

DOWNTOWN
LEBANON



Dimalanta
DESIGN GROUP

TOOLS *for* LEADERS





It is clear. Outside the walls of our offices, the season is changing, the leaves are turning, the sky is darkening, and the air is biting with the familiar breath of early autumn. When the seasons shift physically in our world, we notice that this function of nature is universally true across species and circumstances. Seasons change. Feelings change. Situations change. And pain, though terrible in the moment, does ease, even if by the smallest increment. In life and business, difficult and stressful situations will come and go, and sometimes that knowledge is our only source of relief.

HANDLING STRESS

Without a doubt, owning and running a business in a fluctuating market is nail-biting stress. At best, the stock market is ambiguous, and our businesses' success hinges on its ups and downs. According to Investopedia, "The stock market is a complex, interrelated system of large and small investors making uncoordinated decisions about a huge variety of investments. The market, so to speak, could be construed as sort of an ecosystem, one organized by the 'invisible hand.'" Remember, the market will always have mood swings. It is the nature of the beast. Do what you can to secure your business for the down-swing and know that the sun will rise along with the market one day, just as the seasons change.

HANDLING CHANGE

Organizational changes can feel overwhelming to business owners. You're forced to let employees go or watch them walk away sometimes at the cost of interpersonal relationships. This can bring a cold, isolating weariness reserved only for upper leadership. Remember, the discomfort will not last forever. Whoever replaces the person you lost has smooth-running qualities. One grounding option is to stay curious about their unique qualities. They might surprise you and something beautiful could be just around the corner...

HANDLING WORKLOAD

Workload is another frequent source of stress for business owners. Leadership can quickly turn into perfectionism if not balanced with a big-picture perspective. Business owners often expect to work 24/7 and avoid failure at all costs. If the expenses involve your health or the health of your relationships, the success, no matter how spectacular, will not be worth it. Don't check your work emails or voicemails when you're not working. Create a realistic schedule that includes time for fun, relaxation, sleep, exercise, and family. A too heavy workload for too long will eventually impact your overall productivity and performance at work and may cost something precious at home. Set boundaries and know that the majority of your workload is your choice. You have options. Drowning doesn't have to be one of them. When the pressure mounts, do everything you can to step back and set boundaries, knowing that, like everything else, the pressure will ease eventually. It is just for a season.

Seasons remind us that new life is always waiting to be birthed through us if we're willing to cultivate what is hard and toilsome. Seasons are the best teachers. They reveal what is steady and true about life. They also call us to keep hope alive and remind us that no matter how brutal the present, a change is coming. The leaves are turning. The sky is darkening. The air is beginning to bite a little in the morning, and all will be well.

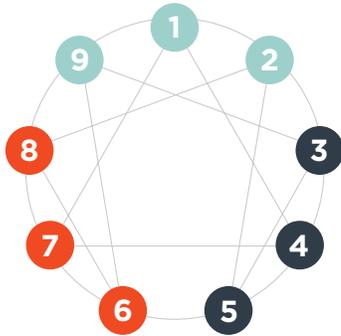
HANDLING OURSELVES WITH THE ENNEAGRAM

The Enneagram is a framework for understanding the multi-layered nature of personality. Our personalities are shaped by the intertwining of our innate qualities and the nurturing we receive from our parents, caregivers, family and friends, and other environmental factors physically, socially, and culturally. Other personality assessments reveal our strengths, weaknesses, and simple facts about our personalities, but the Enneagram dives deeper. It shows what is boiling beneath our personalities and helps us resolve the confusion and frustration we feel in relationships.



The Enneagram is a very old map. Like other typologies, it describes different character types. But, that is just the beginning. Beyond the description of conditions, the Enneagram contains an inner dynamic that aims at change...It confronts us with the compulsions and laws under which we live--usually without being aware of it--and it aims to invite us to go beyond them, to take steps into the domain of freedom.

— **Father Richard Rohr, *The Enneagram, A Christian Perspective*** —



The Enneagram personality model (labeled “a Map for Developing Self-Awareness,” by Beatrice Chestnut, Ph.D.) is a nine-pointed star etched inside of a circle that provides a framework for a personality type system of nine interconnected characters. Put to work compassionately, the Enneagram allows for beautiful personal development and transformation. The Enneagram teaches three distinct “centers of intelligence,” nine personality types, and twenty-seven “subtypes” that offer an incredibly accurate image of ourselves and the patterns

associated with how we move through the world. (Chestnut, Beatrice, Ph.D., *The Complete Enneagram*. She Writes Press, 2013.)



As we “study” ourselves, it helps us have some sort of guidance. We think, feel, and do many things every day--how can we even begin to make sense of it all? This is where the Enneagram comes in.

— **Beatrice Chestnut, Ph.D., *The Complete Enneagram*** —

If you are interested in learning your type or receiving some guidance through the Enneagram please contact us. We have a certified Enneagram coach on our team who can help you grow in self-awareness and develop meaningful leadership skills through this tool.

You know how to handle stress, workload, change, and yourself, now let's take your leadership to the next level by looking at your voice.

FINDING YOUR VOICE AS A LEADER

Finding your voice as a leader is an essential guide for your brand identity and the way you communicate. Part of your role is understanding your voice and how it influences your content and messaging. The first step in finding your voice is to grasp the meaning of what you do and why you do it. Once again, we suggest that you revisit your MVVP and siphon out a strategy from it. Through deep analysis of your MVVP, you can find clear direction on what is important to you and how you sound communicating the meaning of that. Here are five elements of writing to consider as you analyze your MVVP, discover your voice, and begin building a communications strategy around your voice.



TONE AND CHARACTER

If you are the leader of your organization, most likely, you are the brand character of your organization. However, it's helpful to think outside of yourself--your clothes, your desk chair, your hair color, your work--and create a brand character that is more vivid and more imaginative for your communications team. Create some mental, imaginary furniture for a second. Picture someone with your attitude about what you do and many of your personality characteristics sitting next to you. Who could that be? What other more identifiable roles could you play in society? The Seasoned Quarterback? The Goal-Oriented Hippie? The Vibrant Coal-Miner? The Witty Surfer-Dude? Who would you be if you sounded like you, but you weren't you? Who are you as a character?

Next, decide the tone of your voice. This is the attitude of your writing. Are you uplifting? Goofy? Motivational? Warm? Intelligent? Your brand character should help you discover your tone, and your tone can help you explore your brand character.

MOOD

Mood is the atmosphere you create as your brand character and through your tone. Pull out and review some speeches or newsletters you've written in the past. What was the overall mood of your piece? What did it leave your audience feeling? Ask a friend to help you with this if objectivity becomes difficult. Was the mood hopeful? Light? Cool? Comical? Relaxed? Fantastical?

STYLE

Style is how you use your words to create or change the feel of the writing and becomes evident through your word choices. Style also affects Tone and Mood and can be used to transition from one Tone or Mood to another. Is your style straightforward and clear? Lush, elaborate, and descriptive? Poetic and full of metaphor? Sarcastic with a question and answer format? Persuasive and to the point?

DICTION

Diction involves your word choices and how they affect the Mood and Style of your writing. We suggest you break up your MVVP into words or phrases you notice show up consistently to create meaning and make an impact. List those words and see if you can create categories out of your word choices. Using these 3-4 categories as a strategy can build a How to Create my Voice guide. Are some of your word choices more emotional while others are more intellectual? Or funny? Why is that? Is there a group of words you weave into your writing that is stronger and more motivational? Are you mixing word choices that sound warm and words that sound more assertive? See if you can develop some different categories and find the connections between your diction and your tone, character, mood, and style.

No matter who you are, you are a leader! The difference between a great leader and a frustrating leader is one owns the reality of their leadership and one does not. Part of owning your leadership is knowing your voice, the emotions behind it, the effectiveness of its impact, and how to create it so that your brand narrative is straightforward. You know you're nailing leadership when others can follow your lead and joyfully do so.

We hope these tools help you develop and grow as a leader, but most of all, we hope you feel encouraged. For more information on leadership development and self-awareness training, get in touch with Dimalanta Design Group at dimalantadesigngroup.com. We'd love to help you discover what great thing you are going to do in the world next.