



#NEXTNORMAL

Your Impact

This activity is excerpted from *The Next Normal: Transform Your Leadership, Your Team, and Your Organization* by Dr. Greg Giuliano (Lioncrest, 2022).

Leadership.

Leadership is a choice. It takes courage. When you choose to lead, you are choosing to create something. When you choose to lead, you're disrupting the status quo. When you choose to lead, you're stepping into the unknown.

Managing is getting people to do things that are knowable. Leading gets people to join you in creating something different: a new experience, a bigger result, a next normal. In *Leading Change*, business and management thought leader John Kotter writes, "Leadership creates organizations or adapts them to significantly changing circumstances. Leadership requires the will and skill to engage others and cause a positive outcome, defining what the future should look like, aligning people with the vision, and inspiring them to make it happen despite the obstacles." In other words: leaders enable positive transformation for their organization, their team, and the individuals they lead.

Do you know what impact you are having? Is it by design or by default?

Every day, people observe you and decide, "What do I think about this person as a leader?" and "Do I trust this person? The stories others tell about our leadership are informed by how we impact them. They talk about what they observe about you and your leadership. Is she grounded or scattered? Is he open and approachable? Are they honest and sincere? Is he reliable? Does she bring great ideas and deliver great work? Are they concerned with other people's success or just their own? Does he have my back? Does she bring out the best in others? Are they a good boss or someone I'd never work for again?

They talk about your style. Is he an authoritarian, "do it my way" type? Is she transactional? Do they take a hands-off approach, or are they a micro-manager? Is she democratic and inclusive? Does he take a servant leadership approach? Do they use a coach approach? They talk about what they think you're good at and bad at, how you lead your team, and the impact you have. Is he a strong communicator? Is she a strategic thinker? Is he decisive? Does he have empathy for others? Does she focus on results and get things done?

When we become more intentional about who we are and how we approach our work and lead, we become exponentially more impactful. Continuous improvement isn't just for software; it's for people too. The stories others tell become our brand and legacy as leaders. How do you want to impact them? What do you want your brand and legacy to be?

Rethink. Reset. Renew.

This exercise provides an opportunity for you to rethink and reset the impact you make as a leader. Reflect on some questions and prompts as a way of homing in on a clear and consistent statement of what kind of leader you want to be and want to be known as. Knowing that, you can identify the behaviors and practices that are consistent with that statement and those that are counterproductive and renew your leadership..



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Rethink. Reset.

1. Make a list of five people who made a positive impact as leaders. They don't have to be business leaders. Their impact could have been in sports, politics, the arts, philosophy, or religion. They could be relatives or ancestors in your family tree.
2. Think about the people on your list. What made them impactful? What words best describe them and their leadership? How did they help people? How did they adapt and respond to change?
3. Of the characteristics you've written down, which ones come up more than once. Do you have five characteristics that all have in common?
4. Make note of who you'd place at the top of the list.
5. Think of that person and fill in the blanks in this statement: NAME
is a/an _____ leader who helped others _____.
6. This person and how they showed up and helped others would appear to be an ideal for you. *Let's hold on to that.*
7. Imagine we are at your retirement party. Let's ask your colleagues for five words that describe your leadership. If I asked them to come up with five descriptors of you when you're at your best and making a positive impact, what five words would I hear?



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8. If I asked them to come up with five descriptors for when you're at your worst as a leader, what would they say?

9. What five words do you want to hear people use when they're describing how you lead?

10. Fill in the blanks on this statement:
I am a/an _____ leader who helps others _____.
Let's call this your *Impact Statement*.

11. Try saying your Impact Statement aloud with your name at the start of it. How does it sound as if it's coming from someone else?

12. Ask yourself three questions:
 - Am I content if this Impact Statement becomes my brand and legacy?

 - What might I have to learn, unlearn, and practice to ensure this impact statement becomes my brand and legacy?

 - Am I willing to disrupt the status quo (mine and others) to update my impact and make this my brand and legacy?



Your Impact

Renew.

What do you say we become more intentional about the impact we make? Making a more intentional and authentic impact is as easy as **1-2-3**.

1 Name It:

I am a/an _____ leader who helps others _____.

2 Own It.

What are you awesome at? What strengths do you have that contribute to your making this impact? Pick your top two. What needs work? What will you need to work on (things to learn, habits to break)? Pick your top two. What's your kryptonite? What is going to be the biggest barrier to you making this impact? Pick one.

<p><i>I'm awesome at this:</i></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	<p><i>I need work on this:</i></p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>
<p><i>My kryptonite:</i></p>	

3 Practice It.

Take three steps to a more intentional and impactful 2022:

Reflect. Put your impact statement where will you see it every day. Begin the day asking, “What will I have to do to make this true today?” At the end of the day, grade yourself. Would you give yourself an A, B, C, or F? What will you do differently tomorrow?

Dialogue. Talk to a trusted friend and colleague about it. Set a regular cadence. Get advice, suggestions on how to get better at consistently making this impact and feedback on progress and setbacks.

Practice. Commit to regular practice of behaviors and routines that will help you get better at being intentional about the impact you make and the legacy you leave.