FACILITATOR AND PARTICIPANT GUIDE

Book Club Guide for *Where Leadership Begins*

A seven-session journey through the five leadership choices · by *Dan Freschi*

This guide leads a group through a structured exploration of *Where Leadership Begins*, one leadership choice at a time. The discussions, activities, and action plans are built to spark honest conversation, sharpen leadership skills, and help each participant put what they read into practice at work and at home.

Overview and Objectives

Objective. Help participants deepen their understanding of self-awareness, authenticity, humility, vulnerability, and courage, and turn that understanding into practical habits. Through discussion, reflection, and committed action, each member builds a clearer picture of the leader they want to be.

STRUCTURE

Duration: 6 to 8 weeks (7 sessions)

Frequency: Weekly or biweekly

Time per session: 60 to 90 minutes

Who it is for: Leaders, managers, aspiring leaders, and anyone who wants to lead better

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Copies of *Where Leadership Begins*
- The Where Leadership Begins Journal, or a notebook
- Values Discovery Cards *(optional)*
- Where Leadership Begins Assessment results *(optional)*
- Individual Development Plan forms *(optional)*
- Where Leadership Begins Workbooks *(optional)*

Pacing. Seven sessions run about seven weeks if you meet weekly, or about fourteen weeks if you meet every other week. Pick the rhythm your group can keep.

Every Session Follows the Same Flow

READ	DISCUSS	DO	REFLECT	APPLY
The chapter and appendix to read before you meet.	Questions to open the conversation.	A hands-on activity for the session.	A journal prompt to take with you.	A commitment and an IDP update.

RUNNING A GREAT SESSION

A good session has a steady rhythm. Use the template below as a starting point and adjust the timing to fit your group and the chapter.

SUGGESTED 60 TO 90 MINUTE AGENDA

5-10 min	**Check-in.** A quick round on how the week went and any wins.
10 min	**Recap.** Revisit last session's commitments and IDP updates.
30-40 min	**Discuss.** Work through the session's questions.
20-25 min	**Do.** Run the activity for the chapter.
10 min	**Apply.** Name commitments and update the IDP.
5 min	**Close.** Confirm next reading and who facilitates.

GROUP NORMS

- ✓ **Confidentiality.** What is shared in the room stays in the room.
- ✓ **Safety first.** Make it safe to speak up, ask questions, and admit mistakes.
- ✓ **Speak from experience.** Use your own examples rather than speaking for others.
- ✓ **Listen to understand.** Hold back the urge to fix or one-up.
- ✓ **Vulnerability is welcome.** No one is required to share more than they choose.
- ✓ **Share the air.** Everyone gets a turn, and quieter voices are invited in.

SESSION ROADMAP

#	THEME	READING	APPENDIX
1	**Foundations**	Choice vs. Control	App. 1
2	**Self-Aware**	Chapter 2	App. 2
3	**Authentic**	Chapter 3	App. 3
4	**Humble**	Chapter 4	App. 4
5	**Vulnerable**	Chapter 5	App. 5
6	**Courageous**	Chapter 6	App. 6
7	**Wrap-Up**	Afterword	Appendices

A tip for facilitators. Rotate who leads each session. People engage more deeply with a chapter when they have prepared to guide the group through it.

SESSION 1

Foundations: Choice Theory and the Leader's Choice

Preface, Introduction, and Chapter 1 · Appendix 1: Defining Your Quality World

READ

Read the Preface, the Introduction (What is Choice Theory?), and Chapter 1 (Control Theory, Choice Theory, and Being a Leader). Skim Appendix 1.

DISCUSS

- What does leadership mean to you, and where did your own leadership begin?
- What are the key differences between Choice Theory and Control Theory?
- Where have you felt controlled at work, and where have you felt empowered?
- What changes when a leader shifts from control to choice?

DO

Quality World Mapping. Using Appendix 1, map the people, experiences, and beliefs in your Quality World, then note how your most important relationships line up with your leadership goals.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Write about one moment you led with control and one you led with choice. What was different in the relationship afterward?*

APPLY

Set a personal goal for the book club: what do you want to gain from it? Pick one relationship to improve using Choice Theory. Complete the Values Discovery card sort (Appendix 2) before Session 2.

FACILITATOR TIP

Start with the icebreaker, with each person sharing a leadership experience, before any theory. People open up once they have spoken once.

NOTES

SESSION 2

Choosing to Be Self-Aware

Chapter 2 · Appendix 2: Values Discovery

READ

Read Chapter 2 and complete the Values Discovery card sort in Appendix 2.

DISCUSS

- Why is self-awareness the foundation for leading others?
- How do your personal triggers and biases show up in your leadership?
- What makes feedback hard to seek, and harder to act on?
- What were your top values from the card sort, and why those?

DO

Johari Window exercise. Note where you can widen your open area, then trade feedback in pairs to shrink one blind spot. Discuss how your values line up with your organization's.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *What is one blind spot a trusted person has named for you? How does it affect the people you lead?*

APPLY

Ask a trusted peer or mentor for feedback before the next session. Begin your Personal Leadership Philosophy and draft your Individual Development Plan. Review your Assessment results if you have them.

FACILITATOR TIP

Feedback can feel exposing. Model it by naming one of your own blind spots first.

NOTES

SESSION 3

Choosing to Be Authentic

Chapter 3 · Appendix 3: Exploring Authenticity

READ

Read Chapter 3 and explore Appendix 3.

DISCUSS

- What does authenticity look like in leadership, and what does it not mean?
- How does authenticity shape relationships and team dynamics?
- When is staying true to your values the hardest?
- The authenticity gap: where is the distance between how you see yourself and how others see you the widest?

DO

Value Alignment and Storytelling. Share your top five values and the start of your leadership philosophy. Then tell a story of a time you were authentic, or not, as a leader, and what resulted.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Recall a time you were on the receiving end of someone being inauthentic. How did it feel, and what did it do to your trust in them?*

APPLY

Name one instance where authenticity improved an outcome. Choose one situation this week to lead more authentically. Update your Individual Development Plan.

FACILITATOR TIP

Keep stories short and specific. One clear example teaches more than a general talk about being real.

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SESSION 4

Choosing to Be Humble

Chapter 4 · Appendix 4: Exploring Humility

READ

Read Chapter 4 and explore Appendix 4.

DISCUSS

- How does humility change the way a team works?
- Where is the line between confidence and humility?
- How can a leader model humility without looking indecisive?
- Whose humility have you witnessed, and what did it make possible?

DO

Recognition exercise. Practice giving genuine, specific credit to someone in the group. Then discuss what humility means to each of you, personally and professionally.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Recall a time someone recognized your work. What did it do for your confidence and your loyalty to them?*

APPLY

Acknowledge one team member's effort before the next meeting. Ask a colleague for feedback and note how it informs your leadership. Update your Individual Development Plan.

FACILITATOR TIP

Recognition feels awkward at first. Let people practice out loud, since specificity is what makes praise land.

NOTES

SESSION 5

Choosing to Be Vulnerable

Chapter 5 · Appendix 5: Exploring Vulnerability

READ

Read Chapter 5 and explore Appendix 5.

DISCUSS

- What makes vulnerability hard for leaders?
- How are vulnerability and trust connected?
- How does vulnerability help build psychological safety?
- What walls tend to stand between leaders and their teams?

DO

Share a current challenge. In small groups, each person names a real challenge they are facing now, and the group practices listening without rushing to fix it.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Recall a time you admitted you did not know something or that you were wrong. What did you feel first, and how did others respond?*

APPLY

Choose one manageable way to show vulnerability at work this week, and report back next session. Update your Individual Development Plan.

FACILITATOR TIP

Set the tone by going first, and protect the room. What is shared here stays here.

NOTES

SESSION 6

Choosing to Be Courageous

Chapter 6 · Appendix 6: Courageous Decision Guide

READ

Read Chapter 6 and review the Courageous Decision Guide in Appendix 6.

DISCUSS

- What does courage look like in day-to-day leadership?
- How do you handle fear and uncertainty without freezing?
- When have you had to stand up for your values under pressure?
- How does courage tie the other four choices together?

DO

Role-play a difficult conversation. In pairs, practice a hard conversation with courage and empathy, then swap roles and debrief what worked.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Where in your life could you use more courage right now? What is holding you back, and what would it take to act?*

APPLY

Use the Courageous Decision Guide (Appendix 6) to think through one real decision. Commit to one courageous action this week. Update your Individual Development Plan.

FACILITATOR TIP

Give role-plays a clear, low-stakes scenario. The goal is practice reps, not a perfect script.

NOTES

SESSION 7

Wrap-Up and the Afterword

Afterword · Revisit the appendices you found most useful

READ

Read the Afterword and revisit the appendices that helped you most.

DISCUSS

- How have you grown over the course of the book club?
- What are your biggest takeaways from Where Leadership Begins?
- How will you keep choosing to lead well after this ends?

DO

Write your personal leadership statement based on what you have learned, then share it and exchange feedback with the group.

REFLECT IN YOUR JOURNAL

> *Which of the five choices is now your strongest, and which needs the most attention over the next quarter?*

APPLY

Finalize your forward-looking development plan. Set a casual quarterly check-in with the group, perhaps over lunch. Consider starting a new club with junior leaders to pass on what you learned.

FACILITATOR TIP

End on commitment, not summary. Have each person say one specific thing they will do next.

NOTES

ORGANIZING THE BOOK CLUB

Before You Launch

Invite participants by email, your intranet, or your network. **Distribute materials,** including books, journals, Values Discovery Cards, the link to the Assessment, and the session schedule. **Set expectations** by sharing the objectives, the schedule, and the time commitment up front.

The Kick-Off (Session 1)

Introduce the club and review the goals, structure, and norms. **Break the ice** so people get to know one another. **Set goals,** with each member naming what they want from the experience.

During the Sessions

Prepare ahead, with the facilitator ready with questions and the activity. **Track progress,** encouraging members to reflect between meetings. **Follow up** with a short note after each session that includes takeaways, next steps, and the reading.

The Wrap-Up (Session 7)

Celebrate completion and acknowledge the group's work. **Share reflections** on the overall experience and the biggest takeaways. **Plan next steps,** with each person leaving with a personal development plan.

After the Club

Gather feedback to improve the next group. **Keep the support going** with follow-up sessions or added resources.

OPTIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

Any of these can deepen the experience. Add what fits your group.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Invite experienced leaders, or the author, to share insights during specific sessions, including when their own leadership began and the hardest choices they have faced.

ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNERS

Pair participants to check in between meetings and support each other's commitments.

CERTIFICATES

Offer a completion certificate or badge to members who finish the program.

LINKEDIN GROUP OR SLACK CHANNEL

Create a space for ongoing discussion and resource sharing after the club ends.

"It is the choice to get better as a leader every day that will separate you from others." Where Leadership Begins gives your group a shared language for that choice.