



Diligent
Community



The Leading with Purpose Workbook

Reconnect with
Your Why



Why You're Here

Leading with purpose: It's a challenge to do effectively during the best of times, and for those representing and working in local government and education, these are far from the best of times. The COVID pandemic and political and cultural conflicts have created new demands on systems and processes that already were under a microscope, relief has been intermittent, and burnout among participants is real.

This likely sounds familiar to you. You may be teetering into the burnout phase, if not already toppled. You're looking for a way to reorient yourself to contribute and succeed in our new reality.

“The two most important days in a person's life are the day they were born and the day they find out why.”

– Mark Twain

Leading with Purpose is About Being Proactive Instead of Reactive.

And your community is looking to you. When faced with unsettling or novel circumstances, people look toward those who lead with purpose, who clearly align their values with their words and actions. Leading with purpose has had buzz in the business world for over a decade. You may have already done some work in articulating your vision, you may need practical steps to realign your work and your purpose, or you may be new to these efforts.

Wherever you are in the journey, you — your purpose, your vision, your actions — are needed. Use this *Leading With Purpose Workbook* to connect or reconnect with your ideals and effect the transformation you want to see in your community.

? **What is the biggest challenge you face? Why did you seek out this workbook?**

What is Leading with Purpose?

Much about working in local government focuses on process and consistency — getting things done. You're studying graduation rates or new businesses opening in your community, watching budget numbers or striving to fill a key executive position before the new year starts. After all, you have populations of people (e.g. citizens, students, community members) to answer to.

But with the challenges faced today, simply getting things done isn't enough. You need to look beyond day-to-day actions to the bigger goals you dream of achieving.

Why Lead with Purpose

When you lead with purpose, it's easier not only to achieve the goals you set for yourself and your community, but to bring others into your circle, to exponentially increase the power of your efforts and achieve more satisfying results. But, before you get there, the first step is to understand yourself.

A 2017 study from Ernst & Young found that a whopping **96% of leaders** considered purpose to be a key element in their job satisfaction.

“Leading with purpose is where you are intentionally making decisions that are going to have a positive impact on your organization, organizational culture, and on the community.”

– Kimberly Richardson, Deputy City Manager, Evanston, Illinois

The Pillars of Purpose-Driven Leadership

You may have gotten into your career because you have a passion: for civic duty, for the power of education, for service. The same qualities that guided you to your passion can leave you vulnerable when factors out of your control threaten your work. But when you lift your vision beyond the day-to-day work and look to fulfill a bigger purpose — when you identify your “why” and strive to answer it — you have the basis for enacting real change.

Determine Your “Why”

Determining your “why” involves asking hard questions about your values, your priorities and who you are as a unique individual. Complete as many of these exercises as you need until you are confident you can articulate your “why.”

- Ask a few trusted friends or colleagues to name three characteristics they’d use to describe you.

- Look to your CV or resume for themes, specifically in the accomplishments that gave you the greatest satisfaction. Take the text from your CV and run it through a word-cloud generator such as wordclouds.com for insights.

- Ask yourself these questions:
 - ❑ When you were a child, who did you most want to emulate when you grew up? What about them inspired you?
 - ❑ Have you ever “captured lightning in a bottle”? What gave you that feeling?
 - ❑ What are the things you would do even if you didn’t get paid for them?
 - ❑ What do other people say you’re really good at, or that you should do professionally, or do more of?
 - ❑ What is one key thing you want to experience or accomplish before you die?
 - ❑ If you had all the money in the world, how would you spend your time?
 - ❑ What would your perfect day look like? Describe every detail.
 - ❑ What activities set your soul on fire?
 - ❑ What is a story from your past — even your childhood — that illuminates who you are.

What is My “Why”?

“Speaking out for every single child in my district to get the best start for a successful and happy life is my why.”

– Diana Freeman, President of the Leadership TASB Executive Board; and Manager of Thought Leadership,
Diligent Community

Reconnect with Your “Why”

Depending on your career or life phase, you may already have engaged in identifying your purpose. Whether you are new to the experience or have already put in the work, revisiting your “why” and connecting it to a personal mission statement is an enlightening exercise.

Write a Personal Mission Statement

Here’s the fun part. Because your personal mission statement is just for you, it can have meaning unique to who you are. (If you’ve already crafted a mission statement, this is an opportunity to revisit it with fresh eyes.) A few samples from Indeed.com include:

- “To inspire children to be more than they thought they could be.”
- “To inspire change through teaching.”
- “To inspire and encourage everyone I interact with on a daily basis.”

There is also room for creativity, to find the turn of phrase that truly captures you. A Harvard Business Review article about purpose-driven leadership includes a few more colorful examples of personal mission statements, including that of Heineken CEO and president Dolf van den Brink: [“To be the wuxia master who saves the kingdom.”](#)

What is my personal mission statement?

The Roadmap: Getting There from Here

The power of your personal mission statement is in how it can reorient you when your situation, goals or surroundings change — when you're facing a new challenge.

Let's look at an example. Community engagement is a perennial struggle for local governments and schools. Whether motivating voters, making business connections, or inspiring parent volunteers, many efforts can feel scattershot and ultimately ineffective. If you've identified your personal mission statement as, for example, "[Open windows to greater understanding for the betterment of humanity](#)," you might be guided to:

1. Craft and share regular communications with local online communities.
 2. Seek out training in modern communications tools and strategies.
 3. Look for staff or partners who have professional communications experience
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"My advice for leaders in trying to become more purpose-driven is to listen, engage with your community, begin to think deliberately about areas that represent common vision and to begin to convene people around what they agree on."

— Bradford Saron, Superintendent, Sun Prairie, South Dakota

Understand and Address Your Unique Challenges

Understanding the circumstances you uniquely face is critical to identifying the next steps in achieving your goals. The personal SWOT analysis or matrix is a proven, insightful tool to capture your Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. By inventorying these elements, you can more easily determine how to employ your strengths and opportunities to overcome the weaknesses and threats that hinder success.

MY STRENGTHS

MY WEAKNESSES

- What are my strengths?
- What do others see as my strengths?
- What values do I prioritize and exhibit?

- What are my weaknesses?
- What are my bad habits?
- What personality traits are holding me back?

- What new technology can help you?
- What trends do you see in your industry and how can you take advantage of them?
- Is there a need at your organization that no one is filling?

- What obstacles are you facing?
- Could any of your weaknesses lead to threats?
- Does changing technology threaten your position?

MY OPPORTUNITIES

MY THREATS

“I think one of the most important things for a leader to do right now is to locate, the strategies that allow others around you to unlock their potential. And to collaborate in order to reach goals that no one individually would be able to achieve if not for the collaboration.”

– Bradford Saron, Superintendent, Sun Prairie, South Dakota

? Considering the strengths and opportunities you identified above, what are three ways your personal mission statement can guide you to address the challenges you’ve identified earlier in this workbook?

Finding Tools for Effective Leadership

As purpose-driven leadership has become more ingrained in organizations and workplaces, tools have become available to support the individual and entity as they face challenges with efficiency, transparency and accountability.

“I bring 15 years of experience helping public education organizations, both as a former board secretary and assistant to a superintendent of schools. As a training specialist, I enjoy assisting customers in enabling their governance management processes to ensure time-saving techniques, organization and transparency.”

– Diana Roadcap, Online Training Specialist



Diligent Community can help today's leaders with these challenges:

- **Digital resilience.** Diligent Community enables organizations to be technologically savvy, nimble and, above all, secure.
- **Team effectiveness.** By simplifying tasks and creating a single source of truth for information, projects and other business, Diligent Community saves time and frustration for staff, the community and more.
- **Transparency.** Increased scrutiny on local government and schools can create roadblocks to achievement. With the publishing and repository features of Diligent Community, you can keep your focus on the work while keeping your audiences informed.

What first step will you take to address the challenge you noted in the beginning of this workbook?

As our local governments and education systems face new challenges, our communities need purpose-driven leaders more than ever. By identifying and living your “why” — and aligning it with the goals you have for your life and contributions, you can guide others in the work that shapes the next phase of civic and education service.

Good luck, and thank you for letting Diligent be a part of your journey.

About Diligent Community

Diligent Community is the next generation of the industry leading solutions, iCompass & BoardDocs, trusted tools used by over 4,000 public governing bodies. The intuitive, easy-to-use paperless meeting software supports public leaders and board members to streamline the way they build agendas, distribute materials to the board, and communicate with constituents and before, during, and after public meetings — whether they are in person or virtual.

To learn more about Diligent Community, contact us today:

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