



**EMyth**

LEADERSHIP PROCESS

# Values, Passion and Purpose Guide

*Putting your life first*



LEADERSHIP

# Your Values, Passion and Purpose

## Definition

This process is designed to help you discover—or rediscover—the things that matter to you most. We categorize those things into your values, your passions and your purpose. They are the answer to the question: “Why do I do what I do?” It’s the most personal question and an ongoing conversation you have with yourself. It’s the foundation for inhabiting your role as leader, no matter what business you’re in or how many people you work with.



## Why Do You Need to Understand Your Values, Passion and Purpose?

Understanding your values, passion and purpose gives you the ability to live your life intentionally — rather than randomly — by making conscious choices that are consistent with what is most important to you. It helps you set your life’s real priorities and puts your business in its proper perspective. It enables you to understand where the real purpose of your life lies, and how better to serve that purpose.

## The Values, Passion and Purpose Discovery Process

List what you don’t want in your life



List what you do want in your life



Set priorities and bust barriers



Write your Values, Passion and Purpose



Write your Purpose Statement



## Key Points

The Purpose Statement is intensely personal. It’s all about you. There is no such thing as a right or wrong, a good or bad Purpose Statement. There is only what is true for you.

The keys to understanding your purpose are to explore what you do not want your life to be like, to decide what you do want your life to be like, and to discover the self-imposed limitations that get in the way.

Money, status, power, possessions, and winning are not the essence of a Purpose Statement. It’s deeper than that.

The best indicator that you have discovered your true Purpose is your emotions. If you don’t feel energy, enthusiasm, commitment, and a sense of “Yes! That’s me!” you haven’t found it.

The Values, Passion and Purpose discovery process is not New Age pseudo-psychology. It’s a pragmatic and real world way to put your life in perspective. It anchors your leadership and your decision-making with a solid understanding of what is and is not important.

## Discovering Your Purpose Your Personal "Why?"

Imagine you could be all of who you are when you're at work. How would that feel to you? Have you ever considered what's stopping you from bringing all of you to your business? If you're in a leadership position, understanding what drives you is the first, most important factor in the success of your business. It doesn't matter what drives you—it could be your love of design or food or software, your thrill at seeing ideas come to life, your passion for helping people get connected—only that you become aware of it. Everything about your business starts here.

Getting to know yourself at this level will change the way you lead and manage, and how you think about your brand, all the way down to the smallest interactions between your staff and your customers. Who you are, and how you are at work, forms the shape and texture of your business. More than anything else, "you" define your business.

## Becoming an Open Leader

From the beginning and throughout the EMyth process, the invitation is to take a step back and genuinely consider who you are and where you are today. Maybe you don't feel like a leader inside at all and you're afraid to let anyone know how often you feel you don't know what you're doing. Maybe you're confident in certain areas but see how your leadership style is rubbing the right people the wrong way (it's okay to rub the wrong people the wrong way).

Here's the key thing: your ability as a leader isn't measured by how well you've got it all figured out. It's measured by how open and transparent you are about your

The good news and the bad news is that you are leading whether you like it or not. Your employees and customers are taking their cues from you whether they're conscious of it or not. If you want a thriving business inside a truly meaningful life, self-awareness is not optional.

Whether that's an inspiring or a sobering thought, it's a unique opportunity. A gift of business leadership. It means that, whether you're soft-spoken or a force of nature, whether you're a solo practitioner or the CEO of a Fortune 100 company, you have a platform to bring your passion out in the world through your business. And with that opportunity comes responsibility.

strengths and your weaknesses. It takes a lot of courage to dive into this territory. There are all sorts of reasons to put it off. It might be hard to see up front how it's going to solve the problems in your inbox today. But in our experience, this kind of self-inquiry will start to show up in your day-to-day results pretty quickly. And there's no particular place that you have to get to in yourself. You just have to be in process with the inquiry, and engaged with curiosity over time.

## Who You Are Has No Competition

If you look at your competition, you'll see that very few business people have this kind of core strength. That's not a reason to go looking for it in yourself—you won't get an honest result if that's your motive—but it's worth noting that you are instantly separating yourself from the competition by uncovering what really drives you and expressing it in every corner of your business. Believe it or not, the number one reason why people buy from you isn't about price, it isn't about features, it's not even about reviews in social media. It comes down to one simple question: Does it feel good to put their name next to yours?

People do business with people ... YOU!

## Leading By What Matters

This lesson is designed to help you discover—or rediscover—the things that matter to you most. We categorize those things into your values, your passions and your purpose. They are the answer to the question:

"Why do I do what I do?" It's the most personal question and an ongoing conversation you have with yourself. It's the foundation for inhabiting your role as leader, no matter what business you're in or how many people you work with.

When you know what drives you from this deeper place, everything you do—planning a new service, designing a new product, setting your pricing, recruiting new employees, creating a customer service strategy—feels different. Over time, you'll have a deep experience of what we mean when we say, "The business is inside of you." You'll start to find that your intentions and actions follow easily.

Can you see why figuring out who you are, what you stand for, and how to tell your market about "you" is critical? Your prospective customers are hungry to feel your passion, your care for what you do, so they can feel good about giving you their money. Your prospective customers can feel whether your business operates with integrity from the inside out. It's the most genuine kind of relationship between you and your customers and all the people who will be exposed to your business for the very first time. You do it for you, and then watch the magic happen.

You won't have to spend so much time analyzing and deciding what to do. You'll rely on how it feels and use your intuition more. You'll find answers start coming to you naturally, instead of exhausting yourself chasing them.

When the business is inside of you, you have an anchor in tough moments. And when you look back on them, you'll think: "I always wondered whether I could really do this, now I know I can. It was in me all along."

As you'll discover throughout the process, we have some counterintuitive approaches to business problems. Of course, that's one reason you came to EMyth. The only place to start the process that makes any sense to us is with the big questions: "Who are you?" "Why do you do what you do?" "What really matters to you in your life?" "What do you want to share with the world?"

Your VPP and you Company Vision becomes a compass when making strategic decisions.

## What Drives You?

Read this paragraph carefully

Your values fueled by your passion are the essential ingredients of your first, critical document, your Purpose Statement. This written statement—no more than a paragraph, and in most cases the shorter the better—describes what you value more than anything in life. It sums up the way you see life and your relationship to it. It's a deeply personal statement that you're likely to share with the people who know you the best and care about you the most. Whether you share it or not, when you're finished, you should be able to read it out loud to yourself and say, "Yes, that's me. I don't really know what to do with it yet, but that's who I'd be if I brought all of who I am, in my heart of hearts, to my business." If it doesn't feel at least a little uncomfortable, a little exposed, if it doesn't make you feel a little timid to say it out loud, you're not there yet. You can't play it safe on this one.

Our coaches and clients have approached it from different angles over the years, but our experience has shown us that it will serve you best as a kind of "personal mission statement," something that you can use as a guidepost to see whether your personal values are in alignment with the values of your company. If they aren't, that's a problem. It's an indication that your business isn't inside of

you; you're inside of your business and it's running you, depleting you. This is a real problem for which there is a real solution. The first step is becoming aware of it. Your Purpose Statement keeps what matters most to you in your life and your business in your awareness.

In the next section of this lesson, we'll give you tools to help you get to your Purpose Statement, but they're secondary to your finding what feels right for you in capturing it. This inquiry is about you and for you. Maybe you just want to sit down and try writing it without any more instruction. That's great. Maybe it's a bit too overwhelming and you'd like some more guidance before diving in. That's great too. It's so important, and this might sound a little strange at first, for you to keep the EMyth perspective inside of you, not the other way around. As valuable as it can be, don't try to fit yourself or your business into our model. Your life and your personal goals are inside of you. And your business is inside of your life. What drives you to make it all happen is too. Our job is simply to help you find what drives you and bring it out, and to hold your business for you in the process so that you can work on it.

## You'll Know It When You Feel It

You'll know you've found the values, passions and purpose that are most "you" when two things start to happen naturally. First, you'll notice that you're feeling more alive, that you have a stronger and more intimate connection between who you are and where you're going. Second, you'll notice all the things in your business that aren't in alignment with your deeper, and now more explicit, sense of what really matters to you. That won't feel good, and it's an inevitable and necessary part of the process. It will

show you every place you've been allowing your business to be "bigger" than you, which you never intended but is just how it is today. That's great data to collect. As you continue into Part Two of this lesson, you'll find tools to help you integrate your values into your business. It's the start of a courageous journey, what we call a hero's journey.

## More You, Not Less

Many people who start the process assume that their "real values" aren't appropriate at work, that they have to shrink into another version of themselves in business to maintain control or a certain image, in order to be taken seriously by other business people. What if those assumptions, and the false personas they create, are the reason why building a business often feels so hard? What if your real values are the secret sauce to your greatest success? In our experience, they are. What if the key to creating a thriving business inside a truly meaningful life is about bringing more of who you are to what you do, not less? In our experience, it is.

These questions suggest that the popular focus on achieving work/life balance misses the point. When your business is inside of you, when the relationship between your life and your business is truly seamless, there is no balance to achieve.

## Let It Come From You

When you know what drives you, when you write it down and start to run your business or approach your work from that place inside of you, you open up a whole new way of leading your company. The distance between where you are today and where you really want to be starts closing, because your business success starts happening inside of your meaningful life.

It stops being work when you find your true calling. And almost nobody you know is living this way. It's rare in this world, but as a leader you have the opportunity to do just that and to show others what's possible.

The critical element in the EMyth approach is this: when you reach the "destination" you're aiming for here, you will feel full, not hungry or drained. Because it won't be about the amount of money you have (though it will be more than enough), it won't be about how many employees you have (because you will have exactly the right number), and it won't be about how big your market share is (because you will be attracting just the right customers, the ones who feel good putting their name next to yours).

Your business and your work can become ideal vehicles for expressing your passion in the world. You can make a great living, create a culture where others are doing the same, and serve your customers' needs without any conflict anywhere in the system. That doesn't mean it's easy, it just means it's going in the right direction. You are in the center of yourself, and your business is serving your life instead of your life being consumed by your business.

## Strategies and Tips for Getting Started

### Don't Rush

It's natural to feel blocked in moments trying to write something so "big." When that happens, take a break, go for a walk, talk about it with your spouse, your partner or a good friend. Be curious and be patient. Just wait for it to start flowing. It will.

### It's About You

The things you want to define your life (values, passion and purpose) must be about you first. There's plenty of time to work on how what matters to you most impacts your family, your employees, your customers and your prospective customers. Even if what matters to you is serving others, remember that you are the one choosing to serve them because it feels good to you. Even if others' expectations of you are the loudest voices you hear in your head, take special care to listen for the solitary whispers that are just about you. The more you center your work in you, the more powerful this tool will be in helping you place your business inside a life of meaning. Dream. Describe the you you've always wanted to be. Don't play it safe; give yourself permission to be bold. Distrust your inner critic.

### Ask For Help

If you get stuck, ask your spouse, your partner or a friend what they think makes you tick. Show them that you really want to know. You might be surprised at just how visible you are to them and how passionate, creative and inspiring they think you are.

### Set Aside Real Time

Don't try and do this in between emails. Take an evening or weekend afternoon. Let calls go to voicemail. Don't worry about grammar or being a good writer. The only thing that matters is that you start to bring your insides out. Carving out some dedicated time is a way to really care about your business and, more importantly, yourself. You will need it!

### Let It Be A Process

More than any other EMyth process, it's not about getting it done or achieving something, though it will be hugely rewarding when you can feel "I've got it." Take the time to wait for the deeper answers, the things you hadn't thought of in a while, the surprises that come when you're not expecting them. Ask a coach or peers for feedback in the platform. Ask someone you don't know that will to read a draft and give you feedback. Send a draft to your coach if you have one.

### You Already Have It In You

Be honest with yourself. Dare to start writing a new story for your business and your life. Revise it as many times as you need to. Tear it up and start over if you feel like you haven't quite captured it yet. It's already in you, and it's hard to let it out sometimes with all the ways we've learned to "get it done" day to day.

### It's In Your Heart, Not Your Head

As best you can, feel your way through it. One of the things that's hardest for us to remember, especially in business, is that meaningfulness is emotive. It's something we feel, not a mental state or checked-off boxes. So don't focus on numbers or achievements here. There's plenty of time for that later. Instead, keep coming back to how you want your life to feel on the inside. For those who are used to pushing and using your will to get through the day, this might be the hardest thing of all. It might feel like exercising a new muscle, or one you haven't stretched in a while.

When you've completed this process, you'll have a solid foundation for all your work going forward. It's you, at your core. It should inspire and motivate you when you read it. If you read it to someone who loves you, they might get tears in their eyes.

## Discovering Your Values, Passion And Purpose

The discovery process contains seven steps. It is important to work sequentially through each one because they help you examine your values, passion and, ultimately, create your Purpose Statement. Read through each step of the process and then use worksheets to record your thoughts and ideas.

### 1

#### What You Don't Want

What don't you want? What isn't you? What has your life told you is not a good fit? Not because it's too hard or too out of reach, but because it doesn't feel satisfying. Let's get those out of the way first. Generating that list can actually help illuminate what you do want.

For some people, what goes on this first list is the background voice they take through their day, the things that disturb them, repeatedly. When you write down your "don't wants," you stop pretending at some level that these feelings and thoughts—these constant hums—don't exist. Some of them you will change as you reshape the world you're living in according to your Purpose Statement. Some of them may never change. You will just change your relationship to them. You will learn how to live with them by noticing what triggers you throughout the day and starting to get your reactions inside of you, instead of being thrown by them.

We don't do visualizations, affirmations or "positive thinking" at EMyth. Walking on hot coals isn't going to change your life. Being honest with yourself is.

As you begin, don't think too much about each item that comes into your awareness. Just start writing and when you're done, go back and look it over. On this

second time through, stop and sit with each item for a bit. Make some notes if new ideas come, but most importantly, highlight what moves you emotively, what stirs up painful or uncomfortable feelings. Then, ask yourself "Why?" The answer to "Why don't I want this in my life?" is a very effective way of getting to know yourself at a deeper level.

Most business leaders are conditioned to hide what they don't want, to "pretend" it isn't there and just go after what they want. It's part of why they've been successful so far. But asking "Why?" in this new way can bring you to a place that's actually more "you," a place from which you'll make decisions that are better for you personally, and for the business as a whole.

Sometimes there's a good reason for why you don't want what you don't want. Other times, you'll find out that your relationship to what you don't want—why you don't want it—is the problem, and you'll be working on a different kind of change. The point is to start making a habit of asking yourself "Why?" so it becomes second nature to you as a leader. You'll be amazed at what you discover about yourself and how it brings you to decisions that just feel more right.



## 2

### What You Do Want

This is the list of what you want, what you feel most passionate about. It's not meant to include your financial or other "hard" goals, those will show up on your Personal Goals in Step 7. It's great to want success in those ways, but it's secondary to having meaning in your life. As you'll hear us say again and again, creating a business inside a meaningful life will naturally serve your financial objectives.

So, what are your best moments? What's happening around you when you feel most "in you?" What are the things you do in your life that give you a feeling of self-respect, the deepest sense of fulfillment? What about one or more peak experiences you've had that you'll never forget and wish your whole life were more like? If your life stood for one thing, what would it be? What is it about life, about people that moves you? What have you not done yet that you hope to?

## 3

### What's Your Priorities and What's In Your Way

Now you have to make some choices. This next step is about prioritizing and working through each item. For each one, pause and ask yourself, "Why is this one really important?" In other words, why are you so passionate about having that present in your life? For example, if you said, "I want to bring joy to the lives of my custom-

ers," go one step further and ask why? What is it specifically about bringing joy to your customers? How does it make you feel about you? How is it related to or different from the other "wants" you identified?

## 4

### What Are My Core Values?

Now we're going to dive deeper. Who are you at your core?

Maybe this is clear to you already, but we're all a product of our conditioning to one degree or another. It's unavoidable. As children we're deeply influenced by the value systems of our parents, the culture we grew up in, the schools we attended, and of course, our religious and spiritual paradigms. As you got older, it's likely that you realized that some aspects of the value system that was given to you supported you in being who you wanted to be, and others held you back. And you've been sifting through that ever since on some level. The result is a unique set of values, principles or standards that define what is important to you in life.

What's tricky, and what people often discover in therapy, coaching or other personal development work, is that some of the values they hold are hidden, or unconscious, and affecting their choices in ways they don't intend or want. For business leaders, it can be a huge wake-up call to discover they're having an impact on their business in counterproductive ways.

Your ability to lead others has a lot to do with your value system, and how it actually translates into your impact on the business. Whatever you believe your core values are, we can virtually guarantee that there's a substantial gap between how you want your business to operate and how it actually is operating day to day. We've coached tens of thousands of business owners over 35 years, and this is just how it is.

The opportunity, the gift you're giving yourself by doing this work, is to change that.

If one of your core values is that it's healthy to question authority, your employees will pick up on that and they'll feel room to innovate and take risks. If one of your values is that authority shouldn't be questioned, they'll feel that too. And, you'll get robotic compliance and a toxic culture between employees when you're not around.

If you value curiosity, or generosity, or going the extra mile, or honesty that requires risk—really value it, not just talk about valuing it—your business will feel a certain way

and your people will pick up the non-verbal cues about how you want them to "be." This is where the rubber of your values meets the road of your operations.

Let's say you value curiosity and nobody in your business ever asks you a tough question. Rest assured you don't actually value curiosity. Let's say, you value honesty but your salespeople will do anything to close a sale, there's a disconnect. You get the idea. The real work is to figure out why or how you don't actually value what you say you value, and then do something about it.

Again, this is not about self-blame. And, it's not about being perfect either. It's about knowing yourself and your values well enough to bring more of what positively influences the business to your internal operations and out to your market, and less of what produces outcomes that you never intended or wanted.

We believe in this wisdom: you can't change anything about yourself that you don't first accept.

To help you better understand how the process works, we want to introduce you to David Moss, a 63-year-old

#### Read this:

owner of a successful auto repair business in Ohio. David's longing was to travel into space. It was his heartfelt, deep-seated desire, but felt impossible to achieve. He didn't have it on his "wants" list, but it came up in conversation with his coach, and it turned into an important clue to finding his Purpose Statement.

David discovered that being in outer space and looking back at the Earth was a metaphor, a way into the things about life that were important to him. Naming this "unrealistic" wish helped him get clear about his own passion and values. In talking about what got him excited about outer space, he realized that, at the core, it was about being a part of a conversation of big ideas, ideas that touched a lot of people. And, this tied back to a couple of the core values he had written down: adventure and curiosity.

In David's case, what he found over time was that he got the same feeling of gratification and fulfillment by immersing himself in charitable work. He put himself in some highly visible positions in the process which helped him push his edges. This new understanding about himself started to show up in his business too. He discovered a similar feeling of fulfillment by serving and satisfying his customers.

As you begin to reflect on your own core values, don't ignore any deeply-held desires simply because they seem impossible, undeserved, embarrassing, unpopular, inappropriate, or beyond your reach. Those are the important ones! We can't stress this enough. They hold a vast amount of often previously hidden information you can tap into to deepen your awareness of yourself. And this awareness is the source of your greatest success.

## 5

### Writing Your Eulogy

One way to get at the heart of your values is to imagine, to let yourself think and feel about the time of your passing. The day when your loved ones speak about who you were and what truly mattered to you. What would they say about you? Thinking about this can be difficult. It might bring up fear or sadness. And, we're encouraging you to do this for a very specific reason: If your business is truly inside of your life, then thinking about what your life was about will help you make some connections into the deeper drivers of your business values, passions and purpose.

It is obviously impossible to change anything that has happened in your life so far. But, from today forward it's a different story. How do you want to be remembered? What if that day were to come tomorrow? What is it that your loved ones wouldn't be able to say about you because you haven't yet manifested or expressed it in your life? What did you not get to be, do or say?

## 6

### Creating Your Purpose Statement

If you've arrived at this point in the discovery process, you've done some deep, reflective work. You've explored and answered a range of Discovery Questions to facilitate your self-inquiry. You've identified your most compelling "don't wants" and your most passionate "wants." You've defined and recommitted to a set of Core Values. And you've written your eulogy or personal

#### The Path To Your Life's Success

Writing down what you want someone to say about you after you're gone, and looking honestly at where you are now in relationship to it, should help you start making changes to live more in alignment with the person you truly want to be.

If you really put your heart into this exercise, it will give you a better understanding of the hero's journey you're on that is deepening through your EMyth work. Your eulogy is just like the vision you'll create for your business. The clearer the end goal, the easier it is to chart the course that will take you there. The absence of vision is one of the greatest entrepreneurial roadblocks. By writing your eulogy and defining the life you want to be remembered for, you'll have a new compass as you move through every challenge.

letter. You're ready now to draft your Purpose Statement, how you want to show up in your life and your business, and the fundamental feeling you want to have in the process.

# 7

## Your Personal Goals

Your final step in this initial exploration of what really matters to you is the setting of your Personal Goals. All of the steps in this process so far have laid the foundation for creating a thriving business inside a meaningful life. When your business truly serves your life, the distinctions between the two, inside your experience, disappear. You're the same "you," whether you're holding a strategy meeting in the office, helping one of your kids with her homework, or on a vacation in Hawaii.

Personal Goals are the specific things you want to accomplish in your life within a defined period of time. They are a way to track the extent to which your business is supporting the life you want. For example, how much vacation time would you like to spend with your family? When will you buy a home, or a vacation home?

Is there a professional accreditation you'd like to get? What kind of time will you spend with your spouse or partner, your kids, by yourself? Doing what? When your business is inside your life, there is room for the people, activities and interests that make your life satisfying. And this is the starting place. This is where you get clear about what you want, write it down, and then make it happen.

Personal Goals are tangible and measurable. They can be material or financial or about the quality of your life, like volunteering in your son's classroom every month. Your Personal Goals should be in alignment with your values, passions and purpose. If they aren't, you will certainly want to ask "why?"