once a year · review every 90 days · work on a separate sheet or in your journal

- 1

Start at ten years. For each domain, write one sentence that would make you proud. Let the dreamer speak; don’t edit yet.
- 2

Walk back to five, three and one. Each horizon must make the next one likely. If a step feels too big, the ring below is missing something.
- 3

Choose one priority per horizon. Which goal, once reached, makes the others easier? Fill that square. Everything else supports it.
- 4

Invite the critic. What could stop this? What will you stop doing this year to make room?
- 5

Turn year one into this quarter. One result, one weekly habit, one date in your calendar. Review with P.A.C.E. every 90 days.

WORKED EXAMPLE		Luca, 41 · accounting firm in Milan · 9 people
10 YEARS	■ MARKET	The firm family businesses in Lombardy trust first. He teaches young founders one evening a month.
5 YEARS	■ WORK	Two offices, 25 people. The firm runs a full month without him.
3 YEARS	■ PEOPLE	Two partners who lead client work and hire without asking him.
1 YEAR	■ SELF	He stops doing the books himself and protects two mornings a week for strategy.
WHAT HE STOPPED Taking every small client himself.		THIS QUARTER Hire one senior accountant by 31 March.

REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS

If nothing changes, where will I be in ten years, and can I accept that?

Which goal am I choosing because it impresses others?

Who do I need to become to reach each solid square?

YOUR QUICK NOTE

NOTES THAT NEVER GET OLD

PHILOSOPHY

A goal is a decision about who you will become. The result is the proof, not the point.

LEADERSHIP

People follow a leader who can say where we are going and why. Clarity is a form of kindness.

BUSINESS

Most founders overrate one year and underrate ten. Compounding is patient, and it rewards the focused.

PERSONAL

Write your ten-year goal for your family and health first. Wealth that costs them is a loss.

“When a man does not know what harbour he is making for, no wind is the right wind.”

SENECA, LETTERS TO LUCILIUS

THE P.A.C.E. DECISION LOOP

Between what happens and what you do there is a gap. Leaders widen it. Pause, assess, choose and execute, and stop reacting your way through the week.

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