



01

THE PURPOSE PRINCIPLE

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PROJECT



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“Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakens.”

– Carl Jung

“The tragedy of life is not death, but what we allow to die inside us while we are alive.”

– H. L. Hunt

The first principle in the **Transformational Leadership Project** is the jumping off point for individual and organizational greatness. Yes, that’s right. I used the word greatness.

This principle will help you peel back the layers of your thinking and shed light on the hopes, dreams and aspirations that you have for your work and personal life. Hopes, dreams and aspirations that you do not want to let go unfulfilled.

Understand this primary point about the Purpose Principle: ***the most successful people you know, both personally and professionally, live their lives on purpose as opposed to accidentally.*** An accidental professional life is a waste of talent and skill and leads to mediocrity and stagnation. An accidental personal life limits your level of engagement with and enjoyment of life and leads to disengagement and lower levels of fulfillment.

Learning Objectives

- Clarify and articulate your purpose
- Determine ways to become more purposeful
- Gain clarity about the value you add to your organization
- Create a link between behavior and your personal leadership brand
- Set the stage for personal fulfillment, increased performance and professional success through TLP

THE DIMENSIONS OF PURPOSE

Your purpose is found at the intersection of passion, competence, and value. In order to clarify your purpose, you will need to gain a deeper understanding of how your unique talents, skills, and passions create value for yourself, your customer, and your organization.

Passion

At the heart of excellence lies passion. Through our passion we are motivated to overcome challenges and achieve what we desire. When we are compelled by what we do, work ceases to be a four-letter word. Passion is a key component of fulfillment. Consider the following questions:

1) What part of my job do I love doing? Why?

2) What part of my work do I find most rewarding?

3) What is the one idea, hope, or aspiration regarding my work that has grabbed hold of me and won't let go?

4) What aspect of my work, if I were no longer able to do it, would make my work less fulfilling?

Competence

Where do your strengths lie? To answer this question, begin by identifying what you do well for your organization. In what ways do you effectively serve your customers and employees? Thinking about competence also provides an opportunity for you to identify areas for further development.

1) What are my five most important talents and skills?

2) What is my proudest contribution and/or accomplishment? Why?

3) What part of my work do I receive the most compliments about?

4) The five work activities I take great pride in are...

5) What part of my job do I plan to master?

Value

Let's take time to evaluate your work in terms of value.

- 1) In my professional life, what are the most valuable contributions I make to my customer, my colleagues or coworkers, and my organization?

- 2) What aspects of my work are distinctive? What differentiates me from my colleagues who have the same role?

- 3) What part of my work, if I were to no longer do it, would leave my customer bitterly disappointed?

- 4) How can I increase the value I bring to my organization?

ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

An important step to clarifying your purpose is to understand what value your actions create. These outcomes often are more significant than the simple completion of a task.

For example, when you hire someone to mow your lawn, a result is that you have cut grass and a tidy yard. At the same time, there is a more significant relational outcome: you converted time doing a less important task (doing yard work) to spending time with your family. An important emotional connection is created because you delegated one task and instead invested in your family relationships.

With your group, explore possible results for the following activities.

Activity

Result

At a crowded drive-thru window, an employee stands outside to take your order and accept payment. You then can drive up and immediately get your food.

The bank teller does not call you by name.

You return an item without a receipt; it is gladly accepted, no questions asked.

During a blood draw, a patient says "Ouch!" The nurse does not apologize.

You get an email from your manager that says, "The boss expects you to be at the meeting, so go to the meeting."

An employee comes to you with a problem. You stop what you're doing, listen attentively, and help her figure out a solution.

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As we can see, there are many possible results from various actions. Now, it's time to take a look at your work activities and the results you create. With these ideas in mind, fill out the section below.

What I do in my role is...

(list four activities)

The results of my activities are

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| | |

Review the activities and results you identified. What themes do you see?

Summarize what you've learned above here:

My top four activities in my role are:

.....

The results I accomplish are:

.....

Knowing the difference between what I do and what I accomplish is important because:

.....

DIMENSIONS OF PURPOSE DISCUSSION

In the previous section, you clarified where passion, competence, and value are revealed in your work life. Review your answers in the prior section again. With your responses in mind, discuss the following with your group:

My three most significant insights are:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

When I review my dimensions of purpose, I see that I excel both technically and relationally at:

The most important thing I want to accomplish is:

WHAT IS MY PURPOSE?

Consider the insights you have had thus far. What ideas are particularly meaningful to you? These insights will help you clarify your leadership purpose.

Now it's time to write your initial purpose statement. This statement should reflect your passion, competencies, and organizational outcomes for which you want to be known. A template is provided for you, however, feel free to write your purpose statement in your own words.

Purpose statement

Template: I create __ (what you do) __ so that ____ (whoever your customer is) ____ can achieve __ (what) ____.

.....

.....

.....

TRY IT ON FOR SIZE

Now that you have an initial draft of your purpose statement, how does it fit? Take a few minutes to discuss the purpose clarification process with your group. If you are comfortable doing so, share your purpose statement as well. Does it resonate with you? What, if any, changes will make it a better fit for your leadership?

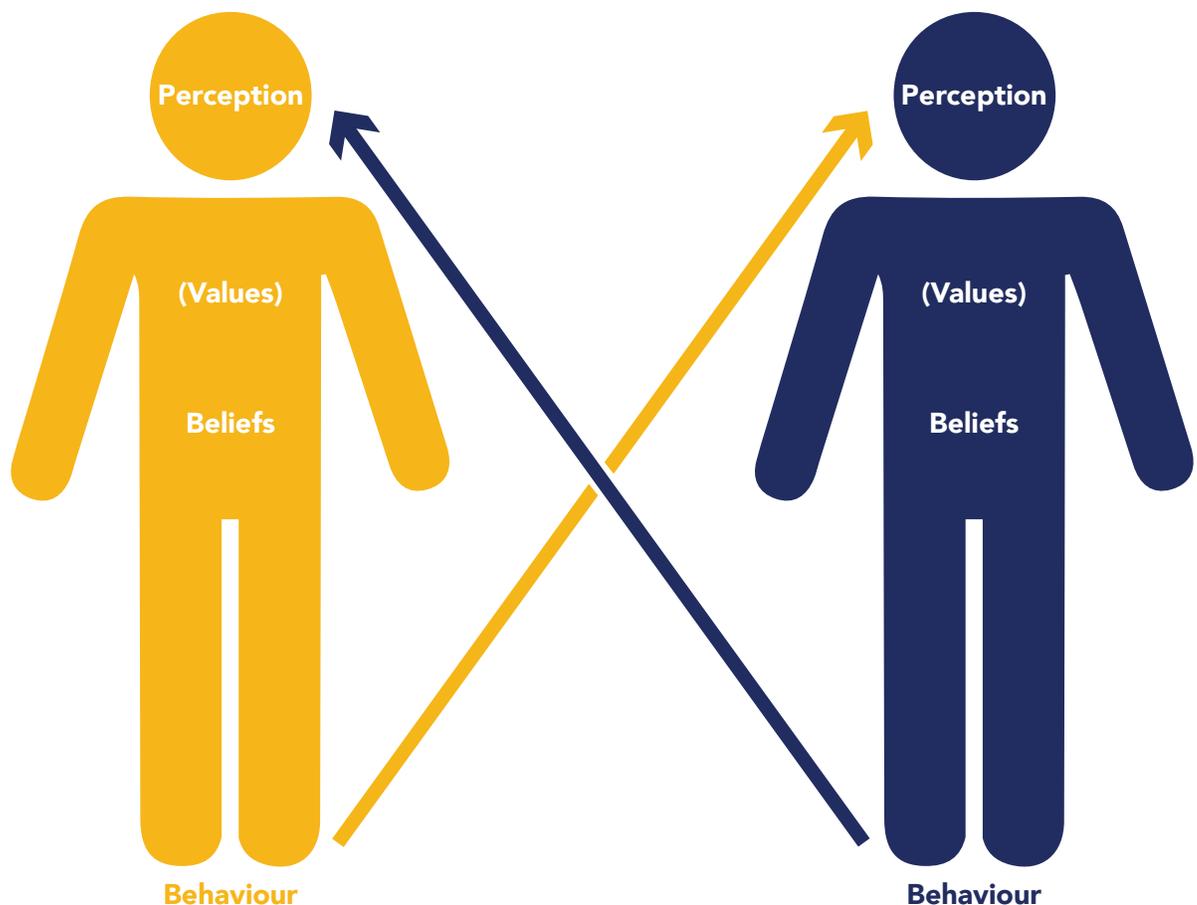
Write your final leadership purpose here:

PERSONIFYING YOUR PURPOSE

Now that you have clarified your purpose, an important next step is to evaluate how well you are living it. In other words, the results of your activities inform perceptions about your leadership. What are you known for? Would a co-worker infer your purpose by working with you?

These questions hint at your personal brand. Brands are among the most strategic assets of an organization. Brands and reputations have tangible, financial value for both your organization and your personal career goals. When what you personify is not aligned with your purpose, credibility is jeopardized, effectiveness is compromised, and it is possible that you are not perceived how you would like to be. In essence, you are living incongruently.

Congruence between what you want to create for your leadership (your purpose) and what you personify is a vital component of transformational leadership. In this next section, you will explore what you personify and how to be more deliberate with your personal brand.



DEFAULT, DESIRED AND DESIGNED BRAND

Personifying your purpose is a conscientious act. When you consider whether your behaviors and purpose are aligned, you begin to clarify your personal brand. In the next activity, you will explore your default, desired and designed brand and clarify specific behaviors you can adopt in order to exemplify your purpose and professionally flourish.

Default Brand

Step 1. The starting point for building your leadership brand involves identifying four words or phrases that you believe best describe your leadership. Don't overthink this; simply capture what you see as the essence of your leadership. For example, you may describe yourself as inspiring, practical, a clear thinker, and open communicator. The four words you use represent your default brand from your perspective.

I see myself as:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Step 2. Now, consider your leadership descriptors in terms of your purpose. Is each descriptor helping you live your purpose or hindering you? For example, perhaps you see yourself as an open communicator, yet you recognize that you sometimes interrupt or multi-task during conversations. In the box below, identify three behaviors you exhibit that hinder you from living your purpose. This candid self-assessment can provide insights into your effectiveness with your **Default Brand**.

Step 3. Determine if there is a gap between the leadership descriptors you identified and the behaviors you exhibit. Ask yourself the following questions:

- a. Am I behaving in ways consistent with my purpose, goals and aspirations?
- b. What is the upside and downside to my leadership brand/reputation?
- c. Am I excited about the words used to describe me, or am I neutral?

Desired Brand

Step 4. Your **Desired Brand** is what you want to be known for. It is as the term suggests, the way you want people to see, know and think of you. Your **Desired Brand** is less about logic; it is rooted in articulating your highest hopes, dreams and aspirations for you and your leadership. To define your **Desired Brand** you'll want to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is it that I want to be known for?

- 2) What traits, characteristics and/or values are essential and or non-negotiable to me? A list of possible descriptors is on page 13.

My desired brand is to be seen as:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Designed Brand

Step 5. Your *Designed Brand* is your *Desired Brand* put into action. After determining your *Desired Brand*, ask how you can behaviorally put into practice your *Desired Brand*. What behaviors will you need to exhibit in order to be seen as your *Desired Brand*? Write your *Designed Brand* below.

The four most important behaviors I can adopt in order to fulfill my *Desired Brand* are:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

- Achievement/success
- Beauty
- Communication
- Competition
- Creativity
- Decisiveness
- Discipline
- Effectiveness
- Equality
- Faith
- Friendship
- Growth
- Harmony
- Honesty/integrity
- Humor
- Innovation
- Love/affection
- Open-mindedness
- Power
- Prosperity/wealth
- Recognition
- Risk-taking
- Service
- Spirituality
- Teamwork
- Truth
- Wisdom
- Autonomy
- Challenge
- Competence
- Courage
- Curiosity
- Dependability
- Diversity
- Empathy
- Family
- Flexibility
- Freedom
- Happiness
- Health
- Hope
- Independence
- Intelligence
- Loyalty
- Patience
- Productivity
- Quality
- Respect
- Security
- Simplicity
- Strength
- Trust
- Variety

DEFAULT, DESIRED AND DESIGNED BRAND POST-WORKSHOP ACTIVITY

We all have blind spots when it comes to assessing our own behaviors and how we are perceived by others. This activity, to be conducted before the next TLP workshop, will shed light on your leadership through the eyes of your most important stakeholders. Ultimately, it is helpful to understand where your perceptions of your leadership align and diverge with the perceptions of the people central to your success.

Step 1. Create a list of eight to ten people that you trust and respect. They can be colleagues, managers, coworkers, direct reports, former employees, and/or friends. Your list should be a list of people whose opinion you value. Who is on your list?

| NAME | DESCRIPTORS |
|-----------|-------------|
| 1) | |
| 2) | |
| 3) | |
| 4) | |
| 5) | |
| 6) | |
| 7) | |
| 8) | |
| 9) | |
| 10) | |

Step 2. Call and/or speak in person with those on your list and let them know you are involved in a leadership activity that requires candid feedback. As someone you respect, his or her assistance in seeing your leadership from an outsider’s perspective is essential. Specifically, ask them to provide you with four words or phrases they believe best describe your leadership. It can be a one word descriptor such *innovative* or inspiring. It can also include phrases such as *“can do attitude.”* This step will capture 32-40 words that represent what others see as your leadership brand. Review your words and compile a list of themes or patterns. Similar words or synonyms should be distilled into a one-word descriptor that best represents what you believe is the tone and/or feel of the words.

The four most common words used to describe my leadership are:

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

Step 3. Compare and contrast these descriptive words with the words you used to describe your leadership during the *Default, Desired and Designed Brand* activity. Where are there similarities? Where are there differences? Is your list of descriptors (both your own and from your observers) distinctive or simply the price of entry for being in your role?

Step 4. How does this knowledge influence your *Designed Brand*? For example, are there things you are doing well that you were unaware of? Perhaps there are areas you would like to focus upon more. Write down the insights you have gained from this process. What, if any, changes will you make to further accomplish your *Designed Brand*?

PRINCIPLE REFLECTION

By clarifying your Purpose and taking steps to personify it in your everyday leadership behaviors, you are on the path to becoming a Transformational Leader. Take a few minutes to consider the following:

- What insights have I gained from this session?
- What are the immediate impacts of these insights for my team, my organization, and myself?
- One thing I will implement as a result of this session is...

Schedule time to check in with your buddy approximately 15 days from now. At this check in, please discuss how implementation of the Purpose Principle is proceeding. For example, you may want to discuss:

- Areas where I am feeling successful are
- I'm experiencing difficulty with
- I'm adding value to my organization/team in these ways
- The Purpose Principle's most significant impact to my leadership is

Schedule your follow up conversation below:

..... and I will meet/call to discuss transformational leadership on at am/pm.

We will discuss these conversations at the beginning of the next principle.

