

The Leadership Blind Spot: How Hidden Fears Shape Your Decisions

As a CEO, your decisions shape your organization's direction, culture, and performance. But what if some of those decisions—especially under pressure—are subtly influenced by hidden fears? Whether it's the fear of failure, losing control, reputational risk, or making the wrong call, these unspoken pressures can impact everything from strategic vision to team dynamics, often without you realizing it.

This assessment is designed for self-awareness, not self-judgment. The strongest leaders aren't those who eliminate fear but those who recognize and navigate it with clarity. By identifying where fear may be influencing your leadership, you can shift from reactive decision-making to intentional leadership—turning awareness into a competitive advantage.

Completion time: 6-8 minutes



by **Jacqueline Wales**



Section 1: BE - Mindset Assessment

1 Rate each statement on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Rarely, 5 = Very Often)

2 When faced with major decisions, I find myself focusing on what could go wrong

3 I delay important initiatives until I feel completely ready

4 I need extensive data before making strategic moves

5 I worry about how others perceive my leadership decisions

6 I stick to familiar approaches even when they may limit growth

7 I take criticism of my ideas personally

BE Score: ___/30

Section 2: DO - Action Patterns

1 Rate each statement on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Rarely, 5 = Very Often)

2 I actively seek opportunities that push me out of my comfort zone

3 I make decisions with available information rather than waiting for perfect data

4 I delegate important tasks even when I could do them better myself

5 I speak up about difficult issues even when it might create tension

6 I take calculated risks in pursuit of innovation

7 I address performance issues promptly rather than hoping they'll improve

DO Score: ___/30

Section 3: HAVE - Outcomes & Impact

1 Rate each statement on a scale of 1-5 (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

2 My team feels empowered to bring new ideas

3 We regularly achieve ambitious growth targets

4 Our organization adapts quickly to market changes

5 I maintain strong relationships even during conflicts

6 My leadership inspires others to take smart risks

7 We consistently outperform our competitors

HAVE Score: ___/30

BE (Mindset) Score Interpretation: High Fear Impact (25-30)

Impact

Operating predominantly from a fear-based mindset significantly impacts leadership effectiveness. This critical area requires professional support and intervention.

Recognition Points

- Excessive risk aversion limiting company growth
- Need for control affecting team autonomy
- Perfectionism causing operational delays
- Decision paralysis affecting market opportunities
- Resistance to change limiting innovation

BE (Mindset) Score Interpretation: Moderate Fear Impact (15-24)

Impact

Your mindset mixes growth and fear. Professional guidance can help optimize your leadership approach.

Recognition Points

- Variable decision confidence
- Situational risk aversion
- Inconsistent trust in team
- Selective challenge avoidance
- Intermittent perfectionism

BE (Mindset) Score Interpretation: Low Fear Impact (Below 15)

Impact

Demonstrates a growth mindset; crucial to maintain and enhance this positive pattern.

Key Attributes

- Balanced approach to risk and opportunity
- Confident decision-making
- Comfortable leading through ambiguity

Strengths

- Resilient response to setbacks
- Open to new ideas
- Strong trust in team

Qualities

- Proactive engagement with challenges
- Healthy relationship with failure
- Willing to have difficult conversations

DO (Action) Score Interpretation: High Action Hesitation (25-30)

Recognition Points

- Frequent postponement of key decisions
- Over-reliance on data and analysis
- Limited delegation of important tasks
- Avoidance of difficult conversations
- Preference for safe, proven approaches
- Hesitation to address performance issues
- Tendency to over-prepare before acting
- Difficulty pivoting when plans change
- Resistance to organizational change
- Extended deliberation on strategic moves

Growth Opportunities

- Developing decision-making frameworks
- Practicing timely action with incomplete information
- Building trust in team capabilities
- Engaging in constructive conflict
- Expanding comfort with strategic risks

DO (Action) Score Interpretation: Moderate Action Balance (15-24)

Recognition Points

- Situational decision-making confidence
- Selective delegation of responsibilities
- Context-dependent risk-taking
- Variable comfort with confrontation
- Inconsistent response to opportunities
- Mixed approach to innovation
- Periodic postponement of difficult actions
- Selective engagement with challenges
- Varying levels of proactive behavior
- Circumstantial change adoption

Growth Opportunities

- Identifying triggers for hesitation
- Developing consistent action protocols
- Building delegation confidence
- Strengthening conflict resolution skills
- Expanding leadership range

DO (Action) Score Interpretation: Low Action Hesitation (Below 15)

1

Decisive Action

Characterized by timely decision-making and swift adaptation to changing circumstances.

2

Empowered Teams

Demonstrates effective delegation, fostering team empowerment and autonomy.

3

Calculated Risks

Comfortable taking calculated risks, displaying a proactive approach to opportunities.

4

Change Leadership

Exhibits strong leadership in driving change and implementing strategic initiatives effectively.

HAVE (Outcomes) Score Interpretation: Limited Impact Range (25-30)

Recognition Points

- Consistent underachievement of targets
- Low team innovation and initiative
- Slow response to market changes
- Strained stakeholder relationships
- Decreased market competitiveness
- Limited team autonomy
- Reduced organizational agility
- High employee turnover
- Missed market opportunities
- Resistance to organizational change

Growth Opportunities

- Building team empowerment systems
- Developing innovation frameworks
- Improving stakeholder engagement
- Enhancing market responsiveness
- Strengthening organizational culture

HAVE (Outcomes) Score Interpretation: Moderate Impact Range (15-24)

Recognition Points

- Inconsistent achievement of goals
- Variable team performance
- Selective innovation success
- Fluctuating stakeholder relationships
- Uneven market performance
- Mixed employee engagement
- Sporadic change implementation
- Variable decision effectiveness
- Inconsistent growth patterns
- Selective opportunity capture

Growth Opportunities

- Identifying performance patterns
- Developing consistent systems
- Building sustainable practices
- Strengthening team dynamics
- Enhancing execution consistency

HAVE (Outcomes) Score Interpretation: High Impact Range (Below 15)

Recognition Points

- Consistent achievement of stretch goals
- High team innovation and engagement
- Quick adaptation to market changes
- Strong stakeholder relationships
- Clear competitive advantages
- Empowered organizational culture
- Effective change implementation
- Strong talent retention
- Regular capture of opportunities
- Sustainable growth patterns

Growth Opportunities

- Scaling successful practices
- Developing future leaders
- Expanding market influence
- Building lasting capabilities
- Leading industry innovation

Impact on Organization

Cultural Indicators

- Employee engagement levels
- Innovation frequency
- Team autonomy
- Change readiness
- Leadership pipeline

Performance Indicators

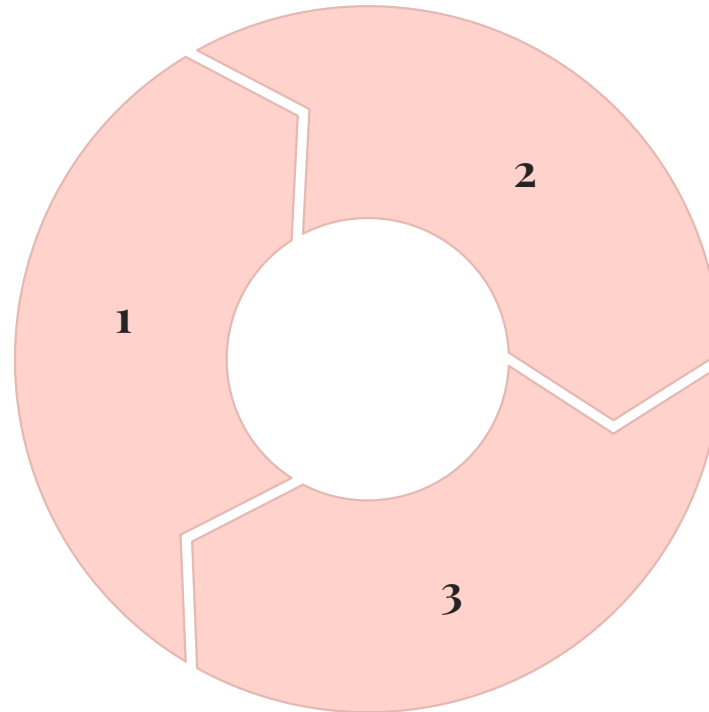
- Market position
- Growth metrics
- Customer satisfaction
- Operational efficiency
- Financial results

Development Pathways

Explore interconnected strategies to elevate performance, culture, and market position, creating a cycle of continuous growth and mutual reinforcement.

Performance Enhancement

Focused metrics drive success.



Culture Development

Innovation thrives with trust.

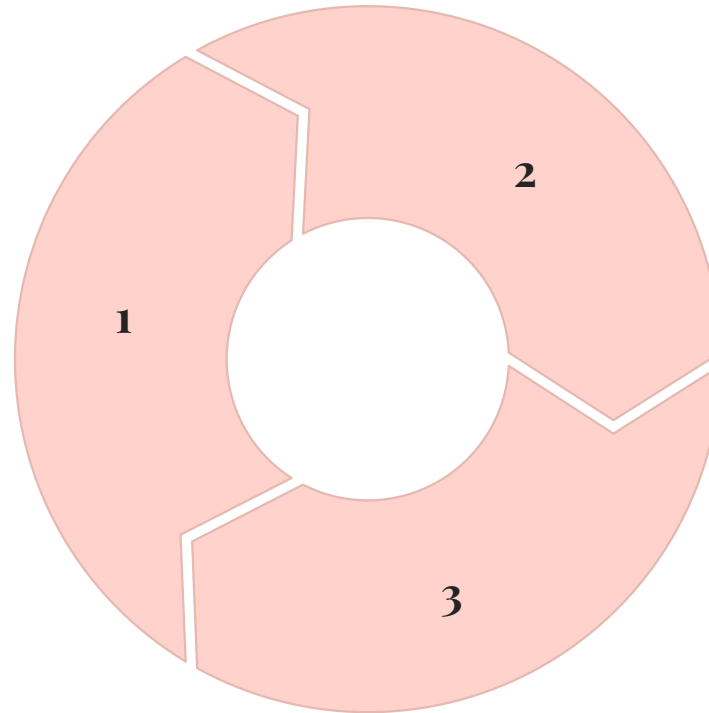
Market Position

Influence expands reach.

Creating Sustainable Impact

System Development

Build scalable processes, create consistent frameworks, develop measurement tools, establish feedback mechanisms



Team Empowerment

Delegate effectively, build capabilities, foster innovation, develop leadership

Strategic Growth

Capture opportunities, drive innovation, lead change, build sustainability

Impact of Professional Support

Individual Benefits

- Enhanced decision-making confidence
- Reduced stress and anxiety
- Improved work-life balance
- Greater leadership satisfaction
- Increased professional resilience

Organizational Benefits

- Accelerated company growth
- Improved team performance
- Enhanced innovation culture
- Better risk management
- Stronger market position

Taking Action

1

Acknowledge Results

Review scores, accept areas for support, recognize organizational impact.

2

Seek Support

Connect with coaches, advisory groups, consultants, and executive programs.

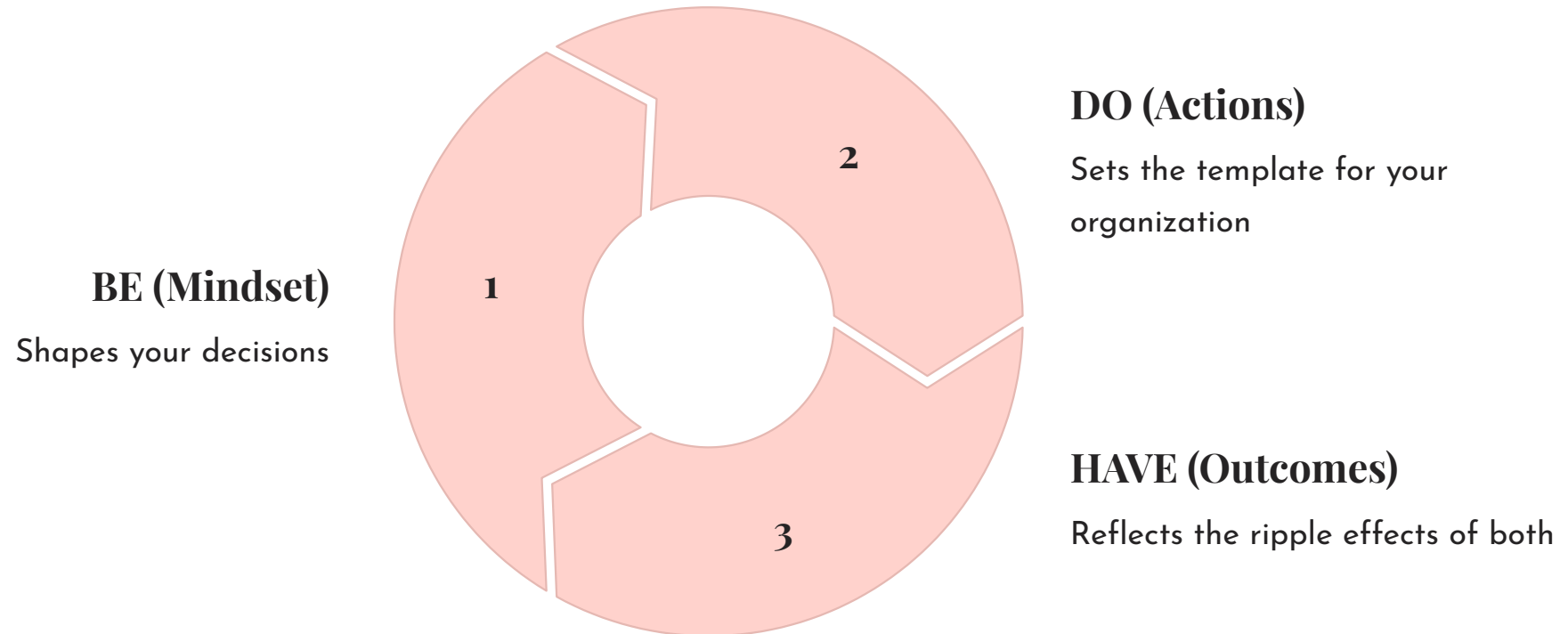
3

Commit to Development

Set goals, schedule assessments, maintain accountability, track progress.

Conclusion

Understanding how fear influences your patterns isn't about judgment—it's about choice. Strong leaders recognize fear and navigate it wisely, transforming limitations into opportunities for growth.



The most powerful tool in a CEO's arsenal is clear self-awareness, allowing you to lead with greater clarity, purpose, and impact.

Assessment Methodology

This assessment, based on Jacqueline Wales' Transforming Fear Model, offers a framework for understanding how hidden fears shape leadership decisions and impact organizational outcomes.

The BE-DO-HAVE structure provides a holistic view of leadership, examining mindset, actions, and results. By identifying patterns across these areas, leaders gain insights into their decision-making and leadership style.

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