

CHANGE
HAPPENS

*Leading Yourself and
Others through Change*

MACK & RIA STORY

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INTRODUCTION

Although change is a constant in life, most people resist change. They resist what change brings, especially big changes. They fight to maintain the “status quo,” even when it’s impossible. We look at every change and immediately see how it will affect us. Unless we instantly see the change is positive, and sometimes even then, we fight to keep things the same.

Why?

Because change isn’t comfortable. And, we all like to be comfortable. We work very hard to be comfortable in life. We go to school, so we can get a “good job” to buy a nice house, a nice car, and take a nice vacation. Many people spend years working in a job they don’t like, so they can retire and be comfortable. Sometimes, we are willing to trade true happiness for security because it keeps us comfortable.

Regardless of how much we like or dislike change, it’s certainly going to happen. We can’t stop the clock or hit the pause button on life – it goes on. With that certainty comes the fact we must all deal with change.

What determines our ultimate success in life is how well we learn to adapt to the changes forced upon us, how well we learn to leverage change, and our courage to change. It requires courage to embrace change. It requires us to become comfortable being uncomfortable. It requires us to realize growth, personally or professionally, won’t happen accidentally. If we aren’t intentional, growth won’t happen at all.

Mack and Ria have experienced a lot of change over the years. They both experienced personal transformation and overcame overwhelming odds to get to where they are today. Mack started out as a front-line, blue-collar factory

worker who barely graduated high school. To escape years of sexual abuse, Ria left home at 19 with nothing.

Today, they live the life of their dreams, teaching and speaking on leadership, writing books like this one to help others, and traveling the world – together. They work with organizations to unleash leadership potential by taking complex leadership principles and making them simple to understand and apply.

They have lived through a tremendous amount of change in every area of life to get to where they are today.

Some changes weren't ones they chose, but they learned to adapt. Some changes, they learned to leverage. Some changes, they learned to create. Along the way, they realized applying the principles related to change helped them create the life they wanted, rather than the life they were given.

Mack and Ria want to share these principles with you because an “Abundant Life” is not just for some people – it's for anyone with the integrity, strength, desire, and the *courage* to claim it.

Living an Abundant Life, at work or at home with your family, is something they will address in this book. They will guide you through 15 principles of change and the key concepts that will allow you to lead yourself, and others, through change. They will share one principle in each chapter with two different perspectives. Ria's perspective focuses primarily on self and is followed by Mack's perspective which focuses on self and others.

The principles in this book are powerful – *when applied*. As with any tool in your tool box, it's only helpful when you use it. Like most principles, they are much easier to say than to apply. It can be done. However, the question is: Will you put them into practice?

Is it easy? No. Is it possible? Yes. It is possible to do

CHANGE HAPPENS

more, be more, and have more in life. However, you must be unwilling to settle for being “comfortable.”

It’s a choice. Choices always come with consequences. Choosing wisely brings the consequences we want in life. Choosing poorly brings the consequences we don’t want in life. We certainly can’t control everything that happens, but we can control the choices we make or don’t make. Eleanor Roosevelt said, *“I am who I am today because of the choices I made yesterday.”*

Who you are tomorrow is determined by the choices you make today. Choose wisely.

CHAPTER ONE
Nothing Fails Like Success:
Ria's Perspective

RIA'S THOUGHTS

“You can never get complacent because a loss is always around the corner. It’s in any game that you’re in - a business, game, or whatever - you can’t get complacent.”

~ Venus Williams

It’s one of the greatest dangers success in life brings – complacency. Why? Because to become complacent means we quit striving for improvement, for growth, and for something better. Unfortunately, the risk of complacency rises with each level of success, personally and professionally.

We see it in sports teams, who come off a big win and simply don’t put the same effort into winning the next game. We see it in companies that experience huge profits and expansions, then fail just a few years later, unable to sustain the growth. We see it in people who get promoted to a great job but fail to develop their skills enough to keep the job. Success is everywhere – and many times, it leads to failure because the individual, team, or organization becomes complacent.

Success often quickly leads to failure.

Complacency happens to organizations, companies, and teams because it happens to individuals. When we reach a goal, individually or collectively, we feel entitled to the rewards, including the right to rest on our laurels. The successful person “has arrived,” and the temptation to enjoy what was earned, to rest, and to coast lurks just around the corner.

Past accomplishments should bring confidence, but all too often, they bring arrogance instead, causing pride. As you may know, “pride comes before a fall.”

Successful people may forget what it means to be

hungry, and someone who isn't hungry won't fight as hard. Someone who isn't hungry won't be willing to sacrifice. Someone who isn't hungry won't give up in order to grow up.

Danny Miller talked about this in his book, *The Icarus Paradox*, where he discussed how corporate success often leads to corporate failure.

The problem with success and why it's often the precursor to downfall is because success often doesn't teach us anything. Success today is one of the biggest threats to future success because **we don't learn as much from it**. We can learn so much more from our mistakes, or our so-called "failures," and the lessons they teach us.

I bet if you have ever run out of gas, every time you got in the car to go somewhere for the next several months, or years, the first thing you did was check the gas gauge.

I remember the first time I got a bad sunburn. My grandmother took my brother and me on a trip to the lake. It doesn't take much to make two little kids happy – some water, sand, and a few beach pails kept us occupied for a long time. Grandmother wanted us to put on sunblock because we were there for several hours. I refused. At eight years old, I was sure I knew everything already.

I came back to the hotel that afternoon with blistered shoulders. I had been outside many times already that summer without being sunburned, but I hadn't been playing out in the lake and sun for hours on end until that trip. I spent the rest of the trip, and quite a few days afterward, wishing I had listened. But, I learned to listen the next time grandmother gave me advice.

We learn more from the lessons of failure because they teach us principles. Success doesn't teach us what NOT to do, it teaches us what we did right at the time. That's a practice.

When we learn what worked once, we are learning exactly that – what worked once. It doesn't guarantee what worked once will work again, or in the future, or when some of the variables change. And, they will change.

What is required to become successful is not what is required to remain successful. In order to remain successful, there must be continued effort and improvement because change is going to happen, sooner or later, for better or worse.

The status quo in life is constant change. Children grow up, friends move away, jobs change, and people get divorced. As Benjamin Franklin famously said, "In this world, nothing can be certain, except death and taxes."

We know change is certain. Because change is coming, we know if we don't change too, success will certainly end in failure because nothing fails like success. Nothing fails like trying to stay exactly the same and not responding to the changes around you. Nothing fails like trying to remain the same in a changing world.

Complacency may be easy but it's fatal to long term success. Og Mandino said, "I will not allow yesterday's success to lull me into today's complacency, for this is the great foundation of failure."

You may have heard that a frog will not jump out of a pot of water when the temperature is raised gradually. If you dropped the frog into a pot of very hot water, the frog would immediately jump out by reflex. But when the water is cool to begin with when you place the frog in, and the change in temperature is gradual, the frog remains. And, dies.

CHAPTER ONE
Nothing Fails Like Success:
Mack's Perspective

MACK'S THOUGHTS

"Change is not required because survival is not mandatory."

~ Edward Deming

Everything around us is constantly changing and churning at an ever-increasing pace. Most of us struggle to keep up as the organizations where we work fight a constant, never ending battle to not be left behind by the competition or the next startup. But, at the same time, there are also some organizations and people that seem to always be ahead of the others. They don't appear to be struggling at all. They don't merely survive. They thrive.

How is it some organizations and people in the same industry thrive while those around them struggle to survive? It's simple to say, but it's not so simple to understand and act upon. Thriving organizations truly understand, better than most, *nothing fails like success*.

I remember the first time I heard those words spoken by Dr. Stephen R. Covey. He said, *"When a challenge in life is met by a response that is equal to it, you have success. But, when the challenge moves to a higher level, the old, once successful response no longer works - it fails; thus, nothing fails like success."*

When we can meet the challenge with an effective response, we are successful, but only for a brief moment in time because *everything* is about to change. In today's busy world, everything is constantly changing. People change, processes change, customers change, products change, demand changes, suppliers change, expectations change, and many other things will change.

When everything is constantly changing, the challenge is also changing. What was mastered successfully yesterday may no longer be relevant today. Therefore, the one thing that should also constantly change is *you* and *me*. If we're

not willing to change, we should expect to be left behind by those that are.

When we choose to constantly change to meet new challenges, we have a *chance* to continue to achieve personal and organizational success. But, when we refuse to change in response to new and greater challenges, we and the organizations where we work will struggle to survive, and some will end up taking a dive.

Once we've achieved success, most of us no longer want to change. We want to hold our ground and keep things just the way they are. After all, we've put in a lot of hard work and often suffered through many stressful days to be where we are. Once we become familiar with our job and the people we work with, we find our comfort zone. Most of us want to remain there.

However, at work, others are constantly making changes and asking you to make changes. Woodrow Wilson said it best, *"If you want to make enemies, try to change something."* Leaders in organizations make a lot of enemies because they have the responsibility of moving the organization forward. They are hired for that reason and are expected to help the organization and the team remain successful in the face of all of the change taking place inside and outside the organization.

I remember starting a new job at a new company. I was hired as an engineer and had to learn the system used to track costs, inventory, equipment, etc. There was a lot to learn. The bad part was the system was already obsolete and would be replaced with a new system within the next year.

After a month or so, I had learned what I needed to know about the new job and had mastered the system. I had it all figured out. I was once again on easy street. I could do my job effectively and efficiently. Success!

I was pleased. My new boss was pleased. He was glad he had hired me because I caught on quickly which made his job easier. In other words, I had been successful in my new role in the new organization for the new boss.

Then, everything changed for everyone. The old system was shut down and replaced with the new system. Instantly, everything was different. There was a lot of moaning and groaning throughout the organization.

I knew this would be my time to shine since I have always liked change and growth. While many others were complaining about the new system, I was focused on learning it. I knew if I could learn it quickly, I would be able to help others learn it, which would make me a more valuable team player. That's exactly what happened.

Before the change, everyone was successful. After the change, most struggled. What had gotten them there would no longer keep them there. Many people started blaming the organization and their boss for the changes. Blaming others when change happens doesn't increase your influence with the leaders. It decreases it. Your life will always be better with more influence, not less.

Alvin Toffler had this to say about change, "The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn." If you want to intentionally accelerate your climb up the corporate ladder and be recognized as a high impact team player by the high impact leaders in your organization, you must become a master at learning, unlearning, and relearning when change happens.

CHAPTER TWO
The Impact of Change:
Ria's Perspective

RIA'S THOUGHTS

“Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.”

~ John F. Kennedy

The impact of change means the end of something familiar. When change occurs, the predictable, stable situation we have become comfortable with is ending and a new situation is beginning. For most people, that could be, *and usually is*, considered a negative impact of change.

However, there is also a positive side to the impact of change. Change brings new situations, new experiences, new challenges, and usually new opportunities. That could be, *although often isn't*, considered the positive impact of change.

The interesting thing is while we cannot control every aspect of the situation, we certainly can control how the change impacts us personally. To a large degree, how the change affects us is determined by our attitude and degree of acceptance of the change. Certainly, there will be changes in life you cannot control, and you don't see any positive outcomes whatsoever. At that time, you may choose to have a positive attitude or a negative one. And, the attitude you choose will determine much of what happens in the future.

Years ago, I started a new job at a hospital. I had been working there about six weeks when the director who hired me, and to whom I directly reported, announced her resignation. To say I was shocked, worried, and concerned about what would happen to me is an understatement. I had accepted the job expecting to work for and with her, and she was leaving!

It was a great decision for her. She had two beautiful

young children at the time, and she simply realized being at home with her children was more in alignment with her values.

I had the utmost respect for her decision – and still do – but I couldn't help but realize the change was going to impact me. Significantly.

Rather than hire another director to take her position, the senior leaders decided to have my department, and me, report to a director in another department. In addition to that, they allocated my hours to two different departments, so I now reported to TWO directors.

In just six weeks, I started a new job, in a new organization, started another new job, and reported to three different bosses.

My world changed drastically. Fearing the uncertainty of the future, I considered my options. They were limited. Resign and find another job, or stay there.

Another job wasn't a realistic option – I had worked and gone to school for years to get a position at that hospital. I wasn't going to let the impact of change take my opportunity away from me.

I realized the change brought about an incredible opportunity – if I chose to look at it like that. I could complain, be negative, and resentful about the changes in my world. Or, I could be positive, helpful, and embrace the changes.

I knew many people would complain under the circumstances. Some might even resign. I also knew *how* I accepted the changes would impact my future opportunities in the organization.

I chose to embrace the changes and to be positive about it. I learned all I could from both of my new bosses, eagerly taking on additional responsibilities. In just a year, I was promoted to manager of my department, and later director.

Of course, if I had chosen to be negative about the changes, I would not have been viewed as someone with leadership potential in the organization.

Frequently, when change impacts us, we become more focused on the negatives of the situation instead of the positives. Often, we spend more time and energy worried about what we don't know and what we can't control than we do on looking for the benefits of the change. We will find what we are looking for. And often, what we are worried about doesn't come to pass anyway.

The impact of change can be enormous in life. I'm not disputing that in any way. I've gone through some major changes over the years and nearly every one of them brought some fear of the unknown.

Often, change brings some sadness with endings, but it can also bring joy with new beginnings. Sometimes, it's easier to see the opportunities, and sometimes it's not easy at all. Sometimes, we are tempted to hold on tight to what we know because it's comfortable and familiar.

Change always impacts us. The only question is: *how*? How we are affected is determined in large part by our attitude. Our attitude is determined by our thoughts about the situation. Choose to look for the bright side, and you will find it.

To those who choose to embrace change, the future is hopeful. For those who choose to be threatened by it, the future is fearful. To those who choose to look for the opportunities instead of the challenges in change, the future brings exactly what they are searching for.

CHAPTER TWO
The Impact of Change:
Mack's Perspective

MACK'S THOUGHTS

“The secret of change is to focus all your energy, not fighting the old, but on building the new.”

~ Socrates

With over 11,000 hours of leading cross-functional, kaizen teams through change – process improvement and cultural transformation – I’ve seen it all when it comes to how people deal with change. Kaizen is a Japanese word that means continuous improvement or small change for the better.

For many years, at one point in my career, I would start each week in a new place with a new team implementing new changes. My job was leading people through change. The vast majority of them didn’t want to change and didn’t want to be a part of change. The impact of change brought out the worst in some and the best in others.

When change happens, the first thing people want to know is, “How is this change going to impact me?” Until they know the answer, they’re not interested in anything else. It’s the leader’s *responsibility* to help others feel *safe* when change happens. If there’s one thing you can count on, it’s this: Change happens.

Jim Kouzes remarked, “*Uncertainty creates the necessary condition for leadership.*” When people are uncertain about the changes happening to them and around them, there’s a tremendous need for leadership. Leaders must help their team members focus on what’s new and move beyond what’s old.

When change happens, some people will simply go through the change passively allowing change to happen to them while others will grow through the change actively making change happen around them. Those growing

through change will be identified by their leaders as high impact team players who are helping them and other team members effectively deal with change.

When change happens, those going through change tend to *w/*hine. But, those growing through change tend to *s*hine. We want to help you shine because just as shiny objects get noticed, so do shiny people. When change happens, it's the perfect time to intentionally separate yourself from the crowd.

Change is a separator. Change will impact different people differently. We don't always get to decide what will change, but we do always get to decide how we will respond when things do change. In this book, we want to offer you a perspective on change that will allow you to leverage change for your benefit.

When you're able to see change as your friend instead of your enemy, you're able to make better choices.

You can choose to lead change, choose to avoid change, or choose to resist change. It's your choice. And, it's a choice that will have a major impact on your future career growth. High impact leaders in organizations notice those that lead change.

Typically, people respond to change in three ways. There are those that lead change. They are considered leaders, whether they have a leadership position/title or not, and make up about 15% of the group. Then, there are those who avoid change and will never change. They are the slackers, and make up about 15% of the group. What's left is the 70% in the middle. They will change, but they are *resistant* to change. They want to wait and see what happens.

Imagine for a moment, you're the leader of the organization, department, or team, and you're ultimately responsible for moving your team or group forward when

change happens. Which team members can you depend on to help you? Those leading change? Those avoiding change? Those resisting change?

The answer is common sense, right? You depend on those leading the change. They will help you accomplish the mission. Those formally responsible for an organization, department, or team know one thing. If they don't accomplish the mission, their boss will find someone who will because moving forward is not an option. *To survive and thrive, change is necessary.*

When change comes to your area, how does it impact you? Which group do you typically fall into? Do you lead change? Avoid change? Or, resist change? Do you *whine*, or do you *shine*? How do you allow change to impact your career? Positively or negatively? It's your choice.

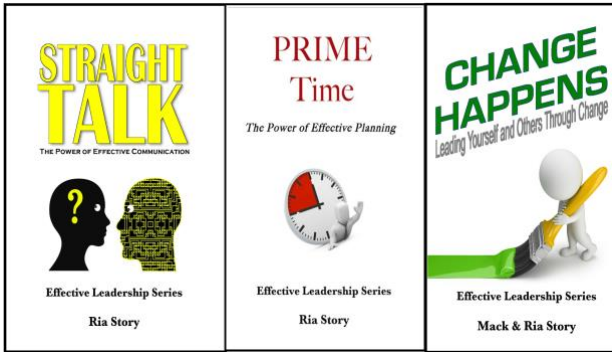
When it comes to your career, leaders are looking for those among their team who are willing to help them lead. Think about this. Will you be happier at work if you have more influence or less? More. Are you likely to be paid more if you have more influence or less? More. Are you likely to be promoted if you have more influence or less? More. More influence gives you more options.

In an organization that is constantly changing to remain competitive, who will have the most influence? Those leading change? Those avoiding change? Those resisting change? There's no doubt which group has the most influence. It's always those willing to step up and lead the way when change happens.

How will change impact you? I love Abraham Maslow's thoughts about change. He said, "*When we are faced with change, we either step forward into growth, or we step backward into safety.*"

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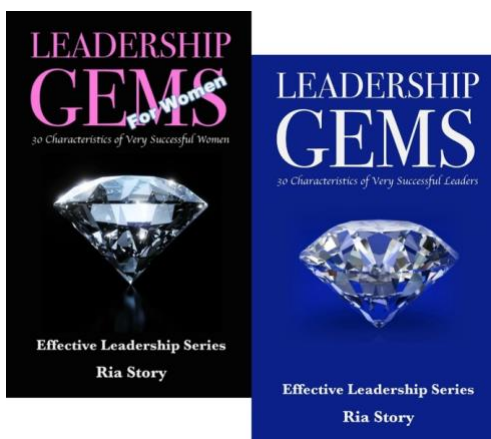
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The Effective Leadership Series books are written to develop and enhance your leadership skills, while also helping you increase your abilities in areas like communication and relationships, time management, planning and execution, leading and implementing change. Look for more books in the Effective Leadership Series:

- Straight Talk: The Power of Effective Communication
- Change Happens: Leading Yourself and Others through Change
- PRIME Time: The Power of Effective Planning
- Leadership Gems: 30 Characteristics of Very Successful Leaders
- Leadership Gems for Women: 30 Characteristics of Very Successful Women

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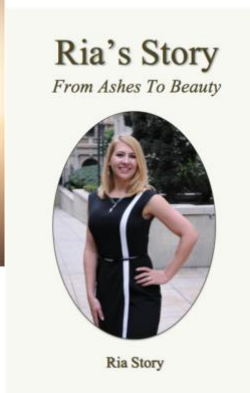
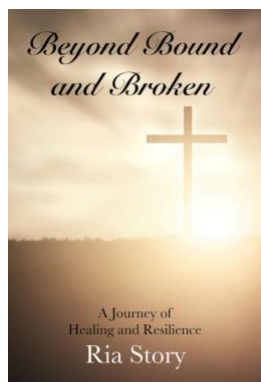


Note: Leadership Gems is the generic, non-gender specific, version of Leadership Gems for Women. The content is very similar.

One of the greatest leadership myths is that you must be a "born" leader to be successful. In truth, leadership and influence are skills that can be developed and improved. However, to be very successful, you must intentionally develop your skills so you can lead and influence others at work, in your career, at home, church, or even as a volunteer.

In Leadership Gems, Ria has packed 30 precious gems of leadership wisdom on characteristics of very successful leaders - and insight on how you can develop them yourself. These lessons will help you become a very successful leader regardless of whether you are in a formal leadership position or not.

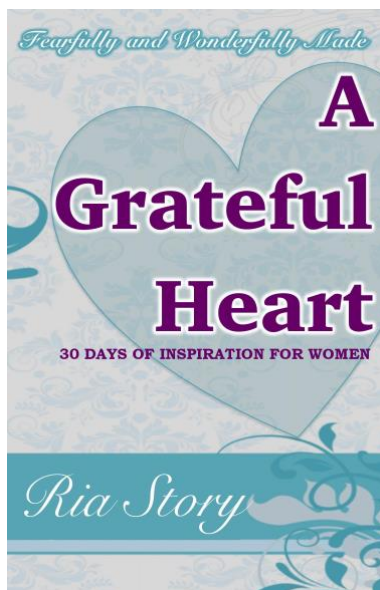
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In *Beyond Bound and Broken*, Ria shares how she overcame shame, fear, and doubt that stemmed from years of being sexually abused by her father. Forced to play the role of a wife and even shared with other men due to her father's perversions, Ria left home at 19 without a job, a car, or even a high-school diploma. This book also contains lessons on resilience and overcoming adversity that you can apply to your own life.

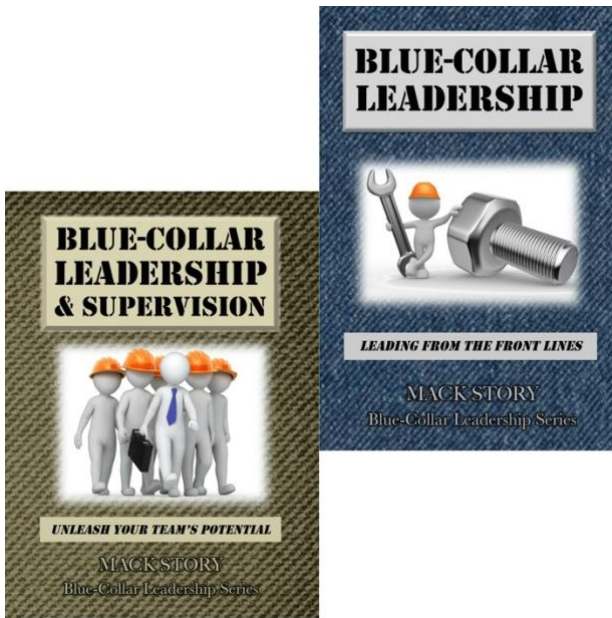
In *Ria's Story From Ashes To Beauty*, Ria tells her story of growing as a victim of sexual abuse from age 12 – 19, and leaving home to escape. She shares how she went on to thrive and learn to help others by sharing her story.

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Become inspired by this 30-day collection of daily devotions for women, where you will find practical advice on intentionally living with a grateful heart, inspirational quotes, short journaling opportunities, and scripture from God's Word on practicing gratitude.

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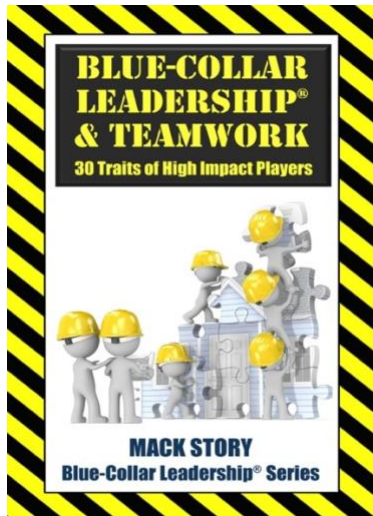


“I wish someone had given me these books 30 years ago when I started my career on the front lines. They would have changed my life then. They can change your life now.” ~ Mack Story

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Supervision and *Blue-Collar Leadership®* are written specifically for those who lead the people on the frontlines and for those on the front lines. With 30 short, easy to read 3 page chapters, these books contain powerful, yet simple to understand leadership lessons.

**Down load the first 5 chapters of each book FREE
at: BlueCollarLeadership.com**

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Are you ready to play at the next level and beyond?

In today's high stakes game of business, the players on the team are the competitive advantage for any organization. But, only if they are on the field instead of on the bench.

The competitive advantage for every individual is developing 360° of influence regardless of position, title, or rank.

Blue-Collar Leadership® & Teamwork provides a simple, yet powerful and unique, resource for individuals who want to increase their influence and make a high impact. It's also a resource and tool for leaders, teams, and organizations, who are ready to Engage the Front Line to Improve the Bottom Line.

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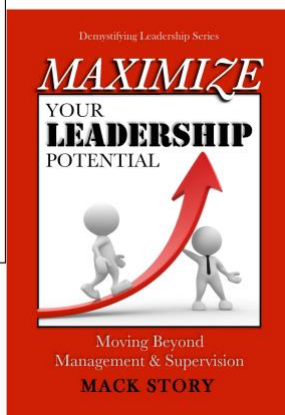
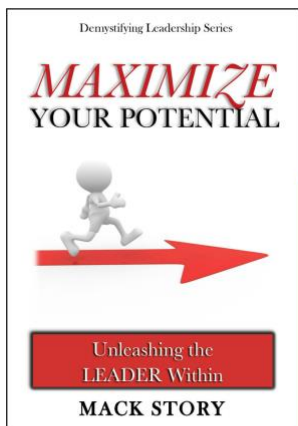


The biggest challenge in process improvement and cultural transformation isn't identifying the problems. It's execution: implementing and sustaining the solutions.

Blue-Collar Kaizen is a resource for anyone in any position who is, or will be, leading a team through process improvement and change. Learn to engage, empower, and encourage your team for long term buy-in and sustained gains.

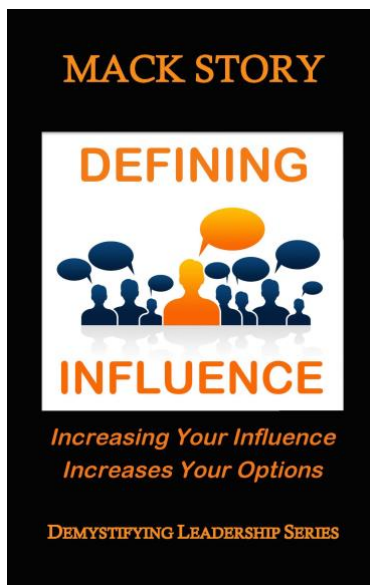
Mack Story has over 11,000 hours experience leading hundreds of leaders and thousands of their cross-functional kaizen team members through process improvement, organizational change, and cultural transformation.

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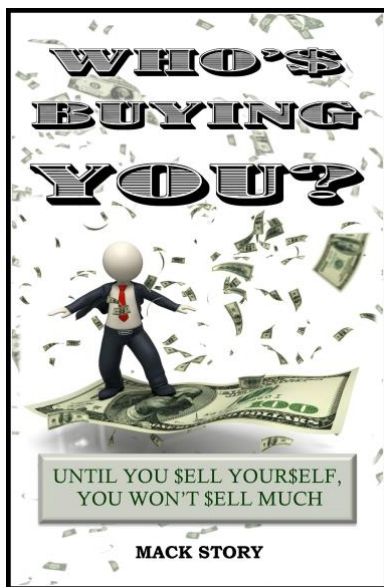
Mack's MAXIMIXE Your Potential and MAXIMIZE Your Leadership Potential books are the white-collar version of the Blue-Collar Leadership® Series. MAXIMIZE Your Potential books are written specifically for those working on the front lines and those who lead them. With 30 short, easy to read chapters, they contain powerful leadership lessons in a simple and easy to understand format.

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Everything rises and falls on influence. Nothing will impact your professional and personal life more than your ability to influence others. Are you looking for better results in your life, team, or organization? In *Defining Influence*, everyone at all levels will learn the keys to increase their influence.

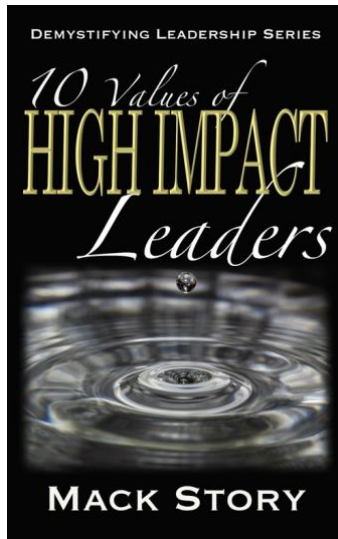
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It's no longer "Buyer Beware!" It's "Seller Beware!" Why? Today, the buyer has the advantage over the seller. Most often they are holding it in their hand. It's a smart phone. They can learn everything about your product before they meet you. The major advantage you do still have is: YOU!

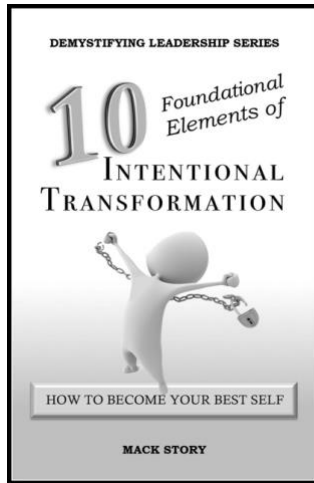
This book is filled with 30 short chapters providing unique insights that will give you the advantage, not over the buyer, but over your competition: those who are selling what you're selling. It will help you sell yourself.

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High impact leaders align their habits with key values in order to maximize their influence. High impact leaders intentionally grow and develop themselves in an effort to more effectively grow and develop others. These *10 Values* are commonly understood. However, they are not always commonly practiced. These *10 Values* will help you build trust and accelerate relationship building. Those mastering these *10 Values* will be able to lead with speed as they develop 360° of influence from wherever they are.

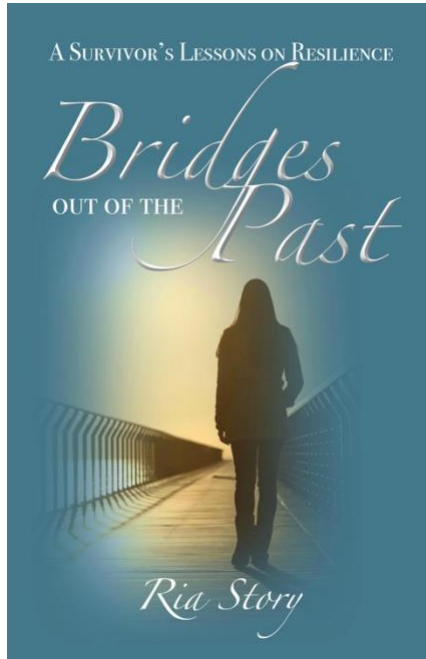
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10 Foundational Elements of Intentional Transformation serves as a source of motivation and inspiration to help you climb your way to the next level and beyond as you learn to intentionally create a better future for yourself. The pages will ENCOURAGE, ENGAGE, and EMPOWER you as you become more focused and intentional about moving from where you are to where you want to be.

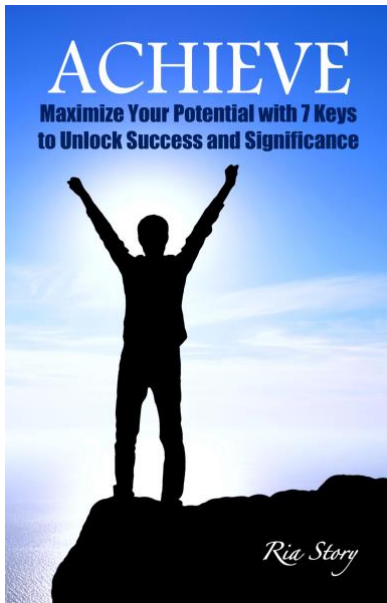
All of us are somewhere, but most of us want to be somewhere else. However, we don't always know how to get there. You will learn how to intentionally move forward as you learn to navigate the 10 foundational layers of transformation.

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It's not what happens to you in life. It's who you become because of it. We all experience pain, grief, and loss in life. Resilience is the difference between *"I didn't die,"* and *"I learned to live again."* In this captivating book on resilience, Ria walks you through her own horrific story of more than seven years of sexual abuse by her father. She then shares how she learned not only to survive, but also to thrive in spite of her past. Learn how to overcome challenges, obstacles, and adversity in your own life by building a bridge out of the past and into the future.

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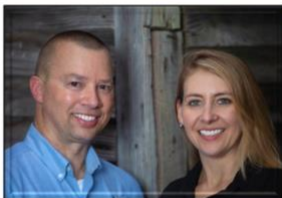


You have hopes, dreams, and goals you want to achieve. You have aspirations of leaving a legacy of significance. You have untapped potential waiting to be unleashed.

But, unfortunately, how to maximize your potential isn't something addressed in job or skills training. And sadly, how to achieve success and find significance in life isn't something taught in school, college, or by most parents.

In *ACHIEVE: Maximize Your Potential with 7 Keys to Unlock Success and Significance*, Ria shares lessons on Attitude, Choices, Humility, Integrity, Energy, Vision, and Excellence. Each “key” can help you become more influential, more successful and maximize your potential in life.

Top Story Leadership



Top Story Leadership simplifies foundational leadership principles into everyday language and easy to apply and understand concepts, so organizations and individuals can turn potential into reality. Mack and Ria Story are Certified Speakers and Trainers. They are published authors with more than 20 books available on leadership development, personal growth, and inspirational topics.

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~ Sam McLamb, VP & COO, CMP

"We would highly recommend Mack and Ria as speakers...their presentation was inspirational, thought-provoking, and filled with humor. They taught us some foundational leadership principles."

~ Stephen, President-elect, WCR

"Mack and Ria understand people! The dynamic team made such an impact on our front line supervision that they were begging for more training! We highly recommend Mack and Ria!"

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