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SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITION INTO LEADERSHIP

Welcome to *The Highly Valued Leader* podcast where I make it simple for leaders at all levels to amplify their value. My name is Mel Savage and I went from working in the mailroom at a small ad agency to making multiple six figures in senior management at McDonald's, to running my own multiple six-figure executive coaching business. I've had huge successes in my career and epic failures. All of it taught me the world-class leadership, mind and skill sets that I simplify for my clients and share with you on this podcast. I'll help you reset your leadership style, demystify the politics, and help you become the highly valued leader everyone wants on their team.

Get ready for the most honest, direct and revolutionary leadership coaching you've ever heard. Let's simplify leadership together.

Welcome to *The Highly Valued Leader* podcast, my friends. This is the first episode the first full episode of this new podcast. And in the spirit of the first episode, I actually just want to start where I start with a lot of my clients just at the beginning, really, which is how do you successfully transition into a leadership role? And you'd be surprised how many people have actually never asked themselves that question. But I want to say that this podcast is not just for newbies because there are a lot of you out there who have two, three, or four years of experience in your leadership role. You're not a newbie, but you're still really struggling with certain aspects of leadership.

There are still some behaviors or some issues that are getting in the way. Maybe it's getting along with certain kinds of people, maybe you're micromanaging your team, maybe it's just managing your workload, because you're working way too many hours, maybe it's how much you get involved, or how many projects that you take on, maybe it's how you're having difficulty creating a profile for yourself with senior management or selling your ideas through senior management.

There are lots of elements of leadership that come naturally to people and then some elements that you just want to get stuck on. And so everything I'm going to talk about here today really is going to help you with that. So really, this episode is for my entire audience. If you're an aspiring leader, you need to know this stuff. But I'm going to talk about today, if you're imminently stepping into a leadership role, or you've just stepped into a leadership role, this is for you. And even if you've been in leadership for several years, and you're just not getting the traction, there's going to be something here for you.

The reason I think this topic is so important is because of the job that you were doing before you became a leader. And even if you've been a leader for two, three or four years, the job you were doing before you became a leader is completely different than the one you're going to be doing now that you are a leader. And sometimes

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when you've been a leader for two, three, or four years, you still have some identities that you carried over from before that you are a leader.

I'm a person who's a fixer. I'm a person who has the answer to any question. I'm a person who needs to know everything. Whatever it is, sometimes we carry those identities forward with us into our leadership life. And those are the things that are holding us back. So it's important to understand that a lot of the things that you are doing well, that got you promoted, or that really carried you through the large piece of your career up until now, is not necessarily the behaviors, the skill sets, the identities that are going to carry you forward into becoming a highly valued leader.

As an example, you became a leader because you were seen as reliable, strategic and smart, as a doer. And so your boss in the company and whatever said, ' *she or he is ready. They are ready to become a leader.'* You were excellent at delivering results and you were doing it without breaking things or breaking people. And because of that, they gave you this leadership role. But if you rely on the skill sets that made you a valuable doer, before you became a leader, and you use those skill sets, identities, and behaviors in your leadership role, you will fail as a leader or you will stagnate as a leader as some of you might be finding out. And you'll never really become this great world-class top-performing leader, which I know a lot of you want.

So the goal for today is to help you be proactive in how you intend to approach who you want to be as a leader, and how you want to operate as a leader, and getting very intentional about that. And that has nothing to do with putting together a 90-day plan. For sure, go ahead and put together a 90-day plan. But usually, 90-day plans are things where you articulate who you want to meet, and what you want to accomplish and you know what you want to achieve in the first 90 days.

What I'm talking about here is being very clear on what the success parameters are in terms of who you are as a leader in this new role, or who you want to be as a leader in this new role, making that very aspirational and practicing that as you step into this role. Essentially, you want to be able to define your value in this role. You know what your value was as a doer, but what will be your value as a leader in this new role? What your value in this role is going to be different, very different from the value that you've been providing up until now. And that's what we're going to be talking about today.

What I'm going to cover is why you're not as ready to step into the leadership role as you think you are. And I'm not trying to scare you or anything. But a lot of the time, I haven't met a leader yet that was like, *I'm stepping into this role. And here's how I want to be and here's how I'm getting prepared.* Like, we just go in there thinking, *Hey, you know what, I've been really good at my job so far so I'm going to be good at this one, too.*

That's why I'm saying, let's talk about why you're not as ready as you think you are to walk into this role. What are the benefits of taking time to plan your approach as you walk into this leadership role? Or as you want to maybe adjust some of the aspects of how you're behaving in this current leadership role if you've been at this for a while, and an outline of your new role as a leader. This is how I define leadership. I'm going to share that with you very top line today. Because if you're going to put a plan together, you need to know what the benchmarks are or what the goalposts are.

Within that, there are four strategies that I want you to employ as you transition into a leadership phase. I'm going to share four strategies with you that you'll want to employ as you transition into this phase of leadership. And these aren't necessarily the strategies that you might use when you're well into leadership, and you're trying to accelerate into the C-suite. But these are four strategies that you can use to ground yourself, whether you're

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brand new into leadership, or you're two or three years into leadership, and you're just focusing specifically on some areas. These strategies are for anyone who hasn't yet successfully transitioned into the full role of a world-class top-performing leader.

Now, most people I know don't have a plan when they go into leadership positions, as I said before. By the way, I didn't have one either, so I'm not anything special. These are things I have gleaned looking back. And I want to share this with you as you walk into the leadership position. So most of us don't have a plan, which I think is hilarious because, in our day jobs, we probably wouldn't do anything. We probably wouldn't lift a finger to help another department or wouldn't start a new project without understanding what the objectives are for whatever we're being asked to do, and identifying some strategies to execute against those objectives.

We want to know who the key stakeholders are, and what they think about this thing in any situation. And we want to know what the parameters of success are. We're going to have KPIs, blah, blah, blah. We wouldn't want to go deep into a project without knowing any of those things. When I was working in an ad agency, the first half of my career was at an ad agency. Nobody would lift a finger unless we had a brief of what it was we were trying to do like where the success parameters were.

Usually, someone like me as an account person, or someone on my team would have to put a brief together, which would be a synthesis of all the information and the background and the goals and everybody's ideas and bringing it down to a very clear objective for communication of what we wanted to do. And it was the same at McDonald's. You couldn't get a group of department heads or cross-functional team members together if they didn't understand how it was going to benefit the overall organizational goals or their particular goals.

You need to be able to be clear on objectives and strategies for any project that you're working on, and I'm sure it's the same for you in your role. Yet, when it comes to our career or how our development is going to look, now that we're a leader, somehow, we are happy to fly by the seat of our pants. We're happy to do what I call *growing with the flow*, which seems hilarious when you think about it, because what's more important than your success?

When you think about it, think about the number of things that your career provides to you in terms of your identity, your self-worth, your financial security, etc. You would think that above all the other things that we do, how we think about our career would be the thing we're going to be most strategic and thoughtful about, yet it never is. We just grow with the flow, as I call it.

So I want to offer that having a vision and a plan and an objective and some success parameters around what it looks like for you to be a leader aspirationally, not just today, what you know, but what you gleaned in your career about what leadership should look like and the people that you admire, and the things I'm going to share with you today, whatever it is. Having those things that are aspirational, is going to help you get a sense of what that Northstar is for how you want to show up on a day-to-day basis.

A goal or a vision is not just about the end state. Oh, we're going to get from here from A to B. No, you use B. If you're going from A to B, you use B as a filter for how you're going to show up every day, what you're going to do every day, and how you're going to behave every day. It's the same for your projects. When you have an objective, you use that to filter out what to prioritize, and how to judge what success looks like. And you need that for yourself as well. But I honestly haven't met one person, including myself, who has had that kind of vision for themselves when it comes to leadership.

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They have 90-day plans, but they don't have aspirational visions for themselves. You're just happy that you got the job. That's really why we don't do it. *I'm just so happy I got the job.* You've been thinking about getting the job for a long time, you've been striving for it for a long time, and you've been so focused on getting there, that you haven't really spent a lot of time thinking about who you're going to be when you get there or now that you're here. You've probably actually thought about these things that you want to do when you're a leader.

Maybe you thought about the changes you want to put in place, the people that you want on your team, or the kinds of things that you would never do to your people because you had this crappy boss who did them to you. So you thought about those kinds of things. And you thought about what maybe you'll do with all the money that you're making. *Oh, when I get promoted, then we can go on this holiday or we can buy this house,* or whatever. Maybe you thought about how you want to celebrate.

Now that you've achieved the goal, you said, *'Once I get promoted, we're going to do this thing, or we're going to go for a dinner or have a bottle of champagne.'* You've thought about all the different kinds of things that you'll do once you achieve the leadership role that you want to get. And there are a lot of companies out there and bosses out there who will say to you, *'Look, we can't promote you until you're actually doing the job.'*

A lot of people have this philosophy that you only get promoted when you're actually doing the job that you're trying to get promoted to. But usually, that's more about the functional parts of the role. And also sometimes it's also about how you are able to create some initial influence, how you play well with others cross-functionally or build some key relationships, etc. And so you might have some practice in some of those areas as it applies to this leadership role. You might have some practice when you're still doing the doer job.

But it's really hard to fully step into the leadership role until you're actually in the role. And not only that, once you're actually in the role, the benchmark for what success looks like in the minds of your stakeholders, all of a sudden changes. At one point, before you got the role, they're like, *'Oh, this person, they're really stepping above what they're doing right now. They're doing more leadership kind of stuff.'* And then all of a sudden, you get the leadership job and then they set you back to zero.

And you have to all of a sudden, stepping a little bit above the doer role into leadership isn't going to cut it anymore. Now you really need to be the leader that they're asking you to be. And they're not even asking you very clearly and they're never going to so don't expect it. You need to be really clear on what you're doing. Because usually, no one is out there saying to you, *'Hey, what kind of leader do you want to be when you get the gig?'* No one is sitting you down saying, *'Hey, there are some key roles of a leader that you really need to master. If you want to be a top performer, where do you want to start with that? Let's work this out with you.'* No one is asking you that.

Really clearly, I'm working this through with you. That's what I work on with my clients. Whether you're brand new, or you've been into the role, and there are some areas that we need to focus on, we really focus on creating a vision for you–identifying your version of those roles that a leader does. And that's how you get authentic. You identify what the roles are, and then and then decide who you want to be in those roles. Where is the growth that you want to focus on based on the vision that you have and who you are today, your personality, your values, and all of that stuff?

No one ever sits you down and talks to you about this kind of stuff, because everyone's focused on getting the functional stuff done. And you've been good at getting stuff done, but the benchmark for you is changing. When you focus on the kind of leader you want to be, meaning not what you'll do as a leader, but who you'll be as a leader. I want to say that, again. It's not just about what you do as a leader, but who you're going to be as a leader.

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What is that emotional intelligence, that emotional energy that you're bringing to your leadership role? When you first focus on the kind of leader that you want to be, that's going to help you grow into the role so much faster.

When you know what you're working towards, when you're using that filter to help ground you every day, you're going to grow into the role so much faster, and it's going to help you become a top-performing leader. Because your job as a leader is not about getting results anymore. I know that sounds weird. But your main job is not about actually getting the results. Obviously, you have even more accountability, and more responsibility when you step into a leadership role. But even still, your role is not really about getting results. Not directly.

The role of a leader is to create the environment for results to happen. You need to be four, five, or six steps ahead of everyone on your team, clearing the path, and clearing that environment so that they can drive the functional results. You're clearing the path for them and with them and doing that so that results can happen but you're not the one doing the results.

I'm going to talk high-level about what that means when I walk through the four strategies that I want to share with you. But the sooner that you can transition into a leadership role and let go of that former identity you have as this reliable doer who knows everything, the faster senior management is going to start to see you as a leader. And the faster that they see you as a leader, the more juicy projects you're going to get and the more you're going to be invited to have a seat at the table for the really good stuff.

That is, for me my favorite reason for really stepping into a leadership role. You got to work on the good stuff. But also, letting go of that doer role, is going to give you the space to actually show up as a leader. Because if you're still trying to do what you were doing before and just doing more of it, you're going to be overworking. You're not going to have space to actually focus on being a leader. You're going to be so bogged down in all the dirty details of how everything gets done.

Don't get me wrong, I know you love the dirty details. It's the dirty details that got you here. But continuing to immerse yourself in those dirty details, as I'm calling them, isn't going to get you to the next level. They aren't going to get you a seat at the table. They got you kind of a seat at the table in your previous role, but they won't, as a leader, if you keep going down that path and relying on that strength. And honestly, while the role of a leader is sometimes more complex, politically, let's call it that, once you get into a groove, I think you're going to find it a lot easier than being that reliable doer that you used to be.

The sooner you can master that skill, the more you'll have the ability to work for anyone and anywhere in any department. The sooner that you can master the skill of being this top-performing leader, the more you're going to have the ability to work anywhere for anyone in any department.

If you look at the C-suite of an organization, the CEO, the COO, or the CMO are not the experts on every function in their department, particularly for the CEO, CFO, CIO, CTO, I'm not even sure what their people are calling things anymore. They're not the expert on what happens in their department. They don't know all the details. They don't know how to do the function better than everyone in the department. Those roles of CEO and COO are so all-encompassing that there's no way that you can be an expert, and what your team is doing underneath you and know everything that's going on.

By the time you get to the C-suite, your job is to be an expert at creating a path to success. Your expertise is how to be a leader. And so you can work at any department once you're a leader. I think today, I probably could go into an organization and be CEO of an organization, not necessarily knowing all the operational complexities of an

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organization. But I do know how to motivate people. I do know how to ask the right questions, I do know how to clear the path to success, create a vision, influence an organization, create change in an organization, and all of these things. And I can do that anywhere, without actually knowing all the functional details.

Even if I went back to marketing today, I've been out of marketing for seven years now. Working in enterprise marketing, it seems like the world has changed with digital and AI. Those are things I haven't kept up on. But could I go and be a CMO somewhere? Absolutely. Because I know enough about marketing. I know enough about how business functions. But more importantly, I know enough about leadership to be able to do those things.

So bottom line, as you step into this role, the role of a highly valued leader, you want to create a vision for the kind of leader you want to be based on what I call, the key roles of a leader. And I'm going to share those with you. But right now, let's go through the four strategies. And within that, I'm going to talk about the key roles of a leader. I'm going to go into this right now. Let's just start with strategy number one.

Strategy number one, as you're kind of stepping into this leadership role. And this is for you, even if you had been in leadership for a while, but you're trying to shift behavior, or whatever. Strategy number one is, don't try to prove yourself. Don't try to prove yourself. You've got the job. You're super excited. That's great. To be honest, I don't love excitement as an emotion. Here's why. Because people always say, *'I'm scared and excited all at the same time.'* That's why I don't love excitement because, to me, it has the same frenetic energy as fear. That's why they show up together all the time.

This is really sort of a high, frenetic energy. Excitement sort of takes a lot of brain power, let's say to have that high vibrating frenetic energy. To me, excitement is fear, in a slightly better outfit. Excitement is fear in a slightly better outfit. My husband and I always say that about squirrels too. We think they're just rats with slightly better outfits.

Fear and excitement are both emotions that make you do crazy, impulsive, overly dramatic actions. When you think about excitement, you might say you have excitement about a new fitness regimen. You go out and buy all the new fitness gear that you need. If you're going to change the way you eat, you go buy all the food. If you're going to start a new job, you go out and buy a whole new wardrobe. It's like you don't need to take these impulsive, overly dramatic actions.

I find this happens a lot with clients who are starting a new leadership role. You're super excited about the opportunity, and you're completely terrified, but you'll blow it. So what do you do? You dive in headfirst. You work all the hours and you do all the things so that you can prove to yourself that you're worthy of the opportunity that you've already got. But still, you take on projects, you never say no, you're afraid to make a mistake, you work all the hours, and you take anybody's advice even if it's counter to your own. You're thinking, *'Well, they've been here longer. They're more senior, they must know better than me.'* And you try to be what everyone else wants you to be because you don't have a vision for who you want to be as a leader.

The only thing that you know is that you want to be successful like you were before. And a lot of the time when we're trying to be successful and we're in this prove yourself mentality, we go into this people-pleasing mode of just saying *yes*, and doing all the things and changing who we are to make someone come to you and say, *'Well, you shouldn't have said that in a meeting or you shouldn't have said that this way.'* You'd be like, *'Oh, yay.'*

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The proving yourself mindset is not leadership. It's not a leadership move. The proving yourself mindset always leads to burnout and bad leadership decisions. Instead, I suggest that you let go of this idea that you need to prove yourself. And I suggest that you operate as someone who has already proved themselves. What would be different in how you're acting right now? If you believed you were someone who already proved themselves, think about that, and then act that way. You already got the job. So just pretend for a second that you don't need to prove yourself anymore, that you can just show up and be your best the way you know how to be your best right now and even if you have a vision for your leadership, what that best looks like.

I suggest that you replace excitement and fear. I understand why you feel that way. When you feel excitement and fear, you can feel that but I suggest you try to redirect yourself to being calm, thoughtful, and pragmatic. That's the kind of energy that you want. When I say energy, I want you to be able to know that I sort of used energy and emotion interchangeably. Excitement and fear are emotions. Calm, thoughtful, grounded, and pragmatic, can also be emotions. That's the kind of energy that you want to focus on.

If you operate from prove-yourself-energy, the emotions that you have are going to be like very *hustly*, panicky, anxiety-ridden, insecure, and uncertain. You're going to have that kind of energy when you're proving yourself. When you're hustling and insecure and uncertain, guess what? You're not going to act like your best self.

So instead of putting yourself on your back foot, thinking, *'I need to prove myself to these people, I need to show them that I am worthy of this job now that they've given it to me.'* Instead, I suggest that you think, *'I got this job because I'm worthy of the job because I can do this job, because I'm willing to grow in this job, and because I have all the skills that I need to start this job and grow in this job. All I need to do now is to give myself a chance to grow in this job.* And that doesn't come from hustle, that comes from thoughtful strategic thinking and a calm, pragmatic mind.

In order to accelerate your growth as a leader, you need to slow things down and stay grounded, not operate like a friggin whack a mole, boom, boom, boom, trying to do everything. That's number one–Don't try to prove yourself.

Strategy number two. When you step into a leadership role, you need to change your value equation. You need to change your value equation. I've been talking about this throughout the entire podcast, but let me explain what a value equation is. We talk a lot about this in marketing. A value equation is the elements that make up your value as a brand. You can even write it out like an equation if you want to, although I've never had it. But if you think about it, literally, it can be an equation, your value equation.

Take a brand like McDonald's. Their value equation is McDonald's = speed of service + value pricing + being fun and welcoming + being a family environment + familiar comfort food. Those things are what makes them valuable. You can argue some of those because I know McDonald's is very polarizing as a brand. But as an example, we can do the same thing with someone like Nike. Nike would be Nike = top performance + accessibility + variety, or something like that.

Your value equation, before becoming a leader, was very much based on your ability to deliver reliable results, or or reliably deliver results. So you have the answers to every question, and you can solve any problem. And you would get things done with minimal drama. That's how you know how to become successful. You are comfortable with that value equation. In fact, whenever something would go sideways, you knew that you could

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just dig in and figure it out. You knew that you could solve any problem and you could just put your head down and take it over and figure it out.

But if you continue down that path, now that you have more people who report to you and not just more people, they're more seasoned people who can do more things; if you continue down the path of trying to solve all the problems and dig in and do it yourself, let's say, you will fail. Because you can't know everything that everyone on your team is doing. You can't solve every problem all the time. There are so many problems now, and your team is not going to want you to tell them how to do everything because they also want to figure it out, and they also want to grow.

Your job is to help them grow by not telling them how to do their job, but by helping them figure out their own solutions to doing the job to get the results. You're not supposed to tell them what to do, your job is to help them figure out what to do. When I think about the value equation of a leader, I break it down into five key roles of a leader. These are the roles that I was talking to you about before where I said, you need to know where the goalposts are.

I'm not going to share them in detail here, because I have other content where I do that, and I do not want to coach people. And there's a lot of detail that I could go into down a rabbit hole that would take hours and hours so I'm going to talk about it high level. But here are the roles of a leader that I have put together that I believe create an environment for results to happen. That's your job to create the environment for results to happen.

So here they are. Number one, leaders create a clear vision. And that vision can be for big things, like huge sea changes in organization, or it can be for small things, like the need to get a project going. It can be anything. It can be for people. It can be for anything. Leaders create vision.

Number two, leaders establish effective relationships and can work with anyone. And I mean, anyone. I want you to think about the person that you are telling yourself you cannot work with. Leaders establish effective relationships, and they can work with anyone. They can establish and create that environment for results to happen with anyone. And that can be cross-functional, up, down, and across.

Number three, leaders build high-performing critical thinkers in their teams. They don't solve people's problems. In fact, I always say to people I'm training, one of the things, the practice things that I offer them is to go to work and not solve problems. You do not solve anyone's problems. Right now, your job is to help them solve their own problems without giving them the answers. You need to help them learn to think critically. So the first three are you create a clear vision, you establish effective relationships, and you build high-performing critical thinkers on your team.

Number four is you can lead change in an organization. What I mean by that is essentially being able to create alignment for any kind of change with stakeholders in the organization. And that can be as small as a new idea you want to implement or a project you're trying to get through with people who don't want to implement that project to like I said before, a huge sea change. So it's not just about having a vision for a sea change, it's also being able to implement and influence an organization to be able to “easily” implement change in organizations.

And the last role of a leader that I like to work with is all about advocacy. So being able to build advocacy for themselves within the organization. They're building advocates for them. But they also build advocacy within

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themselves. Meaning, like, I believe in myself. I have to be my first advocate. And then they also build advocacy outside the organization. Because if you don't believe in yourself, you're not going to be able to create an environment for results to happen. If people don't believe in you, you're not going to be able to create the environment for results to happen.

While we largely focus on advocacy within our organization, I also love to encourage all leaders to practice building advocacy for themselves outside their organization because that protects your career as well. As you get more senior, it becomes more and more important to be able to create advocacy for yourself outside of the organization. If you want to shift things in your industry; if people in your industry need to know who you are; or if you need to find roles, the more senior you get, the fewer roles there are.

So it's important that you build advocacy and relationships outside your organization because that's when people are going to come to you and say, *'Hey, we have this job. Would you come over and come work with us?'* That's ideally how you want to find jobs at the top levels. And that's by nurturing your network and creating advocacy for yourself outside your organization. But you're not going to be able to build advocacy for yourself outside or inside your organization until you build it within yourself. There are three kinds of elements to building advocacy that I work on with clients.

Those are the five roles of a leader–vision, relationships, advocacy, critical thinker, and leading the organization. Those are the areas that go into your plan and your own vision for what leadership looks like for you. The first two strategies are, don't try to prove yourself, you have to change your value equation. And then number three is don't expect people to make it easy for you. I think this is really important to know.

Because even though your boss will later come to you and say you shouldn't be getting in the weeds with your team, at the same time, they're going to be coming to you and asking you for the weeds. They're going to be asking you for the detailed information that they used to ask you for. They're so used to coming to you for that kind of stuff. And they're going to be confused when you don't have the answer. You can let them be confused, you don't have to fix things for them all the time.

Because once you decide on the kind of leader that you're trying to be, it's also your job to educate your audience. And that doesn't mean that you need to go out there with your little plan and say, *'Hey, this is my plan. This is the kind of leader I want to be.'* Sometimes, maybe with your boss, because you want some feedback, or maybe with a mentor, maybe you want some feedback as you're creating the plan.

But what you really need to do is you need to help people see this new version of you in action. You need to help them through the transition from who you used to be to who you're becoming. They're not going to help you with that. And you might be upset about that but that's just the way life is. Change is hard for people. And so they're going to be happy with you being who you were before. Yet, they're also going to expect you to be someone different on day one so don't blame them for that. That's just the human condition.

It's your job to figure out as part of your plan how you're going to make that transition happen. Our brains like familiarity. So you're going to have to kindly and gently be helping people see a new version of you consistently. If they see consistently, they're going to start to shift. But you're also going to be redirecting people. You're going to say, *'I don't do that anymore. This person can help you. Let me get them to come to follow up with you.'* You're

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going to be showing up differently in meetings or different touch points in different interactions. You're not going to be answering the questions that you used to answer but you're going to help other people step into that role.

I know it's such an overused term but you really need to be the change. It's so true in so many parts of your life. But if you want people to see you as the leader, you need to start acting as a leader first. You can't be just like, *'See me as a leader, and then I'm going to start acting like one.'* No, you need to start acting like one. And then they're going to shift. It's normal to want people to stop asking you for the details they used to, but they will not until you stop giving them the details that you used to give them. No one else is going to change until you change. And it's your job as a leader to help guide them through that change.

Strategy number four, get help. Now, strategy number four is actually the last strategy. Don't try to prove yourself, change your value equation, and use the five roles of a leader to do that. Don't expect everyone to make it easy for you. Strategy number four is to get help. Get help. That's the last thing I want to offer you here. Get help. That might sound self-serving because I'm an executive coach. But I would not be doing you a service if I told you that you could figure this out on your own.

I know you want to figure this out on your own because you're very smart and you've got this far. But you're going to go through some key identity shifts in your style. You're going to be changing your habits, how you respond to things, how you do things, how you think about things, and how you think about people.

Everything is going to start to shift little by little. And that's going to feel a bit scary. It's going to be wobbly sometimes and you're going to have some self-doubt as part of this process. You're going to be exhausted by this process because you're going to be using your strategic brain, your prefrontal cortex a lot as you go through this. And that takes up a lot of energy. You're going to make mistakes as you go through this. You're going to fail to try new things. And that's scary and can help make you feel insecure. So the stakes are higher now. At least they are in your mind.

You're in this leadership role, and you don't want to fail and the money is great and your lifestyle is aligned with the money that you're making. But all of a sudden, you're starting to change who you are and that feels wobbly and kind of feels intense and stressed out and you're worried about doing things wrong. This is where you need help more than ever. This is where you need a trusted mentor, a trusted coach, or a safe place.

I guess the key thing is you need a safe place for you to go to be completely vulnerable. Say all the things that you don't want your boss to hear and talk about all the things that are getting in the way of you being this world-class leader in achieving this aspirational vision that you're working towards when things get hard and when the fears are overwhelming you. You need to be able to go to a safe place to get the support you need to deal with the emotions that you're feeling, get perspective, get a strategy for moving forward, and then move forward.

If you just keep ignoring the fear and the insecurity and all that kind of stuff, and powering through, which we've been taught to do, thinking, *'I can't be weak, or I need to be able to do this myself, or I can't be seen as vulnerable.'* If that's your strategy, you will burn out, or you'll figure it out, eventually. You'll figure out all this leadership thing eventually on your own, hopefully, but it's going to take you a lot longer. And you're going to have a lot more missteps along the way.

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So I highly recommend finding a great coach who has experience with what you're doing, who can help you put some priorities together, and help you become the person that you're aspiring to be. Of course, if you want to work with me, I'm here. You just need to go to melsavage.com/chat. I'm booking two months out at the moment. But that doesn't mean that we can't have a leadership strategy session and focus on where your priorities are, where you need to grow, set up a basic plan of attack, and then you can hit the ground running when I'm available to take on new clients.

In summary, have a plan of who you want to be as a leader. Don't try to figure it out day-to-day. Figure out who you want to be and then work backwards. Figure out your value equation to be in this role, and then start to live that value equation slowly. You're going to start to work on that slowly. And remember, no one's going to make it easy for you. In fact, they're going to have a hard time adjusting to who you're becoming. It's your job to help them along that transition. Stay focused on being your best self, and stay focused on not getting into that *hustly*, insecure, uncertain energy of trying to prove yourself.

Stepping into leadership is a big tipping point for many people in their careers. It's where a lot of really good people fall off the corporate ladder because they haven't figured out how to make that transition into leadership from who they were before to who they're becoming. And I don't want to see that happen to you. It doesn't have to happen to you if you start to start working on these four strategies that I have talked to you about today.

Just remember this, you are developing a whole new set of skills. Be kind to yourself. This doesn't need to be scary. This can be so exciting. It can be so much fun. You have solved so many puzzles in your life to be able to get to where you are right now in your career. Becoming a top-performing leader is just another puzzle to be solved. How hard it is to solve a puzzle when you don't have a picture of what the puzzle looks like about what it is you're trying to put together. So create the vision for what you want to be as a leader and then work every day to bring that vision to life. Okay, leaders?

That's what I have for you this week. I hope you're as excited as I am about this transition in the podcast direction. And I will talk to you next week. Bye for now.

Hey, if you want to simplify leadership while amplifying your value, then you need to get your hands on my free training. Head over to melsavage.com/simple for instant access to the training and get a taste of how I help my clients lead with ease and make more money in the process. I'll see you there.

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