

LEAD AGAIN

A MODERN GUIDE TO RESILIENCE



BY NOEL BAGWELL

LEAD AGAIN

**SURVIVE ANY SETBACK AND
RECLAIM CALM AMID CRISIS**

BY NOEL BAGWELL

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*This book is dedicated to my son, Liam,
and the love of my life, Devon. I love you
both with all my heart. I always will.*

FOREWORD

In a world where the only constant is change, *Lead Again: A Modern Guide to Resilience* emerges as a compass in the wilderness of modern leadership. This book is not just about the surface-level mechanics of leadership but delves deep into the art and science of rising from the ashes of adversity. It's a narrative that weaves through the complex tapestry of leading with heart and mind, of balancing empathy with discernment, and of understanding the profound interplay between resilience and adaptability.

What sets this book apart is its nuanced understanding of leadership as a multifaceted endeavor. It recognizes that the true essence of leadership lies not in the loud proclamations of success but in the quiet reflections of setbacks and recoveries. Here, leadership is not portrayed as a linear ascent up the corporate ladder but as a series of undulating waves, each crest and trough offering its own lesson and opportunity for growth.

The principles outlined in this book mirror the disciplined pursuit of prioritization, echoing the ethos that less can indeed be more. It's a clarion call to focus on what truly matters, to cut through the noise, and to engage in the deep work of meaningful leadership. This is not a book that simply skims the surface; it invites you to dive into the depths of your leadership potential, to explore the uncharted waters of your capabilities.

At its core, this book is a meditation on the psychological resilience necessary for effective leadership. It underscores the importance of mindfulness, of being fully present in the moment, and of embracing the inherent uncertainties of leading. It's about nurturing the soil of your mind, cultivating a mindset that sees challenges not as

insurmountable obstacles but as stepping stones to greater heights.

Here, the reader is encouraged to strike a balance – to lead with empathy but not be consumed by it, to listen with intent but not be swayed by every passing emotion. It's about finding that sweet spot where emotional intelligence meets rational decision-making. This book challenges you to look beyond the facade of traditional leadership and to embrace a more holistic approach, one that values self-awareness and personal growth as key components of professional success.

Lead Again is a reminder that leadership is not a destination but a journey – one marked by continuous learning, self-discovery, and the courage to face one's fears head-on. It's about understanding that true leadership is not just about leading others but about leading oneself first.

As you embark on this journey through the pages of *Lead Again*, you are invited to step into a realm where leadership is redefined, where resilience is not just a buzzword but a lived reality, and where every setback is a precursor to a greater comeback. This book is more than just a guide; it's a mirror reflecting the leader within you, waiting to rise anew.

Welcome to *Lead Again: A Modern Guide to Resilience* – a book that doesn't just tell you how to lead but shows you how to emerge as a leader reborn, ready to face the world with renewed strength and clarity.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a journey that transcends the ordinary leadership narrative. "Lead Again: A Modern Guide to Resilience" is more than a book; it's a compass for navigating the unpredictable seas of leadership in the face of adversity. As Joan Rivers insightfully noted, "It doesn't get better; you get better." These pages are a chronicle of that transformation.

I invite you to walk with me, step by step, through the valleys and peaks of personal and professional challenges. Picture the scene: a family home, once a symbol of success and stability, slipping away. Imagine the sting of loss, the taste of failure, the sound of a door closing on a business venture. These aren't just stories; they're chapters from my life, each one a lesson in resilience, a step towards recovery.

In my role as a business lawyer and advisor, I've had the privilege of being a beacon for others weathering their storms. The essence of these experiences, distilled into actionable insights, forms the heart of this book. Whether it's the echoes of your own struggles or the desire to fortify your leadership in times of crisis, these pages are designed to resonate with your journey.

PART ONE: THE FOUNDATIONS OF RESILIENCE

In the first part of our journey, "The Foundations of Resilience," we delve into the essence of resilience. It's about more than just standing firm; it's about learning to dance in the rain of challenges. Here, we explore the fortitude of will, the rebirth of trust, and the art of self-respect. I'll guide you through transforming fear into a catalyst, failure into feedback, and loss into a launchpad for growth.

PART TWO: NAVIGATING THE STORM

The second part, "Navigating the Storm," is your guide through the tempest. It's about finding the eye of the storm and centering yourself. This section is your toolkit for calm in chaos, including mindfulness practices that offer clarity, essentialism strategies that focus your energy, and the acceptance of feedback as a gift. We'll explore the importance of physical and spiritual health, the power of a united team, and the mastery of time - each element a vital cog in the machinery of successful leadership.

YOUR ALLY IN LEADERSHIP RECOVERY

This book is your ally, your mentor, your friend on the path to rediscovering your leadership prowess. Whether you're nursing personal wounds, steering through professional turbulence, or both, "Lead Again" offers the wisdom, guidance, and practical tools necessary for healing, growth, and reemergence as a leader.

As you turn each page, feel the empowerment seep through the words. Envision the leader you will become – resilient, confident, and trustworthy. You're not merely reading; you're embarking on a transformative odyssey to reclaim your rightful place as a leader.

So, let's begin. Each step you take in these pages is a step forward in your leadership comeback. Turn the page, and let's embark on this journey together, towards a horizon of resilience and renewed leadership.

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PART ONE

THE FOUNDATIONS OF RESILIENCE

1.

THE NEED TO LEAD

DELVING INTO OUR MOTIVATIONS

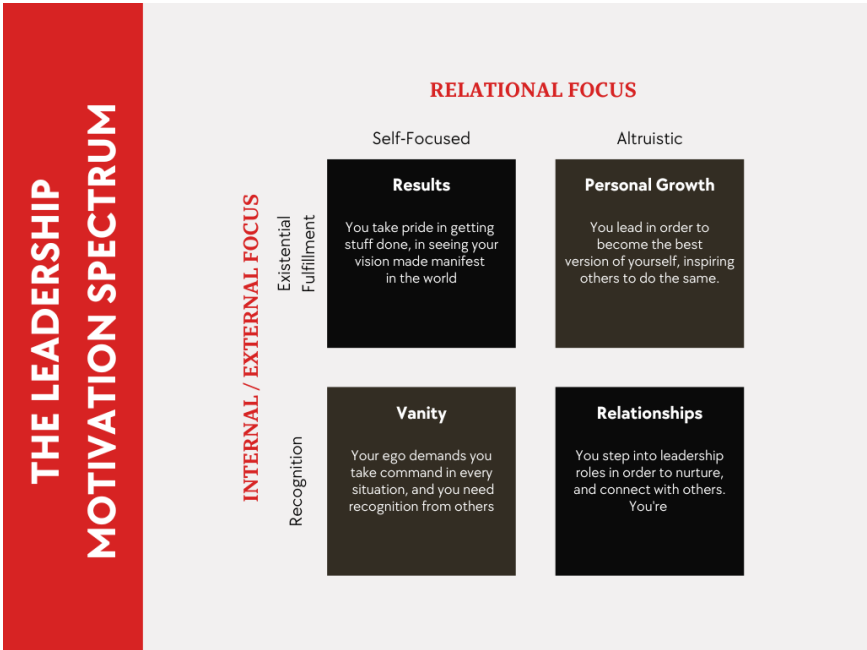
Understanding our drive to lead is a vital first step in our journey to restore one's capacity to lead. Before even beginning to try to recover from a setback, we have to ask one really tough question: "Why do I need to lead?" Answering this question lays the groundwork for our leadership approach, and it's often useful to engage a coach or mentor to dig deeper.^[i]

Motivation is central to leadership. Without a strong connection to the reasons behind our leadership, our energy and endurance may falter. However, sometimes the answer to "Why do I need to lead?" is simply, "I don't need to." Some find themselves in leadership roles due to circumstance or opportunity, without a true passion or need for leading.

In such cases, leadership might be more of a duty than a genuine desire. If that's you, it's okay to step back. Remember the saying, "Lead, follow, or get out of the way." Without passion and internal motivation, it's best to find your passion, follow someone who has it, or step aside from leadership.

CLASSIC LEADERSHIP MOTIVES

Now, let's explore some classic motivations to lead, including personal anecdotes that shed light on these motives.



The Leadership Motivation Spectrum Matrix displays different leadership motives mapped along the axes of self-focus to altruism and external to internal validation.

VANITY

When I was a child, people often said, "You're going to be President someday." That filled me with pride, but as I grew older, I realized this sort of praise was setting me up for vanity-based leadership.

When we internalize the expectations of others, we can develop a craving for personal accomplishment and

acclaim. For some, this desire becomes tied to their self-worth, and when their leadership capacity is impaired, they can feel devastated.

However, vanity can also be an effective motivator if it drives us to excel and bring our organization to the forefront.

Beware, though, vanity can turn leaders into controlling figures. There is always a risk of ego-driven leaders becoming controlling and domineering, making them less effective and more insufferable in the long run.

RELATIONSHIPS

Many people are motivated to lead by the need to be needed or respected. I experienced this shift in my teens and early twenties. At this time in my life, whenever I was given an opportunity to lead, my aim tended to be to connect, participate, and help others with my skills.

For example, on a mission trip to Panama at 17, I earned the lead role in our street drama group. I used my excellent communication skills to build strong relationships and improve our group's morale and effectiveness, providing encouragement and guidance to my teammates.

I loved being the person others would come to for advice, because I felt like I really was helping them, participating in their lives, and actually connecting with them at a human level.

There is an art to giving and receiving advice. Leaders who are motivated by their interpersonal relationships—often driven by an insatiable craving for connection—excel at the art of giving (and receiving) advice.

Skilled advising is not just about the content of the advice, but also about how it is given. It is a creative and collaborative process that requires an ongoing conversation to better understand problems and find solutions. It is not a

one-time transaction, but rather a continuous effort to improve understanding and find promising paths forward.

Leaders with this motivation can be amazing managers and motivators. Sometimes, however, they can struggle with making difficult choices between what they see as beneficial for their concrete, interpersonal relationships and the needs of a larger, more abstract organization, such as a company or community.

RESULTS

Another potent motivation that fuels many leaders is the pursuit of results. Individuals propelled by this driving force are primarily concerned with getting things done, accomplishing objectives, and realizing the fruits of their efforts. They're usually energetic, action-oriented, and thrive in an environment where performance is measurable and, more importantly, visible.

Results-oriented leaders tend to be self-motivated, with a mindset keenly focused on achieving their predetermined goals. They tend to be resilient, willing to tackle challenges head-on, and are not easily discouraged by obstacles or setbacks. They display a high level of commitment, investing time, effort, and resources to realize their objectives.

My own journey into results-oriented leadership really came into its fullness when I started my law practice. I was motivated by the idea of building a successful venture, making a tangible impact in my field, and achieving recognition for my work. This was a time of great energy and enthusiasm, as the prospect of manifesting my vision for how smaller law firms could better serve small-to-medium businesses propelled me forward.

The same results-focused drive was carried into a couple of subsequent entrepreneurial endeavors. However,

these initial ventures proved challenging. I launched two start-ups with my wife, Devon, both of which did not succeed as I had hoped. The first start-up faltered due to a lack of genuine buy-in from Devon, who simply didn't have the interest that I hoped she would. The second venture failed because of discordant interests within the team of partners that had come together around my idea for the business. There is an intricate relationship between shared vision and results, and I learned from that experience that each key person's expectations need to be fully explored and clearly articulated before moving forward in a new venture.

Looking back, I can see that being solely results-oriented, while having its merits, also blinded me to other necessary considerations. Tunnel vision can cost you a lot! Striving for success is important, but one must also remember to balance this drive with other vital aspects of leadership such as building meaningful relationships, gaining genuine buy-in from your team, and aligning everyone's interests towards a common goal.

While it's important to push toward goals, results-driven leaders must understand the essential and equally importance of ensuring their goals are shared by all the key people involved in an endeavor. After all, achieving lasting results is a team effort, and you can't drag others to your dreams. Rather, the ability to inspire, engage, and support others in the pursuit of shared objectives is the mark of a truly effective leader.

The path of leadership is complex and full of lessons like these. My journey made me realize that being a results-oriented leader also meant growing and adapting, knowing when to persist and when to adjust course. It's about the flexibility to learn from failures and the humility to recognize and address any shortfalls in one's approach to leadership.

A results-driven motivation can be a powerful force in leadership. As with any leadership motivation, however, it needs to be balanced with rational compassion,

collaboration, and a clear, shared vision. True leadership success lies not just in the attainment of goals, but also in the journey and growth experienced along the way.

PERSONAL GROWTH

Personal growth serves as a profound motivation for many leaders. Leaders motivated by personal growth focus on being the best they can be. They're driven by continual improvement, a genuine love of wisdom, and a desire to reach their full potential. This motivation can infuse leadership with a sense of purpose and authenticity.

For me, the journey towards personal growth was ignited by adversity. A significant turning point came after I suffered two nearly simultaneous, life-altering tragedies – the loss of my beloved grandmother and the abrupt dissolution of my fifteen-year marriage. The emotional devastation and financial hardship I faced were immense, and I was presented with two stark options: crumble under the weight of the losses or choose to grow from them. I chose growth.

This choice meant diving headfirst into a journey of self-improvement. It involved sharpening my self-awareness, reassessing my behaviors, challenging my belief systems, and deepening my faith. The quest for personal growth became more than a goal; it became a survival tactic, a beacon that guided me through my darkest moments, an evolution that transformed me into a man reborn.

Over time, this pursuit transformed from a survival tactic into a conscious and intentional motivation. It became a tool for leading others through their hardships, helping them navigate personal and professional setbacks, and fostering their healing. It gave me the strength to lead with renewed purpose and a deep-seated authenticity.

Personal growth has taught me that leadership can be about evolving both individually and together with others who

are on a similar path. This kind of evolution transforms pain into power, extracts feedback from failures, and uses such lessons to empower oneself and others. Truly, it is our most painful experiences that often shape us into the leaders we are meant to be. The pursuit of personal growth has allowed me to emerge from adversity stronger and better equipped to lead and support others. If you need evidence that from the ashes of hardship, a resilient leader can arise, here I am.

PROS AND CONS OF LEADERSHIP MOTIVES

The benefits and downsides of each motive relate to whether our drive to lead is self-focused or altruistic. Leaders who, at least, appear to be leading for the good of others gain more trust. Indeed, the best leaders are those who lead reluctantly, seeing leadership as guiding others toward shared goals, rather than wielding power.¹

Consider the example of George Washington, a paradigm of reluctant leadership. His actions and words reflected a sense of duty and selflessness that made him a beloved and respected figure.² As the American Revolution came to a successful conclusion, Washington's leadership and military prowess were highly praised. Yet, when the opportunity arose for him to seize more power, he instead chose to relinquish it and retire to his plantation at Mount Vernon, emphasizing his wish for a peaceful private life after eight long years of war.

In 1787, when the Constitutional Convention concluded with a newly minted framework for a stronger federal government, Washington was the unanimous choice to become the first President of the nascent United States of America. He expressed his reluctance to take on this role in a letter to Alexander Hamilton, asking, "Have I not done enough for my country?" His question echoed his genuine

desire for respite and showed his lack of ambition for personal power.^{1d}

Washington's reluctant acceptance of the presidency embodied his view of leadership as a duty, not a quest for authority. He saw himself as a servant of the American people, ensuring the survival and growth of the young nation. His leadership style, grounded in humility and a deep sense of civic responsibility, resonates with our understanding of effective leadership. Indeed, leadership is not about wielding power but about guiding others towards shared goals.

“LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT WIELDING POWER, BUT ABOUT GUIDING OTHERS TOWARDS SHARED GOALS.”

What is your grand vision and does your leadership primarily benefit you or others? In answering this question, be honest and authentic about your motivations. Self-deception will hurt you and those who follow you.

Whatever your motives, whether self-centered or altruistic, vanity-driven or focused on others, leadership can have meaningful social benefits. It's crucial to be aware of your motives and align them with your core beliefs and values. A coach or mentor can provide valuable support in this process.³

In conclusion, understanding our motivations for leading is vital for our leadership journey. By exploring different motives and being honest about our own, we can ensure that our leadership is in line with our values and goals, benefiting both ourselves and others.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- * Understanding your motivations for leadership is crucial for your leadership journey.
- * Different motives for leadership include vanity, relationships, results, and personal growth, each with its own pros and cons.
- * Authenticity and alignment with your core beliefs and values are key in effective leadership.
- * Seeking support from a coach or mentor can be beneficial in understanding and navigating your leadership motivations.

ACTION ITEMS

- * Reflect on your own motivations for leadership. Are they rooted in vanity, relationships, results, personal growth, or a combination of these?
- * Consider the “pros” and “cons” of your primary leadership motive. How does it impact your leadership style and effectiveness?
- * Assess the alignment between your leadership motivations and your core beliefs and values. If there's a misalignment, what steps can you take to address it?
- * If you're finding it challenging to understand or navigate your leadership motivations, consider seeking support from a coach or mentor.