

LEAD

50 models for success in work & life

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in Work & Life

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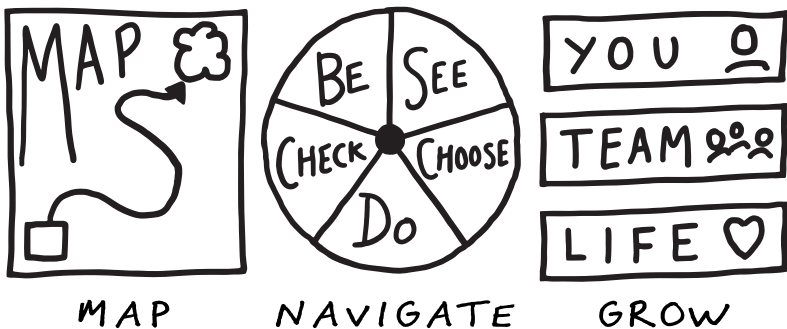
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Dashboard

LEAD will equip you to lead and succeed in work and life.

This Dashboard will guide you through the book:



LEAD will equip you with enduring principles, inspiring stories and practical tools to:

- **Map** the journeys that you want to make in work and life
- **Navigate** you and your team through life's twists and turns to success
- **Grow** your personal capacity and develop the potential of others

Let's get going.

PART ONE

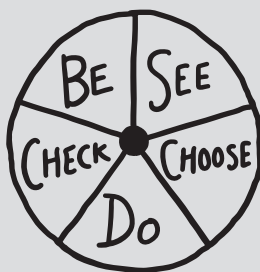
Map

Map out your future, but do it in pencil.

Jon Bon Jovi



MAP



NAVIGATE



GROW

Life is not a straight line

No one is so brave that he is not disturbed by something unexpected.

Julius Caesar

Andrew's Story

'Hey Andrew', said the voice on the phone, 'It's your father. You need to come home. We're closing the business.'

Andrew O'Shaughnessy's world was rocked to the core. Away studying business strategy, his life had been planned for the day when he would take over the family woollen mill in Dripsey, a small village in rural Ireland. His father, his grandfather and his great grandfather had laid the pathway for him. They were proud to supply the best outlets in London, New York, Paris and Milan. And now it was all falling apart around his ears.

Andrew jumped on the first plane home and begged for one last chance to save the mill. He met with each of the 88 workers and set out the bare facts. Like him, they and their forebears had worked in the mill for generations.

Someone must have an idea. There must be some way to save the business and all their jobs. But no.

Andrew held his head in his hands. An old hand approached him. 'We've never been asked for our ideas before. We didn't think it was our place. We've done what you and your family have asked us to do. We're used to you having the answers, not us.'

No-one had expected this.

So 88 good people lost their jobs, 88 families their livelihoods. Many of them would never work again. They had no other skills, no other options. This was their life. It was too late to change.

Andrew swore he would never again put himself in the position of being responsible for the loss of so many livelihoods. So he moved to London and, for the best part of a decade, drifted from one freelance role to another.

Convinced finally that it must be possible to be successful and still treat people well, the prodigal returned to his Irish home ready to start a new business. His small start-up tech business was situated in a business park where Amazon, Apple and Dell EMC were among his neighbours.

Fast-forward another decade, and once again Andrew held his head in his hands.

He had employed Sinead for a year, and thought he knew her well. She had just come up with a brilliant solution that would save the business. But why had she waited so long to offer her thoughts?

‘I didn’t think it was my place’, she explained.

‘What? It’s *always* your place to bring forward the solutions’, he said despairingly.

It was a bombshell. Andrew couldn’t believe that 20 years after he’d closed down his family business in Ireland, history seemed destined to repeat itself.

He wanted everyone to behave like they owned the business. He had strong values, honed in the hard knocks of the family mill. He spoke about them endlessly – didn’t he? – so how could she not have known?

Despite his best efforts, had he recreated the disastrous ‘them and us’, paternalistic culture of the family woollen mill? But for Sinead’s intervention, the company might have gone bust. He had to go back to the drawing board and think again.

Another ten years on, and Andrew O’Shaughnessy now leads *Poppulo*, with a crystal clear vision – ‘to make companies great by releasing the power of their people’.

The journey has had many twists and turns. From email marketing to internal staff communications, *Poppulo* now aims to lead the field in staff engagement across America and Europe. They serve leading global companies – Unilever, Barclays, Lloyds, Coca-Cola, Nike, Adidas, Danone, Nestlé and countless others. Their numbers keep growing.

But throughout these changes, Andrew’s values have not migrated an inch, only strengthened. From the closure of the woollen mill, to the encounter with Sinead, to serving some of the largest organisations on the planet, he has always said: ‘It’s about the people’.

He is emphatic: ‘Make the people a real part of your business by unleashing their individual strengths. It’s not an easy ride, but it will dramatically increase your chances of success.’

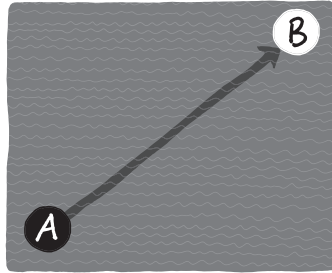
Zigzag Leadership

Consider Andrew’s story. Look at your own story. Look where you are, and trace the path you took getting here. Your job, your home, your family. Has your life to this point been a straight line? Could you have predicted where you are now 20 years ago? Or ten? Or even one year ago?

Life is not a straight line.

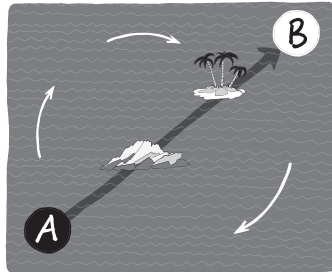
LEADERS' MAP STORYBOARD

WE TRY TO GET
FROM A TO B
IN A STRAIGHT LINE



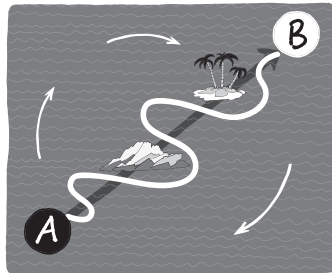
...BUT LIFE IS UNPREDICTABLE & CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE

WINDS BLOW...
WAVES RISE...
CURRENTS PULL...
OBSTACLES BLOCK &
OPPORTUNITIES ARISE



OUR JOURNEY IS MORE LIKE SAILING
THAN DRIVING ALONG A STRAIGHT ROAD

WE HAVE TO
NAVIGATE THROUGH
CIRCUMSTANCES TOWARDS
OUR ASPIRATIONS



*Previous journeys in search of treasure have taught me
that a zigzag strategy is the best way to get ahead.*

Tahir Shah

We live in a highly changing and dynamic world. Our twenty-first century environment is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. So is your journey – in whatever aspect of your life you want to focus on.

Your journey is more like sailing uncharted waters than driving along a straight road. It's more akin to stormy seas than tree-lined avenues. You are going where no-one has gone before.

At sea there are no signposts to tell you to turn right or left. You have to use your judgement to zig or zag, otherwise you can blissfully go way off course while you think you are sailing well.

That's the art of leading.

Leadership is taking people with you on a journey of common purpose and direction.

The journey won't be easy. Winds blow, waves rise and currents pull. Unseen obstacles block your way and unexpected opportunities present themselves. To get to where you have been before is relatively easy. You just need a plan. But to get to where no-one has been before, you first need to map the territory; *then* you can plan your course.

But static plans and strategies can't take account of shifting seas and changing weather. In the words of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 'Plans are nothing; planning is everything.'

As the architect of the D-Day landings, he knew a thing or two about plans and planning. Plans are static, planning is active. The plan is useful for as long as nothing changes. Planning is critical all the time.

Mapping is more than just creating a plan or having a strategy. It is a dynamic, ongoing activity that responds to the changing environment and plots the evolving journey.

Focus 1

Map Your Journey



Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the things you did do, so throw off the bowlines, sail away from safe harbour, catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore.

Dream. Discover.

Mark Twain

As Andrew navigated from point to point, he always needed to have a clear idea of where he was heading – the purpose and direction of the journey. This is your **vision**.

Andrew would describe his vision as ‘making companies great by releasing the power of their people’, but that’s very different from where he started in the 1990s.

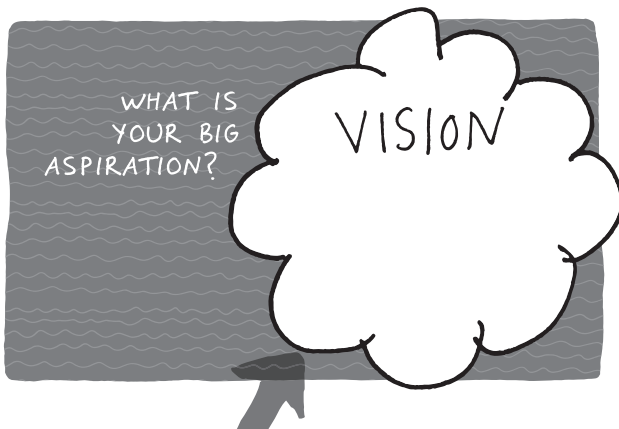
Without this clarity it is easy to follow any wind, or sail towards any calm waters – avoiding trouble, but achieving nothing.

Take a moment and think of your primary leadership role. It might be at work, at home or in a voluntary role. You choose. What is your purpose? What is your big aspiration in the role? What keeps you going? What are you trying to engage others in?

Your vision will be aspirational – inspiring you to strive forward and others to follow you.

So before you go any further, test yourself: just how ambitious is your vision?

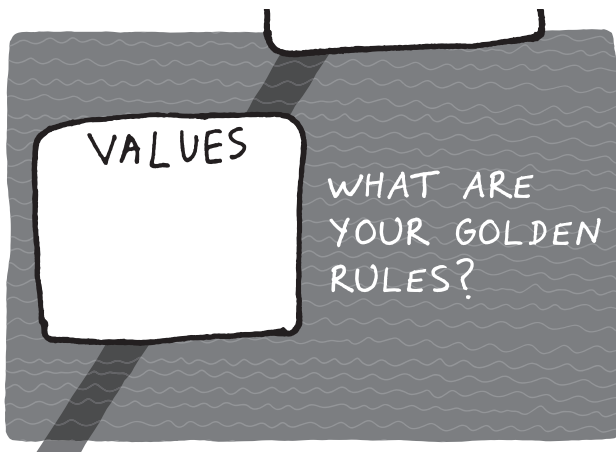
Make a note of it:



Andrew was crystal clear about how he wanted himself and others to behave as they worked, independently and collaboratively. These are your **values**. They dictate how you will behave, when no-one is watching, even when it is to your short-term detriment. They are your golden rules of life and leadership. They won't change. They describe you, your DNA, to the core.

One of Andrew's primary values is 'Together we're better', so no-one would say, as Sinead had, 'it's not my place'. His bitter experience in the mill means he enshrines the value 'Adapt to succeed'. 'What might have happened with the mill if the workers had had this value?' he reflects wistfully. And a third is 'Be the example', which encapsulates his commitment to producing the best from each person by working as a team. This commitment extends to rallying round any team member who is in trouble. 'We keep everyone in', he says with pride.

Now think who you are. What do you believe? What drives you? What poor behaviours, when seen in others, make you angry? What behaviours are you so stubbornly committed to that you won't compromise, even to your detriment? These are your values. Write them down:



You will give up your vision before you give up your values – but in your heart you are convinced your values will better enable you to reach your vision. Your journey may be a zigzag, but your values will be as straight as an arrow, always linking where you are now to your vision for the future.

Success is measurable. If your vision is big enough, you may never see it all fulfilled. But you will have clear, objective, stretch targets that are nevertheless achievable. They are signposts on the way to your vision, evidence that you are on the right course and succeeding. These are your **goals**.

They will define your actions and conversations as you seek to travel forward. They mark your progress to your ultimate aim. You can point to their success – or failure – with a Yes or a No. There is no ambiguity.

Andrew had an ambitious goal to be the first player in the people engagement field to break through in both the US and European markets. But he began with the medium-term goal of being the market leader in the UK.

Think about what success will look like for you. Identify the top two or at most three concrete goals that in the medium to long term will describe a successful journey towards your vision. Commit to them in writing:



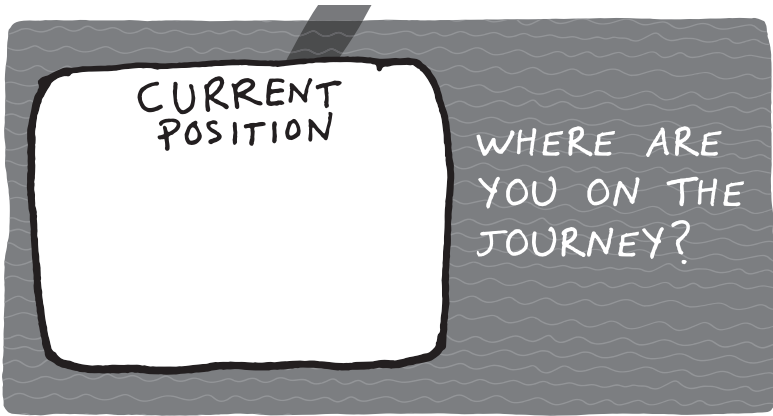
Your *values* will rarely if ever change. Your *vision* may last a lifetime, but it may change slowly over the years. Your *goals* will endure, but change as old goals you have achieved are replaced with new challenging goals to take you further towards your vision. The leader needs to be crystal clear about these, or risk sailing in circles or getting stuck in the doldrums.

But while these change little, your circumstances are changing constantly. So leaders need to be acutely aware of where they are now. How far along are you towards achieving your goals? How are the crew doing? What are the weather conditions like? This is your **current position**.

It's changing moment by moment. If you have no clear vision you will simply react to circumstances. But with clear goals and by being proactive you can read your current situation to see what will help you achieve success and what may hinder you.

Andrew's brutal honesty led to one of his most significant breakthroughs. Having taken 12 months to develop their own software, they emerged to find the market had moved on. He might have just soldiered on. But he recognised quickly that they were dead in the water. This openness to the uncomfortable truth freed him up to look honestly at the risks and opportunities available to him.

If your goals are aligned to your vision, you can simply evaluate your current position against your future goals. Be brutally honest as you describe your current position here:

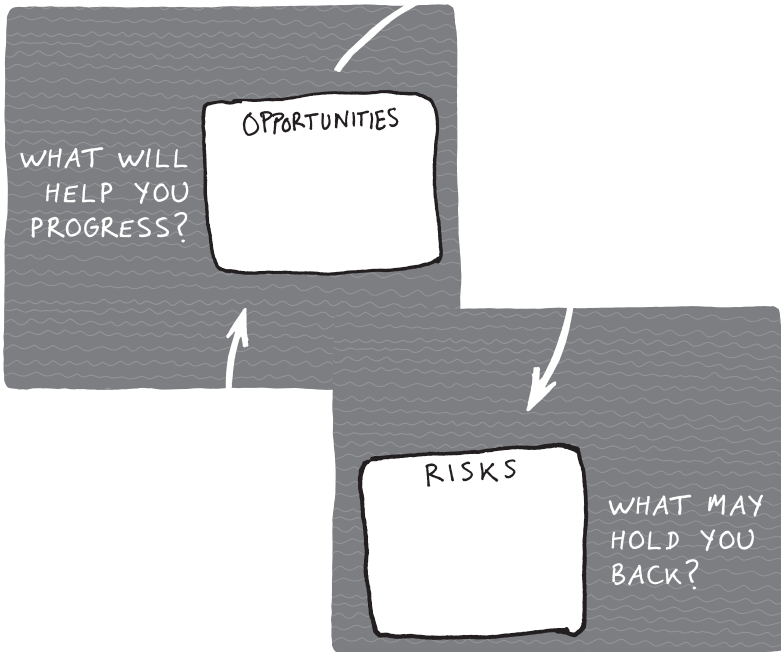


The external elements that may help are **opportunities**, and those that may hinder are **risks** to your enterprise. But be careful! It takes great wisdom to see the difference. As Winston Churchill said, 'A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty'.

Faced with lagging far behind in one market, Andrew saw an opportunity to lead the market in another. While their product was behind the curve, he started to hear feedback that customers were using his software for totally different purposes – and they loved it! He grasped the opportunity to repackage the product and lead a new market. Faced with the risk of another business failure, he gambled on the new product – and won. What looked like luck was only taking an opportunity.

So now think about all the external forces affecting you. These are your opportunities and risks. List the top two or three:

MAP YOUR JOURNEY



Equipped with clear and enduring *vision*, *values* and *goals*, and aware of the ever-changing nature of your *current position*, *opportunities* and *risks*, you are well placed to proactively chart the next leg of your journey. These are your **next steps**.

They are concrete actions, as measurable as your goals, but for the short to medium term. If your goals are two to five years hence, your next steps may be weeks or at most months hence.

So what are you going to *do*?

The other questions are servant to this master, a means to this end, the thinking before the doing. Ultimately, how you answer this question defines you as a leader. But how well you answered the first six questions determines the quality of this answer. What are your next steps? List them:



Andrew bet the company on the product change. But his first step was to convince his executive team colleagues to make the leap. So he undertook market research. This unassuming, single step reassured his team and proved to be the moment they got on board with the highly risky, and ultimately hugely rewarding, pivot.

These seven critical questions will help you create your *Leaders' Map*.