



IMPACT PLAN

Your Guide to Establishing a Growth Mindset, Influencing Others, and Realizing Your Goals



INTRODUCTION

Successful people often say that their drive to keep going, despite the desire to quit, drove them to successful heights in their businesses or careers. That sentiment perfectly sums up the “I can” attitude.

In other words, even though the odds may be against you, keeping a positive mindset can give you the mental push and energy to stick to your plan and build your life the way you intended. If you develop a negative “I can’t” attitude, it can pervade nearly every situation you’re in. It can affect your business plans, career track, family, or social situations.

If you keep telling yourself you can’t do things, you’ll eventually believe in yourself and lose the desire to try.

Have you ever wanted to attend an event or party but chose not to because you didn’t know anyone? Was there ever an incredible opportunity to explore your passion, but you refused out of fear? Have you ever felt handcuffed to a current situation out of fear that exploring a new situation, perhaps an even better one was out of reach?

In each case, I want you to face your fears, attack that defeatist attitude, and say “I can” – especially if there are distinct benefits that could help your professional or personal life.

Instead of getting discouraged by fear, setbacks, or failure, think about your abilities and strengths, then push ahead!

UNDERSTANDING WHAT “I CAN’T” REALLY MEANS

When someone says, *“I can’t,”* they’re saying, *“I’m afraid to fail so that I won’t try.”* They may also think, *“I don’t want to face the emotions associated with moving forward, so I’ll remain where I am.”*

If there’s a breath in your body and potential success that awaits you, why *wouldn’t* you want to try? Why wouldn’t you want to take that risk if there’s a way to improve your life, career, or business?

The answer is precisely that... trying new things involves a certain amount of risk, and not all of us are risk-takers. ***Most new situations don’t involve a life-threatening risk, but not knowing the outcome can paralyze people with fear.***

Unfortunately, fear prevents you from trying anything new, and it’s often difficult to break this catch-22 cycle.

“I can’t” are the words that come out of someone’s mouth when they’re crowded by doubters, plagued by low self-esteem, and stopped believing in their goals and aspirations.

A robust support system comprised of people who believe in your goals can help to change your mindset and reignite your passion. If you don’t feel like you have a support system, you can start building one by looking around for support. Some look to memberships in groups (both online and in-person) to build their support systems.

“I can’t” is a way of denying yourself success because you’re uncertain that you’ll be able to achieve your goal, and you’re afraid to disappoint. But in the end, the only one you’ll disappoint is yourself if you don’t at least try.

Growth-minded leaders don’t have this attitude – or if they encounter it- they know the steps needed to combat these negative thoughts to continue their plans.

Sure, it’s human nature to doubt your ability or expertise, especially when faced with something new. ***The difference, however, is what you do to combat this self-doubt.***

Those with a ***“growth mindset”*** ***know how to turn their negative thoughts into positive actions.*** Rather than dismissing themselves from contention, they welcome the challenge to learn something new.

Here are some steps you can take to combat self-doubt and become action-oriented:

- 1** **Don’t take criticism or mistakes personally.** No one is perfect. Learn from your experiences and prepare yourself for the next time. It won’t change you if it doesn’t challenge you in some way. Embrace the feedback. How can you leverage it for your growth?
- 2** **Find ways to improve your skills.** Take continuing education classes, e-courses like our micro-learning courses, or read e-books to gain confidence in those skills you feel need improvement.

3

Think about past successes. Success is sweet, and words of praise can do wonders for your self-esteem. Think about the times when you were successful and find ways to regain that feeling. Another helpful tip is to revisit thank you notes, letters, and other mementos to help you recall positive past experiences and successes.

4

Consider the problem or task logically and break it into pieces. This can be overwhelming, so tackle smaller goals individually to avoid confusion and added stress.

5

Delegate what you can to other qualified experts. Use the resources around you to help complete the job rather than tackle everything yourself.

6

Remember why you started. It's essential to stay focused. Distractions come at us throughout each day. You can control your time and your attitude. You get to choose how you'll manage both.

The next time you're faced with the chance to try something new, take a deep breath, think about the benefits you could experience from this, and say, **"I can!"**

THE AUTOMATIC "I CAN'T" RESPONSE

When challenges or roadblocks get in our way, as they inevitably will, the automatic response for those weak in their resolve to succeed is **"I can't."** Rather than taking the time to explore how to overcome a specific hurdle, the default mindset is: **"I can't."**

After all, it's much easier and less stressful not to try rather than to put in the effort without guaranteeing success. But think about all that you could be missing!

- Did you pass on the networking event because you were nervous? Perhaps you would have met a new friend and expanded your network.
- Did you pass up the chance to present to a local group simply because you're afraid of public speaking? You might have developed new business contacts and exposed your brand to others who could consider you for future opportunities.
- Have you thought about owning your own company or starting a side gig to explore personal interests but talked yourself out because you lack experience or confidence? Maybe you would have increased your income enough to get out of debt.
- Do you want to lose weight but get frustrated with all the calorie counting and need for exercise? You might miss out on being heart-healthy and medication free.

All these scenarios are conscious decisions regarding our work, social life, or health.

Every day, we're faced with decisions from when we wake up to when our head hits the pillow at night. Do you really want to live with regrets about any of your decisions, all because you convinced yourself to say **"no"**? That **"I can't"** attitude can harm your psyche!

Even when others try to encourage and boost you while you're still in that doubting phase, the automatic **"I can't"** is a ready and willing response designed to shut down their attempts.

The people who care and support you the most can't force you to act. They can offer advice and the necessary steps, but it's up to you to act.

Without action, your thoughts remain daydreams.

THE MIND TRAP

Every day we spend at least a dozen hours in front of some form of media: television, internet, social media, radio, cell phones, magazines, books, and newspapers. We live in the land of instant information, and it's enough to make your brain go into overload.

Have you ever considered how these media messages play a role in our negative attitudes? It stands to reason that, with so many media images hitting our senses daily, we'd be somewhat influenced. After all, why would companies spend millions of dollars each year on advertising if we weren't influenced?

What do these repeated messages do to our minds?

It causes us to revisit those adverse "I can't" thoughts every day:

- **"I can't"** get another job with this pay and benefits, so I'll just stay where I am.
- **"I can't"** go back to school, it's too expensive, and I'm getting too old.
- **"I can't"** get that promotion because "I can't" compete with.....
- **"I can't"** start a business, it's too competitive, and I lack confidence.
- **"I can't"** get my picture-perfect body without surgery.
- **"I can't"** afford this vacation, so I'll add it to my insurmountable credit card debt.

Be aware of unrealistic expectations such as losing 10 pounds a week, having instant success upon graduation, or expecting everyone to like and appreciate everything about your leadership. When people realize they can never achieve those results, they decide they aren't good enough, and the vicious cycle of "I can't" continues. Set realistic expectations with stretch goals and a mind set to overcome obstacles to combat the cycle.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CHANGE YOUR MIND?

Now the mind games begin. You've convinced yourself - and anyone that will listen - that you can't do what you must for your success. Yet, in your mind, you still desire success but are afraid to go after your goals.

- Maybe you've had too many disappointments and aren't ready to experience another.
- Maybe you're just physically and emotionally tired of trying.
- Maybe you think the competition is too great, and you'd instead stop now than be embarrassed later.

Whatever the reason for your latest **"I can't"** attitude, the reasons why **"You can"** remain strong.

Here are some actions to change a negative mindset:

- 1** **Avoid exposure to negative images when possible.** If your mood plummets when looking at the perfect images on social media, find another interest or read a book instead.
- 2** **Pull out your action plan and examine your goals.** Are they realistic? Have they changed from when you first wrote them down? Are these your goals, or are you trying to meet other people's expectations?
- 3** **Examine your strategy for achieving those goals.** Is it still valid? Can you delegate this work to others to help you achieve these goals?
- 4** **What are you lacking in your life/your career?** How can you fix this? Write out small short-term goals - or baby steps - to make your goals more achievable.
- 5** **Lean on your support groups.** Share your concerns and determine if your chosen support people can give you what you need.
- 6** **Ask for accountability.** To say it is challenging when trying to adopt new ways of thinking and behaving is an understatement. As children, we often had teachers, family members, and friends who held us accountable for our decisions. As adults, we must not be afraid to ask for accountability to help us stay focused and ensure we follow through on our goals. Identify someone you can trust and whose opinion and insights you value most.

Once you've identified an area that needs support, improvement, or fixing, make that your focus with new action steps to aid you in your quest.

WHEN YOU NEED SOMETHING MORE

If, after reviewing your plans, you discover that the stumbling block to your success is simply that you need to learn a necessary skill, then your path is straightforward again. Simply determine what you can do to gain this knowledge, then act.

See? The steps to success now seem a little more achievable and less complicated!

Isolate what needs to be done, the time you need, and the resources you require, and then go after it. To give up now must be considered a non-option.

If financial resources are an issue, dig down and look at what's available. Can you save the funds needed? Can you push back your goals just long enough to raise the funds required? Is there a less expensive alternative that's just as good? Any of these strategies are a far better alternative than to quit at this stage.

Learn what you need to know and implement it.

Two steps are listed here, but they work in tandem with each other. Yes, you can learn all there is to know about your chosen subject, but it does no good just sitting in your head. ***You must do something with that knowledge to open the door to success.***

All the hype tells us how easy it is to earn money from home; thousands of “gurus” charge hefty sums to teach their students how to find this **“easy money.”** You can pay millions of dollars for all this training, but how will you make that money back? What’s the next step after learning all these different Internet marketing strategies?

Action.

Learning is excellent, but you **must put that knowledge into action** to reap the rewards of your learning. Sure, it’s risky, but not acting is also a risk. Taking that first step toward success can be enough to regain your “I can” attitude.

Having an **“I can”** attitude supports the notion that there’s always something you can do when you reach an obstacle – it’s just a matter of going after your goal again and again and again...

WHEN “I CAN’T” COMES FROM “I’VE NOT”

Sometimes we are limited by our convictions. Consider the person who wants a promotion but realizes they “can’t” apply because they’ve “not” performed well in their current role. What about the person who wants to expand their network and build better relationships but realizes they “can’t” because they’ve “not” done an excellent job of maintaining current relationships?

To combat the “I can’t” because “I’ve not” mindset, you must “do” something to correct the issue and move into a more positive mindset. If the issue is that you can’t apply for a promotion because you’re not performing well now, then put a plan together to turn it around and maintain a high level of performance. If you’re not good at keeping in touch and know that is the key to an expanded network, then examine what you can do and do it consistently. Before you know it, you’ll have a more satisfying network.

SUMMARY

Once you change your attitude from resignation to hope and confidence, you’ve won half the battle. Keeping a positive attitude in your business and personal life can be difficult; very often, it’s a mind game and a test of wills.

There are countless stories of people who quit just days or months before they would have realized success. They put 2 or 3 years into building their dreams and then quit just when they’re about to reach their stride.

For example, many potential leaders never take that leap of faith to apply for leadership roles. Instead, they continue to daydream about what it would be like to be in a more senior role. They create challenges for a current leader because they secretly want to be in charge but lack the courage and never fully realize their potential. This is a result of the **“I can’t”** attitude. After all, it’s easier to daydream and undermine others than to act!

If your outlook is positive and you continue to believe in the abilities that got you this far, your journey becomes more manageable and within reach.

By continuing your skill development and pushing yourself out of your comfort zone, you'll consistently be challenged. Once you meet that first challenge successfully, working to meet the next challenge will become easier.

Try the following tips to discover your positive attitude:

- 1** **Be thankful.** Rather than always seeing the negative parts of a situation, think about the positive benefits. Even during a struggle and stress about a particular challenge, take the time to notice and appreciate the nice weather, your good relationships, your comfortable home, your good health, or even that sentimental picture from your child.
 - **Life is good, but sometimes we forget this fact when we focus intensely on the stressors.**
- 2** **Be flexible.** Routines improve productivity, but you can avoid unnecessary stress if you learn to be flexible when complications arise. Take some deep breaths and learn to go with the flow.
 - If something isn't as expected, take a break, and focus **on another project.**
- 3** **Journal your thoughts.** Personal journals can help you sort out your feelings and help you relieve stress.
 - If you're upset with someone, write your feelings in your journal. **This can be a cathartic experience to get all those feelings out.**
 - Use a journal for business, too. Frustrations with a client may seem more trivial once you write it all down. It also helps you see solutions more clearly.
- 4** **Use positive affirmations daily.** Keep a favorite positive quote in your office or where it's noticeable so you can see it and remember it throughout the day.
 - When you feel stress in your body (tense, headache, etc.), focus on your affirmation, take a deep breath, stretch, and get away from your desk for a few minutes.

If you have goals and dreams, you'd like to reach, you have every right to go for them. **No one should be talking you out of realizing your dreams - not even you!**

Changing your negative mindset into a positive one won't happen overnight, but if you work through these tips one at a time, you'll soon wake up with the self-confidence to exclaim: **"I CAN!"** And you will!

ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES, IT'S TIME TO GET TO WORK

Use this worksheet to help you create an action plan for your success with SMART long-term and short-term goals. Remember, you'll need to maintain a sense of vulnerability to get the help you need to achieve your goals. No one can do anything on their own. We all need help.

INTENTION LEADS TO IMPACT:

Step 1: Evaluate Your Anchor Goals

Think about the following eight categories (career, family, education, financial personal, retirement, health, and faith) and jot down your thoughts about how these will be impacted by your professional goals. These areas and perhaps others are the anchors or drivers that connect us to and support our bigger goals. Consider, for example, wanting a promotion or a new career. Achieving this is realistic, but if it requires travel, long hours, and weekends, it could impact your family, your health, and practicing your faith. Therefore, it is essential to consider each area when determining plans.

Questions to consider:

- What does retirement look like?
- When will this happen?
- What is it I want to be doing? What are the skills I need?
- How/where will I live?
- How much money will it take?
- What sacrifices (short-term and long-term) will I need to make?
- Who will be impacted by the attainment of this goal?
- How do I close the gap between now and then?
- Am I willing to make the shifts to getting there?
- How will I care for my mental, emotional and physical health?
- What type of support systems do I have/need?

Example:

My Professional Goal is	Become a Senior Leader within my organization within the next two years.
Anchors	Describe how your Anchor Goal can support your Professional Goal. What needs to be happening with your Anchor to ensure you have a balanced life?
Career	<i>When I get this promotion, and if I like it, I would like to leverage it for a few years to build my brand and seek a more senior role. My ultimate goal is to be serving in a C-suite position.</i>
Education	<i>I will need to stay on top of the latest developments in my field.</i>
Health	<i>I am healthy today but will need to maintain a healthy weight and continue a balanced diet.</i>
Personal	<i>I enjoy travel with my friends, I may not be able to do that as often but will budget personal time for at least one friend's trip and brunch on Sunday's at least twice a month to maintain close relationships.</i>

Financial	<i>I have about 3 months of my expenses saved. To maintain my current or better lifestyle, I'll need to maintain a budget that builds two years or more of my expenses</i>
Faith	<i>I've remained with my church virtually throughout COVID, but I miss the interaction. Sundays are protected times for me. This is non-negotiable.</i>
Family	<i>We enjoy the holidays. They're big with my family, so I'll protect those times, that's non-negotiable. My kids are young, and my husband is supportive, so I'll have to make sure we maintain a good relationship. I'll need to include his thoughts in this plan and modify it accordingly.</i>
Retirement	<i>I really don't plan to retire completely. I do want to work for another 15 years and then instead of retiring, I want to work as a consultant in my field part-time.</i>
Other	

INTENTION LEADS TO IMPACT:

Step 2: Clarify and Define Your Professional Goals

Now develop your Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timebound Professional Goals

	1	2	3
What is My Professional Goal?	<i>Develop Executive Presence</i>	<i>Gain Credibility with Direct Reports</i>	<i>Join a Community Boar</i>
Why is achieving this goal important to me right now?	<i>I want to have confidence and close the door to people second-guessing me.</i>	<i>I want them to respect me in this position and stop second-guessing me.</i>	<i>I believe that external engagement will boost my confidence and credibility.</i>
What have I done to ensure this goal can be fully realized within my given timeframe?	<i>Engaged a coach and completed an EQ Assessment.</i>	<i>Same</i>	<i>Reached out to my network.</i>
How will I achieve this goal? What are my options?	<i>Work with a coach and asked for peer accountability.</i>	<i>Ask for feedback. Make needed shifts.</i>	<i>Network. Apply to board openings when appropriate</i>
What obstacles do I face?	<i>Self-confidence.</i>	<i>Fear of rejection.</i>	<i>Limited network.</i>

Which option is best to navigate the obstacles?	<i>Working with a coach and asking for peer accountability.</i>	<i>Asking for feedback through the 360 instrument.</i>	<i>Networking appears to be what most people say works best for board appointments.</i>
What actions do I need to take?	<i>Identify and hire a coach. Identify 2 peers whom I trust.</i>	<i>Ask the coach to help administer a 360 instrument.</i>	<i>Identify a network and start meeting with people.</i>
What is my start and end date?	<i>September 1, 20xx</i>	<i>October 1, 20xx</i>	<i>January 1, 20xx</i>

INTENTION LEADS TO IMPACT:

Step 3: Create Your Micro Goals

Micro goals are the smaller and more easily attainable action steps that lead to achieving your professional goals. Take one of your professional goals and break it down into micro steps to help you increase accountability and measure progress. Once you've completed this exercise, you'll simply go back and adjust the completion date, or others plans on your professional goals worksheet.

Remember to ensure that each goal is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

INTENTION LEADS TO IMPACT:

Example Micro Goal Worksheet

My Professional Goal Is:

I will become a Senior Marketing Officer in my current organization within the next two years and earn \$150,000 in yearly income. I will achieve this by improve my communication and conflict management skills to ensure my current performance is rated high by my current supervisor. I will take classes and get active in my local marketing association chapter to improve my project management skills, and then ask to lead projects to leverage my visibility and reputation as a strong leader.

The Benefit of Realizing my Professional Goal is *that I can experience a better way of living for my family and me, enjoy a more rewarding career, and pave the way for future opportunities.*

My Accountability Party for this goal is: *Tramaine Booker*

We've agreed to the following schedule: *Tramaine will call me weekly to track my progress until I start each goal. Once I start the goal, Traimaine and I will meet for at least 15 minutes to discuss my progress bi-weekly until the goal is achieved.*

My "Micro Goal" Action Step Is:	Start Date:	End Date:	Achieved?
Enroll in the Mosaic Project Management Certificate Training Program. Taking virtual courses during the evening hours.	July 19, 2025	Dec. 16, 2025	Completed December 16, 2025
Enroll in the PJGS Leaders of Influence Academy to gain access to and review their micro-course to ensure I maintain current knowledge on complex topics such as communication, conflict, and change management.	Apr. 1, 2025	Apr. 1, 2026	Enrolled March 30, 2025
Attend regular local marketing chapter meetings with a plan to seek a leadership position at the end of this year.	May 1, 2024	Ongoing	Be on the ballot for the November election.

THE NEXT 90 DAYS ARE CRITICAL

The following 90 days are critical when beginning a new habit or reaching a goal. Take some time to focus on your most important goals. Think about what goals are possible to launch within the next 90 days. If a goal seems overwhelming, break it up into micro goals. The smaller chunks will help you conquer significant obstacles.

Consider professional and personal goals and write down how they influence one another. Now, to repeat the importance of goal setting, take some time to think of the benefits of these goals. Imagine yourself completing each one and writing down the positive impact of reaching that victory.

Work with a coach or find an accountability partner to work with you over the next 90 days. At your next meeting, discuss these benefits and goals to help create an official plan of action to get started and reach success.



For additional support, visit the Best Resources App found in the Leading with Influence™ Academy or reach out to learn how you can begin working with an Advisor or Executive Coach: support@leadingwithinfluencenow.com.



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