

*'The New Leadership Playbook combines inspiring stories, sound principles, and practical advice to uplift your actions and increase your impact.'*

Ron Kaufman, New York Times bestselling author 'Uplifting Service'

# THE NEW LEADERSHIP PLAYBOOK

BEING HUMAN WHILST SUCCESSFULLY  
DELIVERING ACCELERATED RESULTS

PRINCIPLES



ANDREW BRYANT

**BEING HUMAN WHILST SUCCESSFULLY  
DELIVERING ACCELERATED RESULTS**

**THE NEW  
LEADERSHIP  
PLAYBOOK**

**ANDREW BRYANT**

The New Leadership Playbook: Being human whilst successfully delivering accelerated results.

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ISBN: 978-1-922757-00-5 (paperback)

978-1-922757-74-6 (eBook)



A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of Australia

Editors: Jason Martin, Chloe Cran, and Sarah Kate Hill

Printed in Australia by Ocean Reeve Publishing

[www.oceanreevepublishing.com](http://www.oceanreevepublishing.com)

Published by Andrew Bryant and Ocean Reeve Publishing



**ANDREW BRYANT**  
SELF→LEADERSHIP

# FOREWORD

“Just relax” Andrew said. This was our first meeting. Not a boardroom, but a physiotherapist’s table. Some gentle neck muscle movement and then *crack*. With the neck now back in good shape, attention turned to all the other aching parts of my back.

There’s nothing like a physical therapy session to allow time for a deep conversation. For Andrew I’m sure it was helpful in distracting and relaxing me. For me, it was an opportunity to learn that this man, already an expert at working with the body, was now setting his intent on becoming a master of the mind. But more than that ... to become a teacher, a coach, a motivator for others.

I feel deeply fortunate to have met Andrew at this time. I was only 30, a young software entrepreneur, full of ambition and curiosity, but lacking many of the skills to be a successful leader. Our journey together started with me asking Andrew to help my sales organization develop better communication skills. I think I have generally good instincts about people, and I could see that this guy was special. Our relationship quickly evolved into executive coaching, and even further into becoming a facilitator and advisor for my company’s C-Suite. A year or so after we met, I recall him saying, at the end of a coaching session, “there’s something I want to ask you”. I stopped him there and replied “I know what you want to

ask. And the answer is no, I won't come to your wedding. The work you do for me is too valuable for me to risk that with friendship." Today, however, we count ourselves as close friends, such is the way young men mature and get wiser through the years.

A couple of decades since that fateful therapy session Andrew is still my coach. The experience has been transformative to me on so many levels. We've worked together through fast growth times, three massive economic downturns, and acquisitions of companies I've led. Andrew's work has correlated strongly with far better results, regardless of the situation, than I could ever have achieved on my own.

An intellectual, entrepreneur, coach, advisor, speaker, and author, it seems Andrew's work is never done. In late 2020 he floated with me the idea for a new book (his fourth). Andrew was already working on maturing leadership programs at Planful, a Silicon Valley software company, where I was CEO. Some of this work had weaved its way into the idea for this book, coupled with his decades-long, prolific learning of how people think, feel, behave, and actively manage all of that ("Self-leadership"). I was immediately enthused by the idea.

I enjoy a good management and leadership book. But all too often these books follow the same formula, are too conceptual, and don't have sustained impact for the readers. Andrew's approach, to write a book that was founded on science and research, but super pragmatic, resonated strongly with me. "Yes! Too many new leaders have good instincts, but they lack the pragmatic tools and skills to execute on good leadership behaviors. They need this book!" I told him.

In my experience people managers think they are leaders, but many fail to be *successful* leaders. Even the ones who've had successful results will attest that too many aspects of leadership are

harder than they ought to be. For example, most leaders aren't very good at giving constructive feedback, or having a difficult conversation, or embedding values and key behaviors into the daily fabric of work life.

The New Leadership Playbook changes all that. This book gives new, and established leaders ultra-pragmatic “plays” for most of the people and culture challenges they will face in their careers. The plays are backed by reasoning and research, so you can understand the “why” behind them. When you read this book, you'll fast forward your leadership maturity by decades.

I'm not sure this will be Andrew's last book but one way or the other it will form a major part of his legacy, impacting many thousands of lives, directly and through his coaching. I've been privileged to be a recipient of his knowledge and wisdom through all these years, and I'm so glad this is now available to everyone.

Grant Halloran  
CEO – Planful.com

# PRAISE FOR THE NEW LEADERSHIP PLAYBOOK

*‘The New Leadership Playbook weaves powerful principles and proven strategies to empower leaders to unlock potential and accelerate growth in today’s increasingly accelerated, uncertain and competitive world. Written with deep insight, heart and humor, Andrew Bryant has unpacked theory into practical plays you can immediately apply to lead yourself and others to higher ground. Read, apply and reap the results. ‘*

—Dr Margie Warrell, Senior Partner,  
Korn Ferry CEO & Leadership and  
Bestselling Author of *Stop Playing Safe* and *You’ve Got This!*

‘He did it again! Once again Andrew Bryant wrote a book that is eye-opening, practical, easy to read, fun, to the point, and future oriented. I read Andrew’s book on Self-Leadership, close to 10 years ago and I can honestly say that it changed my life, made me a better leader for myself and a better leader for others. In this book, ‘The New Leadership Playbook’, I believe Andrew will improve many individuals’ job satisfaction and therewith their quality of life. By, in a playful way, showing leaders how to be better leaders, for themselves and for others; employees, organizations, and communities.’

—Herdis Pala Palsdottir,  
Experienced Leader, Management Consultant

‘Andrew Bryant’s latest book, ‘The New Leadership Playbook,’ is not only a delight to read, but also a ‘right-for-the-moment’ guide to what it takes to be a leader right now, as we recognize the need to build a new leadership model for a new world. I loved that it was full of stories – both the authors and other people’s experiences – along with simple formulas that are well structured and easy to follow. It really is a delight to read. Do yourself a favour and grab a copy of this excellent and riveting read. It really should be on the list of must-reads for all leaders and aspiring leaders. Yes, it’s that good.’

—Andrea T Edwards, author,  
Uncommon Courage: an invitation.

‘Andrew’s talent to capture what we - business leaders - feel during difficult moments and how it influences our decisions brings a totally new dimension to management. Absolutely worth the reflection for current and future business leaders!’

—Gustavo Hildenbrand,  
General Manager, Danone

‘Congratulations!!! This is truly a bible/manual for leaders (with or without titles) as well as those aspiring to be leaders. The first thing that I observed about the book is a mix of balance or yin and yang which is so rare. For instance, weaving together ‘being human’ and ‘delivering accelerated results’, detailing both the leaderships ‘principles’ (theory) and ‘plays’ (practice), encompassing both ‘mindset’ and ‘behaviors’. That makes it a practical, comprehensive, go-to-guide that is set to create a sustainable and positive change in leading being humans while creating accelerated results. It is a well-researched book that is made simple for the readers with the generous use of metaphors, cases and reflection that help imbibe the concepts easily.’

—Lakshmi Ramachandran, PhD,  
Learning & Development Specialist



‘Andrew Bryant is the world authority on self-leadership and the person I myself go to for guidance on the subject. When Mr Selfleadership writes a book on leadership you should not just pay attention, you should get your own copy.’

—Fredrik Haren,  
The Creativity Explorer

‘This is such a welcome Playbook. As managing director of Asia’s #1 Executive Peer Network, I see this as an important guide for leaders in a post-covid world. We have engaged Andrew Bryant to speak at our events over the last 8-years and he always delivers impact and insights, now you can read his playbook.’

—Nick Jonsson, MD at EGN Singapore &  
Indonesia, author of Executive Loneliness

‘Our world is evolving at an increasingly fast pace. Organisations are facing higher levels of disruption, uncertainty, and volatility in their environments. Teams and individuals alike are having to develop greater agility, resilience, and collaboration to succeed. This ‘next normal’ requires a revised playbook for leaders to grow, perform and thrive.

Through his work – ‘The New Leadership Playbook’ – Andrew Bryant delivers an engaging, easy-to-read, and practical book for leaders, teams, and organizations to stay future-fit and play to their potential in today’s world. The models, stories, and lessons which Andrew shares through ‘plays and principles’ are the highlights why you should read and share this book in your journey to be a human leader delivering exceptional results.’

—Manish Bundhun,  
Author of ‘Shots of Insights’ and  
‘Disruptor’, Chief People and  
Transformation Executive, Executive Coach.

‘If you are a leader looking to take your game to the next level, then ‘The New Leadership Playbook’ is for you! Filled with stories, examples, and strategies from Andrew Bryant’s global experience as a Leadership Expert, this book is a must have for accelerated results in your career.’

—Dr Jerome Joseph,  
Best Selling Author,  
Global Brand Thought Leader

“‘The New Leadership Playbook’ is a first-of-its-kind guide to managing and leading in current time. Presented in Andrew Bryant’s inimitable forceful straight-talking style, it augments his time-tested self-leadership principles, that have helped many become the best version of themselves, with how to successfully lead others. He has brilliantly provided mindsets and strategies, akin to sports plays that are sure to accelerate your results in the world of business.’

—Ganesh Krishnan, CIO / CTO /  
Digital Transformation Leader /  
VP IT at ComfortDelGro

‘Given the constant crises managing anything, especially global supply chains, has never been harder. Andrew Bryant’s latest book gives a much-needed solid framework for managers and leaders to sail their ship through the stormy weather!’

—Radu Palamariu,  
Managing Director, Alcott Global

“‘The New Leadership Playbook’ is packed with no-nonsense answers to real life challenges. It will feel like Andrew is coaching you on the leadership principles and ‘plays’ that will up your game to champions level.’

Ricardo J. Vargas,  
Author of Chief Executive Team,  
CEO at Consulting House

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Andrew Bryant is the founder of Self Leadership International [www.selfleadership.com](http://www.selfleadership.com) and the world's leading expert on self-leadership. He has written two books on the topic: *Self Leadership: How to Become a More Successful, Efficient, and Effective Leader From the Inside Out* (Bryant & Kazan, 2012) and *Self Leadership: 12 Powerful Mindsets & Methods to Win in Life & Business* (Bryant, 2016). He has also contributed to many blogs, books, and articles on self-leadership and leadership.

Andrew has coached hundreds of leaders and leadership teams to become the best version of themselves and to scale their companies. He has international experience with clients from Asia, Australasia, the United States of America (USA), Europe, the Middle East, and Africa.

Not only has Andrew worked across geographical locations and cultures, but he has also transformed and developed leaders across industries, including the airline industry, software and hardware companies, pharmaceutical manufacturers, professional services, banking, finance, manufacturing, hospitality, and travel.

Perhaps his flexibility and agility are because, whilst he lives in Portugal, he is British by birth, Australian by passport, managing director of a Singaporean company, and Brazilian by wife!

Andrew is a highly engaging, informative, and inspiring speaker. He has spoken on stages around the world to audiences as large as 12,000, but can also connect via video conference from his fully equipped studio in Portugal.

Andrew's passion for self-leadership, seeing options, and seizing opportunities began early in his career. Qualifying as a physiotherapist in 1982, and after working in a London teaching hospital, Andrew began to work with athletes and sports teams. Curious about what makes the difference in human performance, he engaged in further studies, including acupuncture, hypnosis, neurolinguistic programming, neurosemantics, and coaching.

These disciplines formed the early framework of his self-leadership model. Whilst studying leadership at the University of Western Australia, he was struck by the need for a practical and behavioral approach to personal mastery and leadership.

After low-cost, high-volume gyms disrupted his fitness and wellness business in 2000, Andrew committed to full-time coaching, writing, and speaking. He was hired by the young CEO of a software company, Orbis Mandatum, to coach him and his executives. The CEO's review speaks to two of Andrew's values: transformation and impact. 'The results were transformational and contributed to extraordinary business results.'

A contract to teach coaching for Singapore Airlines saw Andrew relocate to Asia in 2004.

He was the President of Asia Professional Speakers Singapore (APSS) from 2015 to 2016, is a TEDx speaker, and has been on the external faculty for Singapore Management University's Women in Leadership and Executive Education programs.

View Andrew's YouTube Channel Here:



Andrew is married to Andrea, who originates from Rio do Janeiro, Brazil. He has two children from a former marriage and is now a stepdad. Whilst he enjoys the excitement of the big stage or conducting a senior leadership retreat, he is most fond of his work teaching self-esteem and self-confidence to disadvantaged and at-risk teenagers.

# CONTENTS

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>Foreword</b> .....   | <b>iii</b>    |
| <b>Praise for The New Leadership Playbook</b> .....                               | <b>vii</b>    |
| <b>About the Author</b> .....   | <b>xi</b>     |
| <b>Why this Leadership Book?</b> .....  | <b>xv</b>     |
| <b>Table of Figures</b> .....   | <b>xxv</b>    |
| <b>How to Read and Use This Playbook</b> .....                                    | <b>xxvii</b>  |
| <br><b>Part 1: What is Leadership?</b> .....                                      | <br><b>1</b>  |
| <br><b>Part 2: A Framework for Accelerated Results</b> .....                      | <br><b>15</b> |
| Clear Expectations .....  | 16            |
| Mindset & Motivation .....  | 18            |
| Right Behaviors .....   | 25            |
| A Leadership Operating System .....   | 31            |
| Summary for the Leadership Framework for Driving for<br>Accelerated Results ..... | 34            |
| <br><b>Part 3: The Plays</b> .....  | <br><b>35</b> |
| Play #1: The Why .....  | 35            |
| Using This Play .....   | 40            |
| Play #2: Ownership .....  | 43            |
| Using This Play .....   | 46            |
| Play #3: Feedback .....   | 48            |
| Using This Play .....   | 52            |
| Play #4: Objective Setting .....  | 54            |
| Using This Play .....   | 58            |
| Play #5: Confidence .....   | 60            |
| Using this Play .....   | 62            |

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Play #6: Collaboration.....                   | 65             |
| Using this Play .....                         | 74             |
| Play #7: Career Conversations .....           | 75             |
| Using This Play.....                          | 79             |
| Play #8: Decisiveness .....                   | 82             |
| Using This Play.....                          | 85             |
| Play #9: Talent & Strengths .....             | 90             |
| Using This Play.....                          | 92             |
| Play #10 Crucial Conversations .....          | 95             |
| Using this Play .....                         | 96             |
| Play #11: Culture .....                       | 100            |
| Using This Play.....                          | 103            |
| Play #12: Coaching.....                       | 107            |
| Using This Play.....                          | 107            |
| Inner Game Questions:.....                    | 110            |
| Understanding How Frames Drive Behavior ..... | 112            |
| Start Stop Continue .....                     | 114            |
| <br><b>Part 4: Leadership Principles.....</b> | <br><b>117</b> |
| Self-leadership Comes First.....              | 120            |
| Leaders are Learners .....                    | 125            |
| Progress over Perfection.....                 | 127            |
| Disagree and Commit .....                     | 129            |
| Executive Presence.....                       | 131            |
| Build the Team .....                          | 136            |
| Diversity Matters .....                       | 141            |
| <br><b>Part 5: The Future of Work .....</b>   | <br><b>149</b> |
| Final Thoughts.....                           | 154            |
| <b>References .....</b>                       | <b>157</b>     |

# TABLE OF FIGURES

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Figure 1: The Leadership Framework .....           | xiv |
| Figure 2: Future of Work Elements.....             | xvi |
| Figure 3: Path–Goal Theory.....                    | 6   |
| Figure 4: Google Management Behaviors.....         | 11  |
| Figure 5: Mindsets for People Management.....      | 21  |
| Figure 6: Expectancy Theory .....                  | 23  |
| Figure 7: Observing Behavior .....                 | 26  |
| Figure 8: Big Why, Small Why.....                  | 35  |
| Figure 9: Why Do You Do What You Do .....          | 36  |
| Figure 10: Why and Effort.....                     | 39  |
| Figure 11: Responsibility and Accountability ..... | 43  |
| Figure 12: Feedback .....                          | 49  |
| Figure 13: The FIF Model.....                      | 49  |
| Figure 14: Process and Objectives .....            | 57  |
| Figure 15: Confidence Play.....                    | 62  |
| Figure 16: Assertive Communication .....           | 71  |
| Figure 17: Kalia’s Career Matrix.....              | 76  |
| Figure 18: Career Conversations.....               | 78  |
| Figure 19: Decision Formula .....                  | 86  |
| Figure 20: Strength Formula.....                   | 90  |
| Figure 21: Nine Box Grid .....                     | 93  |
| Figure 22: Culture Formula .....                   | 101 |
| Figure 23: Coaching Challenge and Support.....     | 108 |
| Figure 24: Inner and Outer Game.....               | 109 |
| Figure 25: Frames to Behavior.....                 | 113 |
| Figure 26: Leadership Principles.....              | 119 |
| Figure 27: Leaders are Learners.....               | 126 |
| Figure 28: Workgroup ‘Spokes’ .....                | 139 |



**BOOK SAMPLE**

## PART 2: A FRAMEWORK FOR ACCELERATED RESULTS

*Leadership is not a popularity contest; it's about leaving your ego at the door. The name of the game is to lead without a title.*

—Robin S Sharma

As per the leadership definition I shared earlier in this book, you must influence people towards group goals. The key word here is influence, and the simplest definition of influence is to get a willing yes. You can use force to get people to say ‘yes’, but to my mind, that is manipulation, or you can beg or bribe them, but that, to my mind, is persuasion.

I previously mentioned driving as a metaphor for leadership. If you have driven a manual transmission (stick shift), you will know the feeling of using the clutch and smoothly shifting gears. You will probably also know what it feels like to force the gears and have the car fight back.

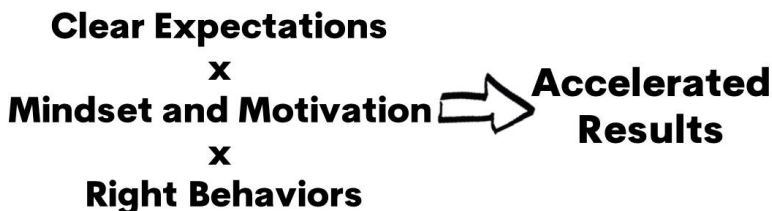
*Slow is smooth, smooth is fast.*

—US Navy Seals

This mantra, from a group that does some of the most dangerous things in the world, is a great reminder to slow down and do the job right.

As a leader, you will need to deliver results, but by doing things smoothly and engaging your people, you can deliver accelerated results.

## Leadership Principles



When I discussed why you should read this book, I introduced the New Leadership Framework.

Clear expectations positively influence mindset and motivation, which in turn influences the right behaviors that drive accelerated results.

This framing creates a multiplying effect and, when properly executed, will enable you to scale your results, your team, and your entire company.

Conversely, if you don't set clear expectations, if people don't have the right mindset, and if their behaviors don't align with the company's principles, you and your team will miss objectives (crash and burn).

### **CLEAR EXPECTATIONS**

*We choose to go to the moon in this decade and do the other things, not because they are easy, but because they are hard, because that goal will serve to organize and measure the best*

## Part 2: A Framework for Accelerated Results

*of our energies and skills, because that challenge is one that we are willing to accept, one we are unwilling to postpone, and one which we intend to win, and the others, too.*

—US President John F Kennedy

In September 1962, Kennedy delivered his famous ‘We choose to go to the moon’ speech in front of a crowd of 40,000. The previous year, the cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin had successfully orbited the Earth, and Americans were fearful of Soviet space dominance.

The speech was remarkable, not just for its vivid pictures and soaring metaphors, but because NASA was months away from putting an astronaut in space and had no idea how it would achieve the goal. Kennedy set big and clear expectations that mobilized mindsets and behaviors that eventually led to American astronaut Neil Armstrong walking on the moon on 20 July 1969.

As a manager and leader, are you setting big and clear expectations?

*First you tell people clearly what results you are looking for.  
Then you discuss how to get those results. (Bossidy, 2002)*

Have you ever delegated a request or piece of work to someone and then said, ‘Do you understand?’ I’m sure you have, and they typically reply, ‘Yes.’ But did they understand? Possibly not. So why does this happen?

Misunderstanding happens because your expectation is in your head, and when they listen to you, they try to fit what they hear into their existing expectation. They say ‘yes’ because they understand *their* view of the outcome, not necessarily *yours*.

**REFLECTION:**

**REMEMBER A PIECE OF DELEGATED WORK WHERE THE OUTCOME DID NOT MEET YOUR EXPECTATIONS. HOW COULD YOU HAVE FRAMED YOUR REQUEST BETTER?**

Surprisingly, setting clear expectations is less about telling and more about asking. To properly set expectations, use questions like:

- What is important about this?
- How should we go about solving this?
- What is the right thing to do?

When you ask questions, you understand how a person has framed their future actions. But, if you must explain in more detail, make sure you ask them to specifically recount what they understand about the task rather than if they simply understand.

You could set the expectation for an employee to purchase a sofa, but is that a clear expectation?

Clearly not, because sofas come in different sizes, colors, materials, and prices. You could specify each of these criteria in your request, or you could be clear about where and how you want to use the sofa—for example, in the client waiting area—and ask your employee if they are comfortable making the selection based on the result you are looking for.

## **MINDSET + MOTIVATION**

I graduated as a physiotherapist in 1982. Physiotherapy wasn't my first choice; I wanted to become a doctor but did not apply myself during my final year of school and didn't get the required grades.

Learning a valuable lesson about focus, I was determined to advance my career by working at a prestigious London teaching

hospital. My mindset and motivation delivered the goal, and I started my career at University College Hospital, London.

I quickly realized that whilst assisting people to recover from injury and disease was rewarding. I was more curious about what makes humans perform optimally.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

(World Health Organization, n.d.)

My curiosity started me on a journey of further studies, including acupuncture, hypnosis, philosophy, psychology, neuro-linguistic programming (NLP), and neurosemantics.

I left the hospital to work with athletes and sports teams to prepare them to win, as much as help them recover. Mindset and motivation were clearly the X factors that made the difference in both speed of recovery and winning.

A mindset is a series of self-perceptions or beliefs people hold about themselves. These determine behavior, outlook, and mental attitude. Motivation is derived from the Latin word *movere*, meaning to move. Motivation is collectively the forces acting on or within a person that cause the arousal, direction, and persistence of goal-directed, voluntary effort.

Fast forward eighteen years from my graduation, I had started my coaching and speaking business and was formulating a self-leadership methodology when a fortunate event occurred. Money was tight as a fledgling consultant, so I worked part-time as a physiotherapist in a colleague's practice in North Sydney to supplement my income.

One day, I was working on a patient with a stiff neck. We chatted whilst I stretched and manipulated him back into shape. He was a

young CEO trying to motivate his team to believe. I shared some ideas, and he was surprised. ‘You don’t talk like a physiotherapist,’ he said.

I shared my story of establishing myself as an executive coach, and he said, ‘Come and see me at my office. I think I need a coach.’ The rest, as they say, is history.

Grant Halloran was my first CEO client, and I helped him scale himself and his start-up team to acquisition. Grant is now the CEO of Planful Inc, and we still work together, which is how I met Mel Dreuth, whose request for a first-time manager’s training motivated the design of the New Leadership Framework and the writing of this book.

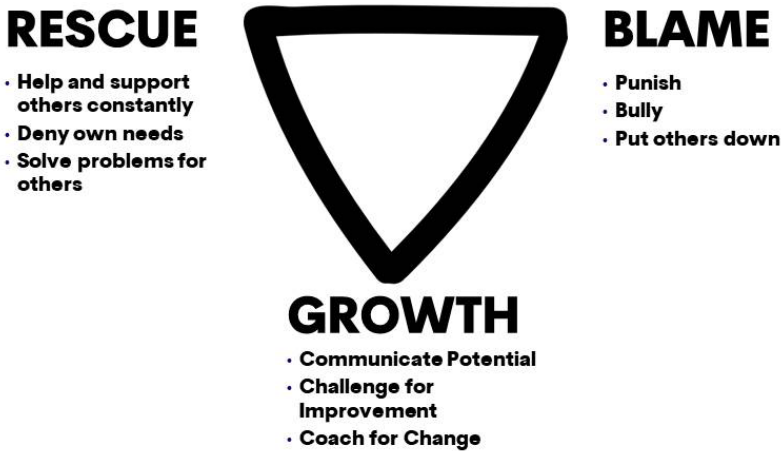
According to Carol S Dweck, PhD, in her book *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (Dweck, 2007), there are two mindsets: fixed and growth.

Having a fixed mindset creates an urgency to prove yourself—criticism is seen as an attack on your character and to be avoided. Having a growth mindset encourages learning and effort. If you truly believe you can improve at something, you will be more motivated to learn and practice. Criticism is seen as valuable feedback and openly embraced. The hallmark of the growth mindset is the passion for sticking with it, especially when things are not going well.

This playbook aligns with the growth mindset, but many managers treat their staff as if they cannot grow. This mindset leads to many of the behaviors that departing employees share in their exit interviews.

Some years ago, I was asked to coach a lawyer through the process of becoming an equity partner in a prestigious international law firm. Human Resources briefed me. ‘He is an excellent lawyer. But he speaks about his associates as ‘units of production’ and has no patience to develop them.’

Look at Figure 5—Mindsets for People Management and see what best describes this lawyer’s style.



**Figure 5:** Mindsets for People Management

Unfortunately, perceiving his associates as units of production, he would blame them for non-performance and spend no time developing them or reflecting on how his own expectation setting was responsible for their shortcomings. Such a mindset can drive people to leave the organization or detrimentally impact the self-esteem and confidence of people who stay.

Equally non-productive is the manager who takes the role of rescuer. Rescuers are over-responsible, and with a positive intent to be nice, they inhibit the growth of their people, leading to frustration. Rescuers cannot scale their team and typically burn themselves out and plateau in their careers.

The correct mindset to adopt for yourself, and to encourage in your people, is one of growth. This mindset comes from a belief in your team’s potential to learn, grow, improve, and succeed regardless of the challenges or failures ahead.



**REFLECTION:**

**WHAT'S YOUR DEFAULT POSITION: BLAMER, RESCUER, GROWTH, OR A COMBINATION?**

**WHY DOES A GROWTH ATTITUDE WORK?**

The Rosenthal, or Pygmalion, effect refers to the result of a study that showed if teachers expected enhanced performance from their students, then the students' performance was enhanced. The study supported the hypothesis that reality can be positively or negatively influenced by the expectations of others. So, if you expect greatness from your team, their performance will be improved.

*If you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right.*

—Henry Ford

**REFLECTION:**

**USE THE LEARNING DIARY FROM THE ONLINE GATEWAY (QR CODE BELOW) TO WRITE THE NAMES OF THE PEOPLE WHO REPORT DIRECTLY TO YOU. ALONGSIDE EACH NAME, WRITE YOUR ATTITUDE ABOUT THIS PERSON. THEN ASK YOURSELF, 'IS MY MINDSET AFFECTING THEIR BEHAVIOR IN A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE WAY?'**

From a self-leadership perspective (Bryant & Kazan, 2012), you are responsible for your mindset, regardless of the circumstances. The

people in your team should also be responsible for their mindset, providing you have set expectations they can buy into. But what happens when a member of your team does not have the right mindset? Can you motivate them without becoming a rescuer?

The answer lies in a formula developed by Victor Vroom PhD, a professor at Yale School of Management. (Vroom, 1964)

### ***Motivation = Expectancy x Instrumentality x Valence***

**Figure 6:** Expectancy Theory

Vroom's formula, known as Expectancy Theory, says that if the future seems reasonably attractive, we know how to get there, and we believe we will be appropriately rewarded, then we will be motivated to act. In other words, if people expect a positive and desirable outcome, they will usually work hard to perform at the level expected of them.

**Expectancy** refers to the strength of a person's belief about whether or not a specific job performance is attainable. In other words, 'If I put in the effort, will I get the results?'

The strength of this belief or self-efficacy depends on whether a person has a fixed or growth mindset and external social proof. For example, the inner dialogue could be, 'I am confident I can complete these actions' or 'I can see other people putting in effort and getting results, so I can too.'

Several factors contribute to expectancy perceptions: the level of difficulty of the task, the amount of support that may be expected from superiors and subordinates, the quality of the materials and equipment, and the availability of pertinent information.

The manager can, therefore, positively influence expectancy when setting expectations by articulating:

- This is something you are competent to do.
- Here are some examples of people who are already doing it or have done it before.
- You will have access to all the resources you need.

**Instrumentality** answers the question, ‘If I complete certain actions, will I get the reward?’

Brains are goal-seeking machines, and when we achieve a goal, we are rewarded with the brain chemical dopamine, which makes us feel good. This good feeling tells us that this is something important and worth repeating.

As a manager, you can enhance motivation by articulating how good a person will feel when they complete the task. If you want this behavior repeated, remember to make the people feel good when the task is completed. Praise, acknowledgment, a thank you cost nothing but are highly motivating.

**Valence** means there must not just be a reward for effort, but the right sort of reward—and one size does not fit all.

This is where your emotions come in. Expectancy was logical, but valence is about how you will feel when you achieve the result—will you value the reward?

As a manager or leader, you must discover what’s important to your people. Is it extrinsic (money, promotion, free time, benefits) or intrinsic (satisfaction, sense of achievement)? It is essential to get buy-in from your people about the importance of the task.

As you read and practice the plays from this book, remember the importance of mindset and motivation to human performance. It is also worth noting factors that will demotivate your people, include:

- no clear career progression
- unsuitable or unsafe work environment
- lack of leadership
- conflict.

Expectation and mindset work together to frame behaviors, and at the end of this section, I have provided a checklist to ensure you maximize your influence and impact.

### **RIGHT BEHAVIORS**

*Our names are labels, plainly printed on the bottled essence of our past behavior.*

—Logan Pearsall Smith

If someone said they were your friend but stole your wallet and your car, would you believe what they said or did?

If you say you value health and fitness, read and talk about health and fitness, but drink, smoke, and sit on the couch eating chips, what will impact your outcomes—your values or your behaviors?

To paraphrase Newton's first law: behaviors are the force that moves a stationary body or influences its direction or velocity. In short, everything stays the same unless some behavior occurs.

You can hire for talent and skills, maybe even mindset, but you will promote or fire people for their behaviors. Yet most people struggle to articulate behaviors.

In the biographical drama film *The Pursuit of Happyness* (Muccino, 2006), we witness behaviors to gain employment at a brokerage firm. Chris Gardner, played by Will Smith, works off a call sheet to find clients and discovers that he gains an extra eight minutes per day if he doesn't hang up the phone. He also chooses to start from the top of his call sheet, connecting with the higher value prospect rather than work up from the bottom. The movie is mostly about Chris's mindset in dealing with adversity whilst caring for his son, but his behaviors get him the results. Spoiler alert: Chris Gardner did become a stockbroker and eventually founded his own brokerage firm, Gardner Rich & Co, in 1987.

If mindset and motivation are the inner game, behaviors are the outer game. Behaviors are talents, experiences, and skills put into action. Whilst mindset can be surmised, behaviors are observable and measurable. The success of a leader is measured by how their people behave or act to achieve the desired results.

Consider the following description:

Simon is a corporate manager and very ambitious. He is keen to show his work in a good light. He never hesitates to highlight his contribution to a project, but you never hear him give credit to others or admit any mistakes. You notice that he watches which way the wind is blowing before he offers an opinion.

Write down the behaviors that are described (you can use the downloadable learning diary for this).

Now look at this picture:



**Figure 7:** Observing Behavior

**WHAT DO YOU OBSERVE IS HAPPENING? PLEASE WRITE DOWN YOUR OBSERVATIONS BEFORE PROCEEDING.**

Does your description contain observations, or did you make some assumptions?

Assumptions include what is happening, the roles the man and woman hold, what the man and woman are thinking and feeling. You can't know their roles and feelings because this is just an image. Some examples of assumptions that I have heard from my management students include:

- The man is the manager, and he is shouting at a subordinate who doesn't like being shouted at.
- The man is singing badly to the woman, who is covering her ears because it's so bad.
- The woman is the manager, and the man is complaining, blaming, and not taking ownership.

To observe and articulate behavior, you need to train yourself to ask specific questions:

- Who specifically is in the picture?
- What specifically are the people doing?
- When/where specifically is this happening?
- How specifically are the actions being done?
- Against what criteria are you evaluating?

Now back to Simon, the corporate manager. What specifically let you know that Simon is ambitious? What behaviors did he demonstrate that caused you to evaluate him as ambitious? Was it something he said, something he did, or was it your assumption (a mind-read)?

The specific behaviors that were absent included giving credit to others and admitting mistakes.

If you were managing or coaching Simon, you would need to set the expectation that the mindset for growth as a leader includes the behaviors of giving credit and articulating learning from your own mistakes.

As for waiting to see which way the wind blows before offering an opinion, this behavior contradicts the leadership principle of Disagree and Commit, which we will discuss later. If Simon is motivated to progress, you could help him realize that he will gain greater acknowledgment and progression if he adopts this principle.

**REFLECTION:**

**HAVE YOU BEEN CAUGHT OUT BY MAKING THE WRONG ASSUMPTION BEFORE?**

**WHAT WILL YOU DO TO CHECK YOUR ASSUMPTIONS MOVING FORWARD?**

In 2020, at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, a CEO that I was coaching was struggling to lead. He felt the pressure of delivering on his promises to the board whilst facing lockdown and business disruption. I acknowledged his situation but asked him how he thought his people were feeling. This shifted his focus as he realized he wasn't the only one this situation was affecting.

‘What do your people need from you?’ I asked him.

‘I need to show them I understand and care.’ He rightly observed.

‘OK, what behaviors can you engage in that will show this?’

Together we brainstormed some concrete actions that started with calling his key employees and letting them know he was there to support them, and the company would survive. His people appreciated his behavior, and the company is not just surviving but thriving despite the global disruption of COVID-19.

You will develop your ability to observe behaviors with additional plays later in this book, as we explore Feedback, Collaboration, and Decisiveness. These plays will help you improve your ability to observe and articulate behavior whilst also becoming aware of your assumptions.

For a senior leadership position, organizations will often put candidates through an assessment center. This consists of a standardized evaluation of behavior based on multiple evaluations, including job-related simulations, interviews, and/or psychological tests. Job simulations are used to evaluate candidates on behaviors relevant to the job’s most critical aspects (or competencies).

Assessors are trained to make behavioral observations and avoid assumptions, which I have introduced you to in this section. Since behaviors deliver results, and you will be measured on the results you create, I encourage you to constantly improve your ability to articulate the behaviors you are looking for and acknowledge the right ones you observe from your people.

To assist you in this endeavor, here are some assumptions (biases) to be aware of and correct for:



## The New Leadership Playbook

|                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| Similar-to-me    | As this person is like me, or I like them, I will judge their behaviors favorably.   |
| Halo bias        | As this person is good at one thing, I will evaluate all their behaviors as good.  |
| Horns bias       | When this person performs badly at a task, I will judge all their behaviors as below standard.   |
| Attribution bias | Attributing task failure or success to employee mindset or behaviors when the result was due to external factors outside of their control. |
| Recency bias     | The tendency to only comment on the most recent behavior rather than consider a history of actions.  |
| Stereotyping     | Generalizing behavior to a group of people, rather than observing the specific behavior of an individual in context.                       |

Ideally, you will be able to observe the behaviors of the people who report to you, but in a virtual world, you may need to ask them to report on their actions and behaviors.

Here are some examples of questions you could ask to elicit this information in an interview or video call:

| <b>BEHAVIOR</b>                   | <b>QUESTION</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>BUILDING<br/>RELATIONSHIPS</b> | <b>COULD YOU PLEASE SHARE SOME<br/>EXAMPLES WHERE YOU HAVE RESOLVED<br/>CHALLENGING ISSUES WITH COLLEAGUES<br/>AND ENHANCED THE WORKING<br/>RELATIONSHIP?</b> |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>COMMUNICATION</b>                                 | <b>COULD YOU GIVE ME SOME EXAMPLES OF WHERE YOU HAVE COMMUNICATED A DIFFICULT MESSAGE OR PITCHED A MESSAGE TO IMPACT A PARTICULAR AUDIENCE?</b>                                       |
| <b>VALUING DIVERSITY</b>                             | <b>HAVE THERE BEEN TIMES WHEN YOU HAVE SOUGHT INPUT OR OPINIONS FROM OTHERS, EVEN THOSE LESS SENIOR THAN YOU? PLEASE TELL ME ABOUT THEM.</b>  |
| <b>DEVELOPING SELF</b>                               | <b>WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR STRENGTHS? NOW, WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE YOUR WEAKNESSES? TELL ME WHAT YOU ARE DOING TO DEVELOP YOUR STRENGTHS AND OVERCOME YOUR WEAKNESSES.</b> |
| <b>MOTIVATING OTHERS TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE</b> | <b>DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF TO BE A GOOD MOTIVATOR?<br/>PLEASE TELL ME ABOUT A SITUATION IN WHICH YOU HAVE ENCOURAGED OTHERS TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE. HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT IT?</b>     |
| <b>ARTICULATING VISION AND DIRECTION</b>             | <b>WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR YOUR TEAM'S PERFORMANCE?<br/>HAVE YOU COMMUNICATED THIS VISION, AND HOW?<br/>DO YOU HAVE BUY-IN FOR THIS VISION? HOW DO YOU KNOW?</b>                      |

## **A LEADERSHIP OPERATING SYSTEM**

*Everything must be made as simple as possible. But not simpler.*

—Albert Einstein

Right Expectations x Mindset and Motivation x Right Behaviors provide the code for a Leadership Operating System. Whether you are a CEO leading your executive leadership team or a marketing manager running a team of young creative individuals, you can put an operating system in place for clear communication and activity.

Once upon a time, early 2007 to be exact, Nokia dominated 49.4 percent of the smartphone market. Their Symbian operating system was easy to use, and when you bought a new Nokia phone, you were up and running in no time. But in January 2007, Steve Jobs walked onto a stage, pulled out an iPhone, and changed the world forever.

Unfortunately, many managers and leaders still operate and communicate in a pre-iPhone, even analog, fashion. Jobs showcased a new operating system that drove an intuitive interface that even a child could use. Shouldn't our leadership operating system be equally effective?

The foundation of the analog operating system was, and remains, the meeting. Meetings where everybody had to show up, but nobody really knew what the meeting was about. Huge amounts of time have been wasted in meetings without clear expectations when participants aren't prepared, and the highest-paid officer (HIPO) does all the talking.

Now, we have the luxury to communicate synchronously, asynchronously, in person, virtually, by message, or by voice. Choice can lead to confusion, and as a leader, you need to set expectations about how information flows, through which channels, and when.

The BADI acronym is a useful tool to think about setting up comms.

**B is for bonding.** Bonding or connecting builds trust, and whilst time-consuming, it can accelerate other processes.

Depending on your personality, it can be pleasurable or an energy drain. Bonding is best done in person; however, checking in with what's happening with people and how they are feeling can be the start of any communication. For decades, bonding over drinks or golf has been a default operating system, but this is not an inclusive activity. If you want to benefit from the power of diversity, you should consider other activities to get to know people and for them to get to know you.

B can also be for brainstorming, and this would be a creative, whiteboard session. Avoid making B for bitching, as you don't want to promote negative communication and mindset. If necessary, create V for venting because sometimes we need to get stuff off our chest, but limit the amount of time anybody has for this.

**A is for advice.** To get the best from people, it is advisable to let them know they can seek your advice if they are stuck or in doubt. Advice could take the form of coaching, a career conversation, or specific insights on project execution. Advice doesn't need to be in person; it can be by video call (Zoom, Teams), a phone call, or message channel (Slack, WhatsApp). You could use email, but I'm not a fan of using email for this purpose because it is too formal.

**D is for decision.** As a leader, there are decisions you will need to make and others that you have empowered your people or teams to make. When they come to you for a decision, how much prior information or briefing do you need to make the right decision? What channel or channels work best for you? Can this be done asynchronously, or do you need to be together in person?

**I is for information.** Who needs to know what and when? This is one of the biggest headaches for teams and organizations. The old operating system was to use a blind carbon copy (Bcc), which could

be used passive-aggressively or to avoid responsibility. I highly recommend mapping out with your team what needs to be shared, with whom, when, and how. If you haven't already done this with your boss, then this is a conversation you also need to have.

In the online resource library, I have provided a worksheet for mapping out communication channels and decision-making processes to form the foundation of your Leadership Operating System (LOS). Check this out if you haven't already.

**REFLECTION:**

**DO YOU KNOW HOW YOU OPERATE BEST?**

**DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR TEAM OPERATES BEST?**

**HAVE YOU BEEN CLEAR WITH YOUR TEAM ABOUT HOW YOU WANT TO RUN MEETINGS, COMMUNICATION, AND DECISIONS?**

**SUMMARY FOR THE LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK  
FOR DRIVING FOR ACCELERATED RESULTS**

1. Management starts with setting clear expectations.
2. Fixed mindsets will pause progress as they seek perfection and don't take feedback well.
3. Motivation requires that people expect to improve, and improvement will reap relevant rewards.
4. Identify right behaviors and be able to describe them.
5. Validate right behaviors.
6. Choose the right channel for communication.
7. Know your BADI. What are you communicating with whom?
8. Map out a Leadership Operating System.