



PLAYBOOK

THE PLAYBOOK · KEYNOTE COMPANION

THE CONVICTION EFFECT

THREE MOVES FOR LEADERS

NORLIZA PAVLAKOS

International keynote speaker · Golden Gavel honouree





Conviction is where hesitation ends.

The best leaders are not the ones who never doubt. They are the ones who know the moment doubt stops and action starts. Three moves, each with a principle, a practice and a prompt for your team. Short enough to remember on stage, and in the room.

01 Decide

Decide where hesitation ends.

02 Move

Aligned and fast beats perfect and late. Setbacks are fuel.

03 Close the Day

Decisions stick when you close the day on purpose.

A NOTE FROM NORLIZA

We all have a story to tell. Mine is not bigger than yours. This is about dedication and discipline.

This playbook refers to themes of trauma and recovery. If you need support, please contact your EAP provider or visit thesupportpages.com.au.



MOVE 01

DECIDE

Decide where hesitation ends.

- Recognise the point where hesitation ends
- Name the decision in sixty seconds
- Limit it to two options
- Give the first step and the date



Decide

The Conviction Moment

Every leader reaches a point where more information stops improving the decision and starts delaying it. Leaders who recognise that point act while others wait for a certainty that never arrives. The cost of waiting shows up as lost momentum, lost trust and lost opportunity.

Information is not readiness

Ask one question: if I had no fear, what would I already know? Most leaders find they know enough. The remaining gap is not data. It is willingness.

The 60-Second Decision Script

"The decision is ___. The options are A, ___, and B, ___. I choose ___ because ___. The first step is ___, by ___."

Limit it to two options

More than two options usually means the decision has not been framed. Reduce the choice, then choose.

Set the clock first

Reversible decisions within 24 hours. Irreversible decisions within one week. If you cannot say it in a minute, you do not yet understand it.

FROM MY STORY

I survived an abduction at nineteen, and the justice system failed me. It happened, and no one could take that reality from me or break me with it. I could stay stuck or move forward. What others said or thought did not help me move. I knew the truth, and what I was destined to achieve depended on how much I applied myself. So I decided. I moved. Tomorrow is a new day.

TRY THIS MONDAY

- List the three decisions you are delaying
- Say each one in sixty seconds, with a date

ASK YOUR TEAM

- Which decision are we waiting on that we already know the answer to?

Decide: research and notes

THE RESEARCH

Over time, we regret inaction

In the short term people regret what they did more, but looking back over a long time they tend to regret what they failed to do. Waiting feels safe now but often costs more later.

Gilovich & Medvec, Psychological Review, 1995

Chasing the best option costs satisfaction

People who habitually search for the very best option (maximizers) tend to report lower happiness and satisfaction and more regret than those who settle for good enough.

Schwartz et al., Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2002

A date turns intention into action

Specifying when and where you will act ("if X, then I will Y") reliably improves follow-through. A meta-analysis of 94 tests found a medium-to-large effect.

Gollwitzer & Sheeran, Advances in Experimental Social Psychology, 2006

FOR LEADERS

Model it

Make one visible decision this week using the 60-second script. Say what you chose and why.

Coach it

When someone brings you a problem, ask: what would you decide if it were your call? Let them answer before you do.

Watch for

Meetings that end without an owner and a date.
Requests for more data that would not change the answer.

MY NOTES

The decision I have been delaying:

What I already know about it:

I will decide by (date), and my first step is:



MOVE 02

MOVE

*Aligned and fast beats perfect and late.
Setbacks are fuel.*

-
- Define what “good enough to act” means
 - Align, then accelerate
 - Name the setback and what it makes possible
 - Move within the hour

Move

Speed over perfection

In uncertain environments the cost of a slow decision compounds. Speed does not mean carelessness. It means deciding with the information you can reasonably have, then correcting as you learn. The pursuit of the perfect answer can be a polite way of avoiding the decision.

Adversity as forward momentum

A setback names a constraint, and constraints clarify priorities. Teams take their cue from how the leader describes the problem: a roadblock produces caution, a question produces ideas.

Define "good enough to act"

Agree before the analysis begins what level of confidence is enough. Eighty per cent is often sufficient for a reversible decision.

Align, then accelerate

Spend five minutes confirming who must be aligned, then move. Set a date to review the decision.

Name it, then move within the hour

Say exactly what went wrong in one sentence. Ask what it makes possible. Take one small action within the hour.

FROM MY STORY

I launched my tailoring store as Alts R Us. The signage was up before I saw the brand was not working, so I rebranded and moved again. If it is not working, build it, fix it and get it right. Being homeless at sixteen was the best setback of my life. It showed me the world is my oyster, if only I apply myself each and every day.

TRY THIS MONDAY

- Decide one waiting item by Wednesday
- Write for a current setback: what does this make possible?

ASK YOUR TEAM

- Where are we polishing when we should be launching?

Move: research and notes



THE RESEARCH

Some people grow through adversity

People who have lived through major trauma report more positive change, such as a stronger sense of personal strength and appreciation of life, than people who have not. Growth is not guaranteed, and it does not make the hardship good.

Tedeschi & Calhoun, Journal of Traumatic Stress, 1996

Most people are more resilient than assumed

Research on loss and trauma shows that most people keep functioning reasonably well, and only a minority develop lasting difficulties. Resilience is common, not rare.

Bonanno, American Psychologist, 2004

Safe teams speak up and learn

In teams where people feel safe to take interpersonal risks, members discuss errors and seek feedback more, and that learning is linked to better team performance. How a leader frames a setback sets that tone.

Edmondson, Administrative Science Quarterly, 1999



FOR LEADERS

Model it

Describe your own last setback in one sentence, then say what it made possible. Teams copy the tone.

Coach it

Replace “why did this happen?” with “what does this make possible?” Ask for one action within the hour.

Watch for

Polishing disguised as diligence. A deadline that keeps moving. Blame replacing learning.



MY NOTES

The setback I am carrying right now:

What it makes possible:

The one action I will take within the hour:



MOVE 03

CLOSE THE DAY

Decisions stick when you close the day on purpose.

- Review what you decided
- Align it with your priorities
- Commit to tomorrow's first action
- Repeat daily



Close the Day

The 5PM Alignment Ritual

Most decisions fail quietly. They are made in a meeting and lost by the next afternoon. The 5PM Alignment Ritual is a daily three-step method that keeps decisions in place. It takes five minutes and requires no one but you.

Consistency over intensity

One review a day is more effective than one retreat a year. The ritual builds the habit of looking back, checking direction and committing forward.

1. Review your wins

Look back at the day. What did I achieve, what did I accomplish and what did I finish? Write each in one line.

2. Align

Does each decision match my priorities and my team's? Mark anything that has drifted.

3. Commit

What is the first action I will take tomorrow morning? Write it down before you leave.

Repeat

Seven days in a row builds the habit. Review the week on Friday.

FROM MY STORY

Every day I look back at my wins: what I achieved, what I accomplished and what I finished. We all have a story to tell, and mine is not bigger than yours. This is about dedication and discipline.

TRY THIS MONDAY

- Set a 5PM reminder
- Complete the three steps for five days

ASK YOUR TEAM

- What would change if every leader closed the day with this ritual?

Close the Day: research and notes

THE RESEARCH

Reflection improves performance

In a field study of new call-centre trainees, those who spent the last 15 minutes of each training day writing and reflecting scored about 23 per cent higher on the final test than colleagues who spent that time on extra practice.

Di Stefano, Gino, Pisano & Staats, "Learning by Thinking", HBS working paper 14-093, 2014

Small wins drive motivation

In a diary study of about 240 employees, making progress in meaningful work, even small progress, was the strongest influence on a good day at work: positive mood and motivation.

Amabile & Kramer, The Progress Principle, 2011

Planning tomorrow closes today

Making a specific plan for an unfinished goal reduces the mental interference that unfinished goals cause, so you can switch off at the end of the day.

Masicampo & Baumeister, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 2011

FOR LEADERS

Model it

Close your own day visibly. Tell the team the one thing you finished and the first thing you will do tomorrow.

Coach it

End one team meeting a week with each person naming a win. Wins build momentum, and momentum builds trust.

Watch for

Days that end with no record of what was decided.
Wins that go unnoticed.

MY NOTES

Today I achieved:

Today I finished:

Tomorrow's first action is:

My Conviction Plan

DECIDE

The decision I will make this week:

I will say it in sixty seconds to:

Decided by (date):

MOVE

What is “good enough to act”?

The setback I will turn into a question:

Action within the hour:

CLOSE THE DAY

My 5PM reminder is set for:

The person who will hold me to it:

Day one starts:

The research behind the moves

MOVE 01 · DECIDE

Gilovich, T., & Medvec, V. H. (1995). The experience of regret: What, when, and why. *Psychological Review*, 102(2), 379–395.
doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.102.2.379

Schwartz, B., Ward, A., Monterosso, J., Lyubomirsky, S., White, K., & Lehman, D. R. (2002). Maximizing versus satisficing: Happiness is a matter of choice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(5), 1178–1197.
doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.83.5.1178

Gollwitzer, P. M., & Sheeran, P. (2006). Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 38, 69–119.
[doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(06\)38002-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(06)38002-1)

MOVE 02 · MOVE

Tedeschi, R. G., & Calhoun, L. G. (1996). The Posttraumatic Growth Inventory: Measuring the positive legacy of trauma. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 9(3), 455–471.
sites.charlotte.edu/ptgi (full text)

Bonanno, G. A. (2004). Loss, trauma, and human resilience: Have we underestimated the human capacity to thrive after extremely aversive events? *American Psychologist*, 59(1), 20–28.
doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.1.20

Edmondson, A. (1999). Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), 350–383.
www.jstor.org/stable/2666999

MOVE 03 · CLOSE THE DAY

Di Stefano, G., Gino, F., Pisano, G. P., & Staats, B. R. (2014). Learning by thinking: How reflection aids performance (Harvard Business School Working Paper No. 14-093).
papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2414478

Amabile, T. M., & Kramer, S. J. (2011). *The progress principle: Using small wins to ignite joy, engagement, and creativity at work*. Harvard Business Review Press.
store.hbr.org (The Progress Principle)

Masicampo, E. J., & Baumeister, R. F. (2011). Consider it done! Plan making can eliminate the cognitive effects of unfulfilled goals. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 101(4), 667–683.
doi.org/10.1037/a0024192

Links open the paper or its record. Findings are summarised for a leadership audience. Individual results vary, and this playbook is not a substitute for professional advice.



TAKE IT TO YOUR TEAM

Bring The Conviction Effect to your leaders.

A keynote or workshop for leaders and decision makers who need faster, clearer decisions under pressure. Tailored to your audience. Delivered in person or virtually.

CHECK AVAILABILITY

events@norliza.com

