

THE SEVEN ANCHORS METHOD

A framework for intentional leadership, sustainable performance and work-life harmony

The idea

A day can get away from you very quickly.

One unexpected problem becomes an afternoon of interruptions. A meeting runs long. Someone needs you. Something at home comes up. By the time the day is over, you have been busy for twelve hours and still feel as though you did not spend your time on what mattered.

The Seven Anchors Method is designed to change that.

It divides the waking day into seven purposeful periods, each with a clear role. The intention is not to create a rigid schedule or achieve a perfect score.

The intention is to create **anchors**.

When the day moves around you, the anchors give you something to return to. And when one anchor gets disrupted, you do not abandon the day. You begin again at the next one.

THE SEVEN ANCHORS

Anchor	Time	What it protects
01 - Restore	8:00 - 11:00	Your physical and mental capacity
02 - Lead	11:00 - 2:00	Your highest-value CEO work
03 - Develop	2:00 - 5:00	Your people and organizational capability
04 - Close	5:00 - 8:00	Decisions, handoffs and completion
05 - Live	8:00 - 10:00	Family, friends and personal life
06 - Unwind	10:00 - 11:00	The transition from activity to rest
07 - Recover	11:00 - 8:00	Sleep, recovery and tomorrow's capacity

The principle: Every anchor has a beginning. Every anchor has an end. Every anchor is a fresh start.

ANCHOR 01

RESTORE: 8:00 am - 11:00 am

The first part of the day belongs to you.

Before the business, the inbox, the team or everyone else's priorities begin making demands, create some space to restore your physical and mental capacity.

This is not time you earn by being productive.

It is time that makes productivity possible.

Today's checklist

- I gave myself protected time before becoming fully available to others.
- I did something physical that made me feel more awake and energized.
- I had a proper first meal without treating it as something to squeeze between tasks.
- I created some quiet space for reading, reflection, journaling or simply being still.
- I identified the one thing that would make today meaningful.

Fuel

Meal: _____

Water: ☐ Glass 1 ☐ Glass 2

One intention for today

ANCHOR 02

LEAD: 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

This is CEO time.

Use these hours for the work that requires your judgment, perspective and authority.

Think. Decide. Plan. Meet. Resolve.

Do not allow this block to become another period of reactive administration.

The boundary

No meetings before 11:00 am.

No meetings after 2:00 pm.

The boundary is part of the framework.

People learn how to work with your availability by watching how consistently you protect it.

Today's checklist

- I reviewed the numbers and information I need to understand the business.
- I protected meaningful time for work that only I can do.
- Meetings and important conversations stayed within this window.
- I made decisions rather than allowing avoidable decisions to remain open.
- I gave attention to something that moves the business forward, not simply something that demanded attention.

Fuel

Meal: _____

Water: ☐ Glass 1 ☐ Glass 2

The most important CEO decision today

ANCHOR 03

DEVELOP: 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

This is time with the team.

But there is an important distinction.

You are not here primarily to get more work done.

You are here to **make the team more capable**.

Teach. Coach. Observe. Ask questions. Give feedback. Remove obstacles. Develop judgment.

Whenever possible, resist taking the work back simply because you can do it faster.

Today's checklist

- I spent meaningful time with my team.
- I taught or coached at least one person.
- I recognized someone for doing something well.
- I helped remove an obstacle without taking ownership of the work myself.
- I left someone more capable than they were when the block began.

Fuel

Snack: _____

Water: ☐ Glass 1 ☐ Glass 2

Who did I develop today?

Person: _____

What did I help them learn?

ANCHOR 04

CLOSE: 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

A strong leader knows how to start the day.

A sustainable leader also knows how to end it.

This block is for the things that genuinely require the CEO before the business is handed back to the team.

Resolve what needs resolving. Make the decisions that cannot wait. Complete the handoffs. Prepare tomorrow.

Then close the day.

Today's checklist

- I dealt with the issues that genuinely required my attention.
- I completed the important decisions, approvals or escalations.
- I confirmed that the team knows what needs to happen next.
- I identified tomorrow's most important priority.
- I consciously ended my workday rather than simply drifting out of it.

Fuel

Meal: _____

Water: ☐ Glass 1 ☐ Glass 2

Tomorrow's one thing

What can wait until tomorrow?

ANCHOR 05

LIVE: 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm

The business does not own the whole day.

This is time for the people and experiences that make life meaningful outside of work.

Family. Friends. Conversation. A walk. A book. Music. Whatever allows you to be present rather than productive.

The objective is not to fill these two hours.

It is to actually inhabit them.

Today's checklist

- I consciously left the business behind.
- I gave someone I care about my full attention.
- I did something that had nothing to do with work.
- I resisted the temptation to fill every quiet moment with another task.
- I was present where I was.

Fuel

Evening: _____

Water: ☐ Glass 1 ☐ Glass 2

Who or what received my attention tonight?

ANCHOR 06

UNWIND: 10:00 pm - 11:00 pm

The mind does not always move from a busy day to sleep simply because the clock says it should.

Give yourself a transition.

Reduce stimulation. Put distance between yourself and the day's demands. Let the mind slow down.

This hour is not about getting more done.

It is about becoming ready to stop.

Today's checklist

- I intentionally reduced work-related activity.
- I stepped away from unnecessary screens or stimulation.
- I did something calming or restorative.
- I avoided reopening problems that can wait until tomorrow.
- I prepared myself for sleep rather than extending the day.

One thing I am leaving behind tonight

ANCHOR 07

RECOVER: 11:00 pm - 8:00 am

Sleep is not what remains after everything else is finished.

It is part of the work.

It is part of leadership.

It is part of health.

And it is part of tomorrow.

Protect this anchor because every other anchor depends on the capacity you bring into the next day.

Today's checklist

- I gave myself the opportunity for adequate sleep.
- I protected my sleep environment.
- I did not trade tomorrow's capacity for one more hour tonight.
- I allowed the day to be finished.

Lights out: Target: 11:00 pm

THE RESET RULE

Never lose twice.

The Seven Anchors Method is deliberately designed to prevent the all-or-nothing trap.

If Anchor One did not happen the way you intended, Anchor Two is still available.

If Anchor Three became chaotic, Anchor Four is still yours.

If the entire day went sideways, tomorrow begins with Anchor One.

Do not turn a disruption into an identity.

Do not turn one difficult block into a failed day.

Do not wait for Monday.

Return at the next anchor. That is the discipline.

DAILY REFLECTION

Date

Which anchor was strongest today?

Which anchor was most difficult?

What pulled me away from it?

Did I spend enough time doing work only I can do?

Did I make someone on my team more capable today?

Did I genuinely disconnect from work?

What will I do differently tomorrow?

DAILY ANCHOR CHECK

Anchor	Protected	Partially protected	Lost
01 - Restore	☐	☐	☐
02 - Lead	☐	☐	☐
03 - Develop	☐	☐	☐
04 - Close	☐	☐	☐
05 - Live	☐	☐	☐

Anchor	Protected	Partially protected	Lost
06 - Unwind	☐	☐	☐
07 - Recover	☐	☐	☐

Do not calculate a daily score.

The purpose of the daily review is awareness, not judgment.

THE WEEKLY REVIEW

Take 15 minutes at the end of each week.

Look for patterns rather than isolated days.

Rate each dimension from **1 to 5**.

1 = barely happened

3 = inconsistent

5 = became a natural part of my week

Dimension	1	2	3	4	5
I protected my morning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I protected CEO time	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I developed my team	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I closed my workday intentionally	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I protected my personal life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I created a real transition into sleep	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I protected recovery	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Then ask yourself:

What did my team handle this week without me?

Where did I step back into work that someone else could have owned?

Which anchor, if protected more consistently next week, would make the greatest difference? What is one behaviour I want to repeat next week?

THE MONTHLY REVIEW

The daily review asks, “**Did I follow the structure?**”

The weekly review asks, “**Is the structure becoming a habit?**”

The monthly review asks something deeper:

“**Is the structure changing the kind of leader I am?**”

Rate each dimension from **1 to 5**.

Leadership Dimension	1	2	3	4	5
Vision - My team understands where we are going	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Team Depth - More responsibility is being carried by others	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Intentionality - My time reflects my priorities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Consistency - The framework holds during ordinary weeks	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Boundaries - People understand when and how to reach me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Capacity - I have energy left at the end of the month	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Work-Life Harmony - My life outside work has meaningful space	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Monthly reflection

What did the business accomplish this month without requiring me to be at the centre of it?

What am I still doing that someone else could learn to do?

Where am I still confusing being available with being valuable?

Did I make enough room for the person behind the leader?

What would need to change for me to confidently step away for a full week?

Which anchor needs the most attention next month?

THE LEADERSHIP SHIFT

The Seven Anchors Method is ultimately about a transition.

From **reacting** to choosing.

From **doing** to developing.

From **being needed** to building capability.

From **constant availability** to intentional presence.

From **work consuming life** to work having its place within life.

The goal is not to become less committed.

The goal is to make your commitment sustainable.

A successful leader can build a business that depends on them.

A great leader builds one that becomes stronger because they are willing to develop others, create boundaries and step back when stepping back is the right thing to do.

THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE

You will break the framework.

Something unexpected will happen.

A meeting will run long.

A team member will need you.

A personal commitment will change the day.

Life will interrupt the plan.

That is not failure.

The framework was never designed for a perfect life.

It was designed for a real one.

When an anchor is lost, return to the next one.

One block does not own the day.

And one difficult day does not own your week.

Start again.

A NOTE FROM MANU

I developed the Seven Anchors Method as part of my coaching work with leaders who have reached a point where working harder is no longer the answer.

I believe there is a stage in leadership where the challenge changes. The question becomes less about how much more we can personally accomplish and more about what we can build around us so that our time, energy and attention are being used intentionally.

This framework came out of that conversation.

I am sharing it because I believe good ideas become more valuable when they are put to work by other people. This is part of my commitment to open-sourcing the frameworks, tools and thinking I develop through my work, teaching, coaching and lived experience.

Use the framework as it is.

Change it.

Adapt the times.

Rename the anchors.

Build your own version.

The objective is not to follow someone else's perfect day.

It is to create a day that reflects **your** priorities and gives you a better chance of living the life you are working so hard to build.

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