

On any team, in any organization, all responsibility for success and failure rests with the leader. The leader must own everything in his or her world.

There is no one else to blame. The leader must acknowledge mistakes and admit failures, take ownership of them, and develop a plan to win.

Extreme Ownership requires leaders to look at an organization's problems through the objective lens of reality, without emotional attachments to agendas or plans. It mandates that a leader set ego aside, accept responsibility for failures, attack weaknesses, and consistently work to build a better and more effective team.

Such a leader, however, does not take credit for his or her team's successes but bestows that honor upon his subordinate leaders and team members.

When leaders who epitomize Extreme Ownership drive their teams to achieve a higher standard of performance, they must recognize that when it comes to standards, as a leader, it's not what you preach, it's what you tolerate.

When setting expectations, no matter what has been said or written, if substandard performance is accepted and no one is held accountable—if there are no consequences—that poor performance becomes the new standard.

Therefore, leaders must enforce standards. Consequences for failing need not be immediately severe, but leaders must ensure that tasks are repeated until the higher expected standard is achieved.

Leaders must push the standards in a way that encourages and enables the team to utilize Extreme Ownership.

Leaders should never be satisfied. They must always strive to improve, and they must build that mind-set into the team.

They must face the facts through a realistic, brutally honest assessment of themselves and their team's performance. Identifying weaknesses, good leaders seek to strengthen them and come up with a plan to overcome challenges.

In order to convince and inspire others to follow and accomplish a mission, a leader must be a true believer in the mission. Even when others doubt and question the amount of risk, asking, "Is it worth it?" the leader must believe in the greater cause.

If a leader does not believe, he or she will not take the risks required to overcome the inevitable challenges necessary to win.

In many cases, the leader must align his thoughts and vision to that of the mission. Once a leader believes in the mission, that belief shines through to those below and above in the chain of command.

Actions and words reflect belief with a clear confidence and self-assuredness that is not possible when belief is in doubt.

Ego clouds and disrupts everything: the planning process, the ability to take good advice, and the ability to accept constructive criticism. It can even stifle someone's sense of self-preservation. Often, the most difficult ego to deal with is your own. Everyone has an ego.

Ego drives the most successful people in life—in the SEAL Teams, in the military, in the business world. They want to win, to be the best. That is good. But when ego clouds our judgment and prevents us from seeing the world as it is, then ego becomes destructive.

Implementing Extreme Ownership requires checking your ego and operating with a high degree of humility. Admitting mistakes, taking ownership, and developing a plan to overcome challenges are integral to any successful team.

Ego can prevent a leader from conducting an honest, realistic assessment of his or her own performance and the performance of the team

2 - DO NOT FIGHT THE LAST WAR, THE GUERRILLA-WAR-OF-THE-MIND STRATEGY

What most often weighs you down and brings you misery is the past, in the form of unnecessary attachments, repetitions of tired formulas, and the memory of old victories and defeats. You must consciously wage war against the past and force yourself to react to the present moment. Be ruthless on yourself; do not repeat the same tired methods.

Sometimes you must force yourself to strike out in new directions, even if they involve risk. What you may lose in comfort and security, you will gain in surprise, making it harder for your enemies to tell what you will do. Wage guerrilla war on your mind, allowing no static lines of defense, no exposed citadels—make everything fluid and mobile.

3 - AMIDST THE TURMOIL OF EVENTS, DO NOT LOSE YOUR PRESENCE OF MIND, THE COUNTERBALANCE STRATEGY

In the heat of battle, the mind tends to lose its balance. Too many things confront you at the same time—unexpected setbacks, doubts and criticisms from your own allies.

There's a danger of responding emotionally, with fear, depression, or frustration. It is vital to keep your presence of mind, maintaining your mental powers whatever the circumstances. You must actively resist the emotional pull of the moment—staying decisive, confident, and aggressive no matter what hits you. Make the mind tougher by exposing it to adversity.

Quotes from Robert Greene's The 33 Strategies of War

Learn to detach yourself from the chaos of the battlefield. Let others lose their heads; your presence of mind will steer you clear of their influence and keep you on course.

4 - CREATE A SENSE OF URGENCY AND DESPERATION, THE DEATH-GROUND STRATEGY

You are your own worst enemy. You waste precious time dreaming of the future instead of engaging in the present. Since nothing seems urgent to you, you are only half involved in what you do. The only way to change is through action and outside pressure. Put yourself in situations where you have too much at

Part 1 - Winning The War Within

	<p>stake to waste time or resources—if you cannot afford to lose, you won't.</p> <p>Cut your ties to the past; enter unknown territory where you must depend on your wits and energy to see you through. Place yourself on "death ground," where your back is against the wall and you have to fight like hell to get out alive.</p>
	<p>Cover and Move: it is the most fundamental tactic, perhaps the only tactic. Put simply, Cover and Move means teamwork. All elements within the greater team are crucial and must work together to accomplish the mission, mutually supporting one another for that singular purpose.</p> <p>Departments and groups within the team must break down silos, depend on each other and understand who depends on them. If they forsake this principle and operate independently or work against each other, the results can be catastrophic to the overall team's performance</p>
Cover and move	<p>Each member of the team is critical to success, though the main effort and supporting efforts must be clearly identified. If the overall team fails, everyone fails, even if a specific member or an element within the team did their job successfully.</p> <p>Pointing fingers and placing blame on others contributes to further dissension between teams and individuals.</p>
	<p>Combat, like anything in life, has inherent layers of complexities. Simplifying as much as possible is crucial to success. When plans and orders are too complicated, people may not understand them.</p> <p>And when things go wrong, and they inevitably do go wrong, complexity compounds issues that can spiral out of control into total disaster.</p>
Simple	<p>Simple: this principle isn't limited to the battlefield. In the business world, and in life, there are inherent complexities. It is critical to keep plans and communication simple.</p> <p>Following this rule is crucial to the success of any team in any combat, business or life.</p>
	<p>On the battlefield, countless problems compound in a snowball effect, every challenge complex in its own right, each demanding attention. But a leader must remain calm and make the best decisions possible.</p> <p>To do this, SEAL combat leaders utilize Prioritize and Execute. We verbalize this principle with this direction: "Relax, look around, make a call."</p>
Prioritize and Execute	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. evaluate the highest priority problem. 2. lay out in simple, clear, and concise terms the highest priority effort for your team. 3. develop and determine a solution, seek input from key leaders and from the team where possible. 4. direct the execution of that solution, focusing all efforts and resources toward this priority task. 5. move on to the next highest priority problem. Repeat. 6. when priorities shift within the team, pass situational awareness both up and down the chain. 7. don't let the focus on one priority cause target fixation. Maintain the ability to see other problems developing and rapidly shift as needed." <p>To implement Prioritize and Execute in any business, team, or organization, a leader must:</p>
Part 2 - Laws of Combat	<p>Human beings are generally not capable of managing more than six to ten people, particularly when things go sideways and inevitable contingencies arise. No one senior leader can be expected to manage dozens of individuals, much less hundreds. Teams must be broken down into manageable elements of four to five operators, with a clearly designated leader.</p> <p>Decentralized Command does not mean junior leaders or team members operate on their own program; that results in chaos. Instead, junior leaders must fully understand what is within their decision-making authority—the "left and right limits" of their responsibility. Additionally, they must communicate with senior leaders to recommend decisions outside their authority and pass critical information up the chain so the senior leadership can make informed strategic decisions.</p>
Decentralized Command	<p>12. LOSE BATTLES BUT WIN THE WAR, GRAND STRATEGY</p> <p>Everyone around you is a strategist angling for power, all trying to promote their own interests, often at your expense. Your daily battles with them make you lose sight of the only thing that really matters: victory in the end, the achievement of greater goals, lasting power. Grand strategy is the art of looking beyond the battle and calculating ahead. It requires that you focus on your ultimate goal and plot to reach it. In grand strategy you consider the political ramifications and long-term consequences of what you do. Instead of reacting emotionally to people, you take control, and make your actions more dimensional, subtle, and effective. Let others get caught up in the twists and turns of the battle, relishing their little victories. Grand strategy will bring you the ultimate reward: the last laugh.</p> <p>14. OVERWHELM RESISTANCE WITH SPEED AND SUDDENNESS, THE BLITZKRIEG STRATEGY</p> <p>In a world in which many people are indecisive and overly cautious, the use of speed will bring you untold power. Striking first, before your opponents have time to think or prepare, will make them emotional, unbalanced, and prone to error. When you follow with another swift and sudden maneuver, you will induce further panic and confusion. This strategy works best with a setup, a lull—your unexpected action catches your enemy off guard. When you strike, hit with unrelenting force. Acting with speed and decisiveness will garner you respect, awe, and irresistible momentum.</p>
Quotes from Robert Greene's The 33 Strategies of War	<p>21 - NEGOTIATE WHILE ADVANCING, THE DIPLOMATIC-WAR STRATEGY</p> <p>People will always try to take from you in negotiation what they could not get from you in battle or direct confrontation. They will even use appeals to fairness and morality as a cover to advance their position. Do not be taken in: negotiation is about maneuvering for power or placement, and you must always put yourself in the kind of strong position that makes it impossible for the other side to nibble away at you during your talks. Before and during negotiations, you must keep advancing, creating relentless pressure and compelling the other side to settle on your terms. The more you take, the more you can give back in meaningless concessions. Create a reputation for</p>

being tough and uncompromising, so that people are back on their heels before they even meet you.

What's the mission? Planning begins with mission analysis. Leaders must identify clear directives for the team. Once they themselves understand the mission, they can impart this knowledge to their key leaders and frontline troops tasked with executing the mission. A broad and ambiguous mission results in lack of focus, ineffective execution, and mission creep. To prevent this, the mission must be carefully refined and simplified so that it is explicitly clear and specifically focused to achieve the greater strategic vision for which that mission is a part.

Different courses of action must be explored on how best to accomplish the mission—with the manpower, resources, and supporting assets available. Once a course of action is determined, further planning requires detailed information gathering in order to facilitate the development of a thorough plan. It is critical to utilize all assets and lean on the expertise of those in the best position to provide the most accurate and up-to-date information.

Jay Abraham's OPR document

Plan

Understand higher headquarters' mission, Commander's Intent, and endstate (the goal).

1. Analyze the mission.
 - Identify and state your own Commander's Intent and endstate for the specific mission.
2. Identify personnel, assets, resources, and time available.
3. Decentralize the planning process.
 - Empower key leaders within the team to analyze possible courses of action.
4. Determine a specific course of action.
 - Lean toward selecting the simplest course of action.
 - Focus efforts on the best course of action.
5. Empower key leaders to develop the plan for the selected course of action.
6. Plan for likely contingencies through each phase of the operation.
7. Mitigate risks that can be controlled as much as possible.
8. Delegate portions of the plan and brief to key junior leaders.
 - Stand back and be the tactical genius.
9. Continually check and question the plan against emerging information to ensure it still fits the situation.
10. Brief the plan to all participants and supporting assets.
 - Analyze lessons learned and implement them in future planning.
 - Emphasize Commander's Intent.
 - Ask questions and engage in discussion and interaction with the team to ensure they understand.
11. Conduct post-operational debrief after execution.

A leader's checklist for planning should include the following:

Any good leader is immersed in the planning and execution of tasks, projects, and operations to move the team toward a strategic goal. Such leaders possess insight into the bigger picture and why specific tasks need to be accomplished. This information does not automatically translate to subordinate leaders and the frontline troops

As a leader employing Extreme Ownership, if your team isn't doing what you need them to do, you first have to look at yourself. Rather than blame them for not seeing the strategic picture, you must figure out a way to better communicate it to them in terms that are simple, clear, and concise, so that they understand. This is what leading down the chain of command is all about.

If your boss isn't making a decision in a timely manner or providing necessary support for you and your team, don't blame the boss. First, blame yourself. Examine what you can do to better convey the critical information for decisions to be made and support allocated.

Leading up the chain takes much more savvy and skill than leading down the chain. Leading up, the leader cannot fall back on his or her positional authority. Instead, the subordinate leader must use influence, experience, knowledge, communication, and maintain the highest professionalism.

Leading Up The Chain

- While pushing to make your superior understand what you need, you must also realize that your boss must allocate limited assets and make decisions with the bigger picture in mind. You and your team may not represent the priority effort at that particular time. Or perhaps the senior leadership has chosen a different direction. Have the humility to understand and accept this.

Books, movies, and television shows can never truly capture or articulate the pressure from uncertainty, chaos, and the element of unknown with which real combat leaders must contend.

Waiting for the 100 percent right and certain solution leads to delay, indecision, and an inability to execute. Leaders must be prepared to make an educated guess based on previous experience, knowledge of how the enemy operates, likely outcomes, and whatever intelligence is available in the immediate moment.

Part 3 - Sustaining Victory

Decisiveness amid adversity

While business leaders may not generally face life or death situations, they are certainly under intense pressure. With capital at risk, markets in flux, and competitors actively working to outmaneuver opponents, professional careers and paychecks are at stake. Outcomes are never certain; success never guaranteed. Even so, business leaders must be comfortable in the chaos and act decisively amid such uncertainty.

Every leader must walk a fine line. That's what makes leadership so challenging. Just as discipline and freedom are opposing forces that must be balanced, leadership requires finding the equilibrium in the dichotomy of many seemingly contradictory qualities, between one extreme and another.

Discipline equals freedom - The Dichotomy of Leadership

1. confident but not cocky
2. courageous but not foolhardy
3. competitive but a gracious loser
4. attentive to details but not obsessed by them
5. strong but have endurance
6. a leader and follower
7. humble not passive
8. aggressive not overbearing;
9. quiet not silent
10. calm but not robotic, logical but not devoid of emotions
11. close with the troops but not so close that one becomes more important than another or more important than the good of the team; not so close that they forget who is in charge.
12. able to execute Extreme Ownership, while exercising Decentralized Command.

8 - PICK YOUR BATTLES CAREFULLY ,THE PERFECT-ECONOMY STRATEGY

We all have limitations—our energies and skills will

take us only so far. Danger comes from trying to surpass our limits. Seduced by some glittering prize into overextending ourselves, we end up exhausted and vulnerable. You must know your limits and pick your battles carefully. Consider the hidden costs of a war: time lost, political goodwill squandered, an embittered enemy bent on revenge. Sometimes it is better to wait, to undermine your enemies covertly rather than hitting them straight on. If battle cannot be avoided, get them to fight on your terms. Aim at their weaknesses; make the war expensive for them and cheap for you. Fighting with perfect economy, you can outlast even the most powerful foe.

7 - TRANSFORM YOUR WAR INTO A CRUSADE, MORALE STRATEGIES

The secret to motivating people and maintaining their morale is to get them to think less about themselves and more about the group. Involve them in a cause, a crusade against a hated enemy. Make them see their survival as tied to the success of the army as a whole. In a group in which people have truly bonded, moods and emotions are so contagious that it becomes easy to infect your troops with enthusiasm. Lead from the front: let your soldiers see you in the trenches, making sacrifices for the cause. That will fill them with the desire to emulate and please you. Make both rewards and punishments rare but meaningful. Remember: a motivated army can work wonders, making up for any lack of material resources.

6 - SEGMENT YOUR FORCES, THE CONTROLLED-CHAOS STRATEGY

The critical elements in war are speed and adaptability—the ability to move and make decisions faster than the enemy. But speed and adaptability are hard to achieve today. We have more information than ever before at our fingertips, making interpretation and decision making more difficult. We have more people to manage, those people are more widely spread, and we face more uncertainty. Learn from Napoleon, warfare's greatest master: speed and adaptability come from flexible organization. Break your forces into independent groups that can operate and make decisions on their own. Make your forces elusive and unstoppable by infusing them with the spirit of the campaign, giving them a mission to accomplish, and then letting them run.

Quotes from Robert Greene's
The 33 Strategies of War