

# **BLUE-COLLAR LEADERSHIP®**



***LEADING FROM THE FRONT LINES***

**MACK STORY**  
Blue-Collar Leadership® Series

# Blue-Collar Leadership®: Leading from the Front Lines

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Mack Story

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## DEDICATION

To those who make it happen on the front lines everyday.

You matter!

And, I believe in you.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the many blue-collar leaders on the front lines that have impacted my life in ways they will never know.

Two of the greatest lessons I learned from front line leaders:

- 1) Give credit to others when things go right.
- 2) Take responsibility when things go wrong.

Many of the best people I have ever met were wearing safety glasses, ear plugs, a pair of well-worn, dirty, greasy, steel-toed boots, and a smile. I'm glad to have met you all. You're an amazing group of hard-working, dedicated people that matter. You deserve to work with a great leader. It's my hope that you become one.

Each of you have played a small part in shaping my thinking and therefore my life. I will be forever grateful. Thank you!





# 1

## I'M ONE OF YOU

### *WHO WE ARE MATTERS*

*“A few start at the top, but most of us start at the bottom.”  
~ Mack Story*

Merriam-Webster’s simple definition of blue-collar: requiring physical work; relating to or having jobs that require physical work.

I'm proud of the many years I spent on the front lines as part of the blue-collar workforce in various manufacturing plants. Those years, and the many outstanding people I worked alongside, shaped me and prepared me to be uniquely positioned to help you today. For that, I'm forever grateful. But, I'll never be satisfied.

If you'll learn and apply what I'll be sharing with you on these pages, you won't have to settle any longer. Like me, you should always be grateful but never be satisfied. You can become a lot more. It's a choice I hope you will make.

You have unlimited potential within you and can move far beyond your current circumstances. I want to help you increase your influence. When you increase your influence, you'll have more options no matter where you work or what work you do.

Those on the front lines have been overlooked for far too long. I've written this book for you. If you invest your time in reading it completely, *you will benefit tremendously* as a result.

*When you decide to accept responsibility for your future,  
you will be able to define your future.*

My intent is to motivate and inspire you to climb to the next level and beyond. I want to help you go faster and farther by sharing what I didn't begin to learn until nearly 20 years after my first day on the front lines. I wish someone had given me this very book in 1988. Things would have been better for me. And, they would have been better much sooner.

I hope as you make your way through this book you begin to see things, including yourself, in a much different way. I hope you feel encouraged, empowered, and engaged to make a bigger difference in your own life and those around you. I believe you can do things you've never even imagined doing.

I want to take you back to my days on the front lines for a moment. I'm sure you will be able to relate in some way. You may not work in the manufacturing plants like I did. But, if you're a blue-collar worker, I know you work hard and long, no matter what type of work you may be doing: electrical, plumbing, construction, farming, mining, manufacturing, oil & gas industry, carpentry, service work, welding, assembly, etc.

There are many of us. We are everywhere.

*The blue-collar workforce built this country, and they can and must help save this country.*

I worked long, hard hours, in hot, cold, dirty, and sometimes, unsafe environments while being bossed by others who thought they were far above me because they had a position of authority and power or simply because they had a college degree. Most often, I only respected the position and not the person. They had to earn my respect.

They didn't listen to me. They didn't have to. They didn't want to. However, if I wanted to continue to get paid I had to do what they said, when they said it, and how they said it.

I didn't realize I had a choice. But, I did. You do too. This entire book is going to help you realize you have a lot of choices and a lot of untapped potential.

I'll never forget my first day on the front lines in 1988 at the age of 18.

It was the first time I had been in a manufacturing plant of any kind in my life. I was quickly taken from the front office and handed off to someone in front of a very, large, loud, and oily machine, a machine like nothing I had ever seen before. I had been in the plant for about 10 minutes at that time.

It was official. I was a blue-collar factory worker. I would stand in front of many machines for many years in many different plants before that would change.

I was shown how to load the machine, start the machine, unload the machine, inspect the parts, and repeat. Then, I was on my own. I was at work doing exactly what I was told to do.

When I got home from work, all of my clothes, even my underwear, were soaked with oil. It was that way for the next two weeks until someone finally told me I could purchase a plastic apron in one of the break rooms, for less than a dollar, that would help keep me dry.

This is how my blue-collar career started.

For the next 10 years on the second and third shifts, I often worked seven days a week, 10 to 16 hours a day for months at a time to make ends meet. When overtime was available, I was always quick to volunteer. I didn't want to. I needed to.

I was greedy because I needed to be greedy. Life was tough. I could never get ahead regardless of how many hours or days a week I worked. I'm sure not much has changed today for many who are still making it happen day in and day out on the front lines of the blue-collar world.

There wasn't much respect for us then, and there's not much respect for many on the front lines today. I know the potential that lies within you. It was also within me, but I didn't know it. I want to help you realize it sooner rather than later.

Everything changed for me in 1995 because one person believed in me and shared that belief with me.

It will be my privilege if I can be that person for you.

***I want you to know: I respect you.***

***I want you to know: Who you are matters.***

***I want you to know: I believe in you.***

# 2

## I BELIEVE IN YOU

### *MOTIVATION COMES FROM THE OUTSIDE, BUT INSPIRATION COMES FROM THE INSIDE*

*"The dictionary defines belief as trust, faith, and confidence. However, that definition is selfish and requires judgement. I think we need to change the way we believe in people. We need to redefine the way we believe in people. We should redefine belief as encouragement, empowerment, and engagement. This definition is selfless and doesn't require judgement." ~ Joshua Encarnacion*

You may be wondering, *"How can Mack believe in me? He doesn't even know me."* Well, my intent on these pages is to express my belief in you in the way Joshua defined belief in the quote above, as selfless and without judgment. I like to refer to this type of belief as "unconditional" belief which is similar to unconditional love.

When we believe in someone or love someone unconditionally, it simply means we believe in them or love them because they are people, not because they behave or act in a certain way. *I do believe you can make your life better.* Believing in someone unconditionally is a choice. It's a choice that builds trust and strengthens relationships.

Since I don't know you, I can't trust you, have faith in you, or have confidence in you based on what I know about you. That would be based on conditions or "conditional" belief. However, I can easily have unconditional belief in you. But, when we work with others and depend on others to get the job done, it's too easy to become selfish, judgmental, and base our

belief in them on specific *conditions* being met first.

I want to share a real example from my life where a stranger *unconditionally* believed in me. It not only changed my direction, but it also changed my life. I share this story in more detail in my first book, *Defining Influence*.

It was 1995. I was 25 years old. It was around 2am. I was wearing old, dirty jeans, an old t-shirt, greasy steel-toed boots, safety glasses, earplugs, and an old, dirty blue jean apron hung around my neck. As usual, I was at work in the middle of the night when most people were home sleeping soundly with their families.

I operated a large drill press and a CNC lathe machining holes in steel parts. It was a dirty, boring job, but it paid the bills. I was in the middle of what would become a three month streak of working 12 plus hours a day for seven days a week without a day off. Long hours and weekend work were a normal part of my life on the front lines.

On that particular night, there was a corporate industrial engineer from our headquarters observing me. He was there to do a time observation study. I was surprised because he could have done what he had to do on the day shift.

He informed me the Plant Manager (PM) had asked him to work with me because I consistently recorded high production. As I worked, the engineer observed me. After we got to know each other a little, he told me the PM believed I had the potential to be more than “just a machine operator” if I would apply myself and get some additional education.

The stranger had no idea I barely graduated high school.

Throughout the night, he expressed his belief in me and continued to do his best to get me to see my potential. He had no idea. I wasn't interested in going to college. Not me!

I didn't plan to ever go. I knew who I was and what I wanted. I didn't need anyone, especially a stranger, telling me what I needed to do to advance in the company. What did he know about me? He knew I had potential. He knew it. I didn't.

I had never seen him before and never saw him again. He has no idea how his words impacted me. He inspired me to

become intentional about changing my life.

I thought it was just another night in the grind on the front lines. But, something happened. I started thinking differently. He had planted a seed of *possibility* inside of me. I hope to plant that seed in you.

I began to ask myself many questions: What if I went to college? What would change? Should I do it? Could I do it? How could I do it? When could I do it?

I took action and enrolled in the local community college the very next semester. I decided to officially rescript my life simply because a stranger had believed in me unconditionally.

*"We already live with many scripts that have been handed to us, the process of writing our own script is actually more a process of 'rescripting,'... As we recognize the ineffective scripts within us, we can proactively begin to rescript ourselves." ~ Dr. Stephen R. Covey*

I started college, as a single parent, while working long hours and weekends to make ends meet. I didn't enjoy high school, so volunteering for more schooling was a big sacrifice.

It took me nearly five years to get my first two year degree, but I did it. I was paying the price to change my circumstances. *I did have potential.* I did not have to keep doing the same thing for my entire career. When I began to change my thoughts, my life began to change. I was slowly moving away from being a reactive person and was becoming a more responsible person.

If you want things to change, you must change the way you think. And no, you don't have to go to college to live better.

*"The reason so many people never get anywhere in life is because when opportunity knocks, they are out in the backyard looking for four-leaf clovers."  
~ Walter P. Chrysler*

# 3

## YOU'RE IN THE PERFECT PLACE

### *YOU'RE EXACTLY WHERE YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE BUT NOT WHERE YOU HAVE TO BE*

*"An educated person is not the one with the most knowledge, an educated person is the one who is willing to reflect, evaluate, and modify his most cherished beliefs when a new idea comes along." ~ Christian Simpson*

There's a story about a tourist who paused for a rest in a small town in the mountains. He went over to an old man sitting on a bench in front of the only store in town and inquired, "Friend, can you tell me something this town is noted for?"

"Well," replied the old man, "I don't rightly know except it's the starting point to the world. You can start here and go anywhere you want."

The same is true for you and me. No matter where we are, we can start and go anywhere we want. Will it always be easy? No. Will it always be possible? Absolutely, *if* we're willing to pay the price.

Obviously, very few people start at the top. But, we don't all have that in common with those lucky few. However, what we do have in common is that if we want to move forward from wherever we are, we all must start.

*"Most people fail in the getting started."  
~ Maureen Falcone*

I agree, some do “fail in the getting started,” but I think the bigger issue is *failing to keep going* once you have started.

If you’re on the front lines like I was when the engineer believed in me and inspired me to get started *again*, that’s where you start if you want to get to the next level and beyond. You’re in the exact place you need to be. You’re at the starting line. Getting to the starting line in life is easy. All you must do is wake up. Then, you must choose to run the race.

*It’s much easier to go from failure to success than it is to go from excuses to success.*

This book is going to help you think in a way that will allow you to get started or, if you’re already started, keep going. It will also accelerate your thinking.

You had to get started at some point to be where you are. It didn’t just happen. You didn’t end up there by accident. Like it or not, you ended up there by choice.

If you want to move up in the company or move forward with your life in general but feel stuck wherever you are, I’ve got good news. You haven’t run out of choices. You’re simply not making the *right* choices.

Why? I have no idea. Only *you* can answer that question.

When you think of why you’re stuck, don’t make excuses. Excuses are like exits when you’re traveling along the highway to success. Excuses don’t take you where you want to go, they take you someplace you don’t want to go.

*An excuse is simply a choice not to do what you know you should do.*

I want to give you something to think about whether you’re stuck or not. If you’re not stuck, use it to help someone that is.

Most of the time people quit growing and going when the *price* gets too high. What I mean is that people are not willing to part ways with the toxic people in their lives or sacrifice their time and/or their money to continue moving forward to the next level. Growth usually requires a lot more *time* than



money, so *not having the money is just another excuse*. And most often, it's not even about our time. *It's about our choices*.

Before you get too deep into this book, I want to help point out a few key choices I hope you will make as you're reading and thinking your way through it.

I encourage you to look at this book as a *tool*, not a book. A tool you can use immediately to identify areas in your life you may need to change. A tool you can use in the future when reflecting on changes you have already made or changes you weren't ready to make initially but will be ready to make eventually.

Whatever you do, ***DO NOT GIVE IT AWAY!*** I made that mistake when I first started reading leadership books. I didn't realize the value of keeping them and revisiting them, especially my highlighted key points. Today, no one gets any of the hundreds of leadership books I've read. I may give away new ones, but not the ones I've read and marked up.

You should personalize this copy by marking it up in a meaningful way, underline key points, fold the pages when something on a page really has something meaningful you want to revisit and reflect on. And most importantly, write down some of your own thoughts about what you are reading and what you may need to do differently.

Once you've finished it, if you know someone else that will benefit from reading it, and you believe in them, show them by buying them a copy as a gift, but don't give them your copy. Sure, they could read it and give it back. But, to get the most out of it, they will need to personalize their copy, make it their own just like you, and be able to reflect on it later.

Have you ever wondered why people don't do the things that seem to be common sense? Things like we've just covered like *get started* or *keep going*. It seems like common sense to me.

***"If we refuse to become a leader because we don't believe we can get to the top, we are limiting ourselves from reaching our potential; and we are limiting the impact we can have on others." ~ Ria Story***

# 4

## COMMON SENSE IS NEVER ENOUGH

### *COMMON SENSE MEANS WE UNDERSTAND WHAT SHOULD BE DONE, BUT ACTUALLY DOING IT OFTEN REQUIRES UNCOMMON SENSE*

*"We only truly know something—that is, have personal knowledge of it—when we can apply it to get results."  
~ Polanyi*

As you continue reading, I'm sure you will often find yourself thinking, "This is all just common sense." It is commonly *understood*. However, when it comes to human behavior, what's commonly understood, often referred to as common sense, is most often not commonly practiced. If it was, there would be no market for leadership and people development, and everyone would be amazingly happy and tremendously successful.

But, leadership is a *HUGE* industry! Many people are unhappy at work and at home while struggling to make ends meet. Nearly all of them know something they should *stop doing* to improve their lives and know something they should *start doing* to improve their lives. But, they don't do it! Why?

*Common sense alone will not lead you to success.* It will help, but it's not enough. Knowing and doing are two very different things that will lead you to very different results. Knowing how to lose weight doesn't mean someone who wants to lose weight will lose weight. We all know how to lose weight. We watch our calories in (what we eat) and exercise (calories out). It's common sense. Everyone knows that!

*To know something and not do it is not truly knowing it.  
To understand something and not apply it is  
not truly understanding it.*

Everyone seems to know common sense is not common practice. However, most people don't seem to know why.

Knowing why common sense is not common practice requires an intellectual level of understanding far beyond common sense. In other words, you need to be an above average thinker.

When I speak on the subject of common sense in my leadership development seminars, everyone in the room always realizes the leadership principles I speak about are common sense. They also know they are not commonly practiced by most people.

Why isn't common sense always common practice?

I've come to understand the problem is found in the definition of common sense which leads to our expectations sometimes not being met. When someone says something is common sense, they mean it is commonly understood.

What most people are missing is this: There's a huge difference between *understanding what should be done* and *doing what is understood*. And, it often takes more smarts to do something than it does to understand something.

*Doing what is commonly understood  
often requires uncommon sense.*

Here's a simple example to prove my point:

It's common sense to understand you should invest your time and money into your own personal growth and development if you want to become more effective and successful at work which will also improve your life when you're at home. Do you agree? If you want to be better, you need to get better. Common sense right? Of course, it is.

But, are you doing it frequently and regularly? You're doing it now as you read this book. Is this your first personal development (leadership) book or one of hundreds? Do you

think the person reading a leadership book for the first time is getting the same results as someone that has read hundreds of leadership books? It's *highly* unlikely.

Leadership is influence. The more influence you have the more options you will have at work and at home. Who will get the promotion, the person with the most influence or someone else? Who will have a more enjoyable day at work or at home, a person with more influence or less?

*“The top 5 percent of achievers invest an average of \$3,000 per year on personal growth while the other 95% average only \$7 per year.” ~ Les Brown*

If we invest in ourselves and become intentional about moving ourselves forward, we *will* move forward. Our personal and professional lives *will* get better. Most people will instantly agree. But, most people don't do it. Most people won't do it.

Instead, most people will choose to waste more money on a weekend hanging out having a good time than they will invest in their own personal growth and development in a whole year.

Why is this the case? Because common sense means we understand what we should do. However, doing it requires *uncommon sense*. I'm sure by now you get the point. After all, it's common sense.

I added this chapter because I want to be sure you realize up front ***it will take much more than common sense to apply what you will learn in this book.*** You will have to develop and use uncommon sense to get the results you deserve and are capable of achieving. Don't just zip through the pages. Think deeply about what you're learning and the impact applying it will have on your life.

You can apply it. But, will you apply it? I hope you do!

*“The critical skill of this century is not what you hold in your head, but your ability to tap into and access what other people know. The best leaders and the fastest learners know how to harness collective intelligence.” ~ Liz Wiseman*

# 5

## THERE IS AN “I” IN TEAM

### *EVERY TEAM IS MADE OF “I”NDIVIDUALS*

*"I'm just a plowhand from Arkansas, but I have learned how to hold a team together – how to lift some men up, how to calm others down, until finally they've got one heartbeat together as a team. There's always just three things I say: 'If anything goes bad, I did it. If anything goes semi-good, then we did it. If anything goes real good, they did it.' That's all it takes to get people to win." ~ Paul 'Bear' Bryant*

Paul “Bear” Bryant was one of the greatest college football coaches to ever lead a team of young men down the field. He was also a “plowhand” from Arkansas. A blue-collar worker. The blue-collar world has produced some of the greatest leaders of all time, so you should be proud and hold your head high. *Without them, the world as we know it would not exist.*

There’s nothing holding you back but you. As my blue-collar friend, Donovan Weldon, stated so well, *“The only person between you and success is you. MOVE! The only person between you and failure is you. STAND FIRM!”* Those are strong words of wisdom. Donovan started on the bottom just like you and me. But today, he’s the CEO of Donovan Industrial Service in Orange, TX near Beaumont.

Donovan’s success didn’t happen by accident. He made it happen. You can make things happen too! He’s a blue-collar leader that believes in and develops his team on a regular basis. I know because my wife, Ria, and I had the privilege of being brought in to speak to his team about leadership in 2014. They are making it happen on purpose for a purpose!

It's time for you to stop playing small and start playing tall. A college degree is not required for you to play at a higher level. Not having one is simply an excuse some people use to continue playing small. If you want a college degree, use what you will learn on these pages to find a way to get one. If you don't want a college degree, use what you learn on these pages to make it happen without one.

You are the key to your success. You must believe in yourself. You must grow and develop yourself, which is what you're doing as you read this book. Do not stop growing! And when the time is right, you must bet on yourself.

Understanding your role as a team member is another must. Those on the front lines often underestimate themselves because they can't see the big picture. They can't see the value they have to offer. Far too often, their boss isn't a high impact leader and needs a lot of growth and development too. Bosses are often given the title without any formal development.

When I write about the front lines on these pages, I'm not only talking about the people in entry level positions. Sure they are obviously on the front lines, but they also have leaders that are on the front lines with them and various team members that support them too. They can all learn from these pages.

This book was written specifically for anyone at any level that visits, interacts with, or works on the front lines.

The principles I share with you must be applied if you want to make a high impact and be recognized for leading from the front lines. Regardless of your position, the more you apply these principles, the more options you will have, and the more positions you will be offered as you climb even higher.

Teams are made up of "I"ndividuals, so there are many I's on every team, regardless of how many times you hear, "There is no 'I' in TEAM." As a matter of fact, *you are one of them*. Every person on a team is an "I" and has the potential to lead (influence) the team, positively or negatively.

*"Leadership is influence. Nothing more. Nothing less."*

*~ John C. Maxwell*

You must understand there are many official and unofficial teams in the organization where you work. They are very dynamic and constantly changing.

When most of us think of which team we are on, we immediately think of our peers, the ones on the same crew, in the same department, or working on the same job. This is our core team, but it only represents the smallest team we're on. We also support other teams too, as others support our team.

When we choose to contribute beyond our immediate team, we are choosing to be part of a bigger team. Often, this only requires a choice to do so. Your choice to get involved in other areas sends a clear message to the high impact leaders.

When you play tall, you choose to contribute because you know it will increase your influence and your impact on the front lines. If you want to play tall, you should want to be noticed, to be selected, to volunteer, to share information, to accept more responsibility, and ultimately, to make a contribution at a higher level.

As a direct result of your choice to step up, your influence increases. You're demonstrating you can lead from the front lines and will be seen and respected by all high impact leaders as a high impact leader. Your actions will not go unnoticed.

When you play small, you choose not to contribute because you don't want to do more. If your goal is to coast until pay day, it won't be a secret you can keep. When you make every effort not to be noticed, not to be selected, not to volunteer, not to share information, not to accept responsibility, and ultimately to not contribute, *you will absolutely be noticed.*

As a direct result of your choice not to step up, your influence decreases. Your influence on the front lines and with your leaders will be diminished. You are more likely to become reactive and frustrated blaming others for what you have chosen. Blaming others will further reduce your influence.

You first make your choices, then your choices make you.

*"The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable." ~ Peyton Manning*

# 6

## BE BETTER TOMORROW

*WHEN YOU BECOME MORE VALUABLE,  
YOU WILL BECOME MORE SUCCESSFUL*

*"If you have too little confidence, you will think you can't learn. If you have too much, you will think you don't have to learn." ~ Eric Hoffer*

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**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"It is the capacity to develop and improve themselves that distinguishes leaders from followers." ~ Bennis and Nanus*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Do you know about the [Special Blue-Collar Leadership® Offer](#)? Get complimentary copies of books with on site leadership speaking/training from Mack and Ria.

We spoke at Yale University's School of Management on the topic of *Blue-Collar Leadership®: Innovation in Talent Development*.  
[Watch our entire 1 hour presentation here.](#)

Listen/subscribe to my [Blue-Collar Leadership® Podcast](#).



# 7

## THE SECRET TO YOUR SUCCESS

### *YOU GET PAID BY OTHERS, BUT YOU WORK FOR YOURSELF*

*"When you take charge of your life, there is no longer need to ask permission of other people or society at large. When you ask permission, you give someone veto power over your life." ~ Albert F. Geoffrey*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"The key to moving beyond average is doing what exceptional people do, not wanting what they have."  
~ Mack Story*

# 8

## **SOMEONE IS ALWAYS WATCHING**

### ***YOU ARE ALWAYS TEACHING WHAT YOU'RE MODELING, REGARDLESS OF WHAT YOU ARE TEACHING***

*"Nothing is more confusing than people who give good advice, but set a bad example." ~ Norman Vincent Peale*

*"Nothing is more convincing than people who give good advice and set a good example." ~ John C. Maxwell*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Example isn't another way to teach,  
it's the only way to teach." ~ Albert Einstein*

# 9

## **YOUR POTENTIAL IS UNLIMITED**

### ***YOU SHOULD ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL, BUT NEVER SATISFIED***

*"When we fully develop our potential, we create superior value for others – and that in turn helps give meaning to our lives...Life is pretty empty without passion for what we are doing. What a tragedy to reach the end of your life and only be able to say, 'I got by without having to do too much.'" ~ Charles G. Koch*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well."  
~ Ralph Waldo Emerson*

# 10

## FOCUS ON THE MIRROR

### *THE FACE YOU SEE LEAST IS YOUR OWN*

*"A man's environment is a merciless mirror  
of him as a human being." ~ Earl Nightingale*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"The moment you take responsibility for everything in your  
life is the moment you can change anything in your life."  
~ Hal Elrod*

# 11

## THE POWER OF THE PAUSE BUTTON

*WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IS  
IMPORTANT, BUT YOUR RESPONSE TO  
WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU  
IS MOST IMPORTANT*

*"Self-mastery is the hardest job you will ever tackle. If you do not conquer self, you will be conquered by self. You may see at the same time both your best friend and your worst enemy, by simply stepping in front of the mirror."  
~ Napoleon Hill*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"If you do what is easy, your life will be hard. But if you do what is hard, your life will be easy." ~ Les Brown*

# 12

## THE FUTURE IS IN YOU NOW

*IF YOU DON'T CHOOSE YOUR FUTURE,  
SOMEONE ELSE WILL*

*"There's nothing you have to do. We all have the power  
to make a decision that will direct us to a new destination.  
Each of us can make a choice that will change our life."  
~ John G. Miller*

### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"We are anxious to improve our circumstances  
but unwilling to improve ourselves.  
We therefore remain bound." ~ James Allen*

# 13

## **COURAGE IS CONTAGIOUS**

### ***COURAGE ALLOWS AVERAGE PEOPLE TO ACHIEVE EXCEPTIONAL RESULTS***

*"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."  
~ Anais Nin*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"While one person hesitates because he feels inferior,  
another person is making mistakes,  
and becoming superior." ~ Henry C. Link*

# 14

## **YOU ATTRACT WHO YOU ARE**

### ***THOSE WHO LIKE YOU THE MOST ARE THE MOST LIKE YOU***

*"The people with whom you habitually associate are called your 'reference group,' and these people determine as much as 95% of your success or failure in life."*

*~ Harvard Social Psychologist, Dr. David McClelland*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"In the end, you may not be able to change the people around you, but you can change the people you choose to be around." ~ John C. Maxwell*



# 15

## CHARACTER COUNTS

### *WHO YOU ARE ON THE INSIDE IS WHAT OTHERS SEE ON THE OUTSIDE*

*"Character is like a tree and reputation like a shadow. The shadow is what we think of it; the tree is the real thing."  
~ Abraham Lincoln*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"Our reputations do not come from how we talk about ourselves. Our reputations come from how others talk about us." ~ Simon Sinek*

# 16

## CHARACTER TRUMPS COMPETENCY

### *WHO YOU ARE MATTERS MORE THAN WHAT YOU KNOW*

*"You can't climb to the top of the mountain  
with base camp character." ~ Mack Story*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"A sign of wisdom and maturity is when you come to terms  
with the realization that your decisions cause your rewards  
and consequences. You are responsible for your life, and  
your ultimate success depends on the choices you make."  
~ Denis Waitley*

# 17

## LEADERS HAVE FOLLOWERS

### *THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LEADER AND A BOSS IS WHAT THEY VALUE*

*"A leader is someone who has followers. If there are no followers, there is no leader. A person may have subordinates, workers, admirers, associates, co-workers, friends, and people who report to him or her, a person may have authority over other people, a person may hold an elective office, and a person may influence a large number of people, but that does not make that person a leader if there are no followers." ~ Jimmy Collins*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the equality of his actions and the integrity of his intent." ~ Douglas MacArthur*

# 18

## POSITIONS ARE OVERRATED

*IF YOU CAN'T LEAD  
WITHOUT A POSITION,  
YOU WON'T LEAD WITH A POSITION*

*"The cost of leadership is self-interest."  
~ USMC Lt. General George Flynn*

### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"The only influence that truly has any meaningful value is based on moral authority, not formal authority. Position or title isn't important or required. Fear and intimidation doesn't exist. Others choose to follow you because of who you are and how you make them feel." ~ Mack Story*

# 19

## FOLLOWERS CHOOSE LEADERS

### *ALL GREAT LEADERS WERE FIRST GREAT FOLLOWERS*

*"To excel in leadership, you must first master  
followership." ~ S. Truett Cathy*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Other people and things can stop you temporarily. YOU  
are the only one who can do it permanently." ~ Zig Ziglar*

# 20

## SEEK FIRST TO UNDERSTAND

### *YOU WILL ALWAYS LEARN MORE FROM LISTENING THAN SPEAKING*

*"Principles are not invented by us or by society; they are the laws of the universe that pertain to human relationships and human organizations. They are part of the human condition, consciousness, and conscience. To the degree people recognize and live in harmony with such basic principles as fairness, equity, justice, integrity, honesty, and trust, they move toward either survival and stability on the one hand or disintegration and destruction on the other."*

*~ Dr. Stephen R. Covey*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"Listening requires giving up our favorite human pastime— involvement in ourselves and our own self-interest. It's our primary, entirely human focus. And it's where our motivation to do anything comes from. With this as a base, can you see what a problem is created when we're asked to listen to someone else?" ~ Sonya Hamlin*

# 21

## THINK OF YOURSELF LESS

*THERE'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN  
ARROGANCE AND CONFIDENCE;  
IT'S CALLED HUMILITY*

*"People with humility don't think less of themselves.  
They just think about themselves less." ~ Ken Blanchard*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"We all know that perfection is a mask. So, we don't trust  
the people behind know-it-all masks. They're not being  
honest with us. The people with whom we have deepest  
connection are those who acknowledge their weaknesses."  
~ Parker Palmer*

# 22

## **ASK FOR MORE RESPONSIBILITY**

*WHEN YOU ACCEPT MORE  
RESPONSIBILITY, YOU WILL  
GAIN MORE INFLUENCE*

*"If we embrace the chance of living life to the fullest, then  
we must be willing to accept responsibility for doing it."  
~ Ria Story*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*Are you living your life by default or by design?*



# 23

## **THERE IS ENOUGH FOR EVERYONE**

### ***HELPING OTHERS SUCCEED ENSURES YOU WILL SUCCEED***

*"Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success." ~ Henry Ford*

#### **CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goals; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude." ~ Thomas Jefferson*

# 24

## BE THE FIRST TO HELP

### *EVERYONE REMEMBERS THE FIRST TO HELP; FEW REMEMBER THE SECOND*

*"Leaders are not always the first to see the need for change, but they are the first to act. And once they move away from the pack, they are positioned to lead."*

*~ Andy Stanley*

### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"By accident of fortune one may be a leader for a time, but by helping others succeed one will be a leader forever."*

*~ Chinese Proverb*

# 25

## DO MORE THAN EXPECTED

*DOING MORE INCREASES YOUR  
INFLUENCE; DOING LESS  
DECREASES YOUR INFLUENCE*

*"Never mistake effort and intentions for results."  
~ Dick Vermeil*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Start doing what is necessary; then, do what is possible;  
and suddenly you are doing the impossible. "  
~ St. Francis of Assisi*

# 26

## **DO IT SOONER THAN EXPECTED**

***DOING IT SOONER INCREASES YOUR  
INFLUENCE; DOING IT LATER  
DECREASES YOUR INFLUENCE***

*"The wise does at once what the fool does at last."  
~ Jewish Proverb*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"The successful person has the habit of doing the things  
failures don't like to do." ~ E.M. Gray*

# 27

## **DO IT BETTER THAN EXPECTED**

***DOING IT BETTER INCREASES YOUR  
INFLUENCE; DOING IT WORSE  
DECREASES YOUR INFLUENCE***

*"When you do the common things in life in an uncommon way, you will command the attention of the world."  
~ George Washington Carver*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Don't measure yourself by what you have accomplished, but rather by what you should have accomplished with your ability." ~ John Wooden*

# 28

## STRETCH YOURSELF INTENTIONALLY

### *ALL OF YOUR GROWTH HAPPENS OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE*

*"If you work hard on your job you can make a living, but if  
you work hard on yourself you can make a fortune."  
~ Jim Rohn*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"When we are faced with change, we either step forward  
into growth or we step backward into safety."  
~ Abraham Maslow*

# 29

## DEVELOP YOURSELF INTENTIONALLY

*IF YOU WON'T INVEST IN YOURSELF,  
WHY SHOULD ANYONE ELSE?*

*"Accidental growth vs. intentional growth is about as effective as accidental exercise compared to intentional exercise....not even close. And the results....not even close."  
~ Mack Story*

**CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO**

*"Today I will do what others won't, so tomorrow  
I can do what others can't." ~ Jerry Rice*

# 30

## YOU MUST BET ON YOURSELF

### *IF YOU WON'T BET ON YOURSELF, WHY SHOULD ANYONE ELSE?*

*"Living intentionally leads to amazing results. Living accidentally leads to depressing disappointments. A better tomorrow won't just happen. You must be intentional and make it happen." ~ Mack Story*

#### CHAPTER CONTENT REMOVED FOR PROMO

*"To grow, you must be willing to let your present and future be totally unlike your past. Your history is not your destiny." ~ Alan Cohen*

Do you know about the [Special Blue-Collar Leadership® Offer](#)? Get complimentary copies of books with on site leadership speaking/training from Mack and Ria.

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Mack has also written [Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision: Unleash Your Team's Potential](#), [Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork: 30 Traits of High Impact Players](#), and [Blue-Collar Kaizen: Leading Lean and Lean Teams](#). As of 2018, [Mack](#) and his wife, [Ria](#), have published [22 books on leadership development and personal growth](#).



We spoke at Yale University's School of Management on the topic of *Blue-Collar Leadership®: Innovation in Talent Development*. [Watch the entire 1 hour presentation here.](#)

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*"My first words are, GET SIGNED UP! This training is not, a stress, not your everyday leadership seminar!" Sam, VP & COO*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mack's story is an amazing journey of personal and professional growth. He began his career in manufacturing on the front lines of a machine shop. He grew himself into upper management and found his niche in lean manufacturing and along with it, developed a passion for leadership development.

Mack has logged over 11,000 hours leading cross-functional blue-collar leaders and their teams through various types of process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation.

Mack is also the author of *Defining Influence*, *10 Values of High Impact Leaders*, *Change Happens*, *10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation*, *Maximize Your Potential*, *Maximize Your Leadership Potential*, and *Who's Buying You?*. He's an inspiration for people everywhere as an example of achievement, growth and personal development. His passion inspires people all over the world! [Listen to Audio Book samples here.](#)

A few highlights: In 2013, Mack participated in the Cultural Transformation of Guatemala with John C. Maxwell where more than 20,000 Guatemalan leaders were trained; In 2014, Les Brown invited Mack to speak at his event in Los Angeles, CA; In 2018, Mack was invited to speak at Yale University.

Contact Mack at 334-728-4143 or [mack@mackstory.com](mailto:mack@mackstory.com) for [Professional Leadership Development](#), [Keynote Speaking](#), and Cultural Enhancement/Transformation.

### [TopStoryLeadership.com](http://TopStoryLeadership.com)

Mack's wife, [Ria](#), is also an author and speaker with [an amazing personal story of overcoming seven years of extreme sexual abuse](#) by her father and others from age 12-19.

### [RiaStory.com](http://RiaStory.com)