

FIELD COMPANION GUIDE

THE FIVE MINUTE FOREMAN

MASTERING THE PEOPLE SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

BY MARK BRESLIN

TOOLS.
REPS.
RESULTS.

Built for the field.
Designed to be used.

BUILD THE PEOPLE WHO BUILD THE WORK.

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Welcome, Professional Construction Leader.

You read the book. Or you're about to. Either way — this guide is the part where the reading turns into doing. No theory. No fluff. Just the moves that work on a jobsite, broken down so you can use them tomorrow morning.

REAL TALK FROM MARK

You've been promoted because you're good with your hands and your head's on straight. Nobody handed you a manual on how to lead people. This is that manual. Keep it short. Use it like a tool. Drop it in your truck. Pull it out when you need it.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

01 Pick one section a week.

Don't try to drink it all in one shot. Five minutes a day beats five hours once.

02 Run the drill on the jobsite.

Every section has a 'Try This Week' move. That's the part that builds the muscle.

03 Score yourself honestly.

Use the self-check at the end. Nobody else is grading you. This is for you.

04 Share it with another leader.

Hand it to a field leader on your crew, your second-in-command, the foreman across the trailer.

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The Professional Job & Leadership Identity

THE BIG IDEA

You might wear a collar of blue — but make no mistake. You are a high-level decision-maker. You're running people, schedules, budgets, and risk every day. That's a professional job. The question is: do YOU think and act like a professional leader? Because the day you start carrying yourself that way is the day everyone else starts treating you that way too.

KEY MOVES

- **Own the title: Professional Construction Leader.**
- **Your job isn't just the work — it's the people doing it.**
- **Carry yourself like you belong in the room. Because you do.**
- **Your leadership identity sets the standard for the whole crew.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

Nobody handed you a professional job description. You earned it through grit, smarts, and showing up. But here's the trap: most foremen still think of themselves as 'just a foreman.' You're not. You're a leader of a small business running on every jobsite. Start acting like it. The respect follows.

TRY THIS WEEK

The next 50 times somebody asks 'what do you do for a living?' — try a new answer. Not 'I'm a foreman.' Try: 'I lead a construction crew. I run the people side of the job.' See what happens to how YOU show up afterward.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I introduced myself as a leader — not just by job title
- ☐ I made a decision that required judgment, not just experience
- ☐ I showed up to the trailer like I belonged in it
- ☐ I owned my role as a professional — not just a tradesman

Player to Coach

THE BIG IDEA

You got promoted because you were the best player on the team. Now your job isn't to play harder — it's to make everyone else better. That's a totally different sport. Most foremen never make this shift cleanly. They keep doing the work themselves instead of building people who can. That's how you burn out and bottleneck the job.

KEY MOVES

- **Stop doing. Start teaching.**
- **Your skill isn't your hands anymore — it's your people.**
- **Plan and prioritize before you push.**
- **Hold the line. Accountability is the job.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

Look — being the best player is how you got here. But it won't get you anywhere else. The crew doesn't need another set of hands. They need a coach. The day you figure that out is the day you actually become a foreman.

TRY THIS WEEK

Pick one task you'd normally just do yourself. Hand it to someone on your crew. Teach them how. Walk away. Check it at the end of the day. That's the drill. Do it three more times.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I delegated at least one task I usually do myself
- ☐ I asked 'how would you handle this?' instead of telling
- ☐ I caught myself stepping in — and stepped back
- ☐ I praised someone's decision-making, not just the work

Growth Mindset on the Jobsite

THE BIG IDEA

Fixed mindset says: 'This is who I am. Take it or leave it.' Growth mindset says: 'I'm not there yet — but I can get there.' Same crew, same job, same problems. Totally different results. The mindset you bring to the trailer in the morning sets the ceiling for everyone you lead.

KEY MOVES

- **Elevate yourself first. Then elevate others.**
- **Treat every mistake as data, not failure.**
- **Get curious about what you don't know.**
- **Make personal growth part of the job — not a side hobby.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

This is construction. Nobody hands out gold stars. But the foremen who actually get better year after year? They're the ones who decided their learning isn't done. Doesn't matter if you've been at this 5 years or 25 — the moment you stop growing, you start sliding.

TRY THIS WEEK

Find one thing you've been avoiding because you're not good at it — documentation, a software tool, a tough conversation. Spend 15 minutes on it. Three times this week. That's it.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I tried something new without needing to be perfect at it
- ☐ I asked a question I normally wouldn't ask out loud
- ☐ I caught myself in a fixed-mindset thought — and flipped it
- ☐ I told someone on my crew where I'm trying to grow

Motivating the Crew

THE BIG IDEA

Money and benefits keep people from quitting. They don't make people give a damn. The top two real motivators on a jobsite are RECOGNITION and RESPECT. Free. Both of them. And most foremen use neither. The crew that feels seen will outwork the crew that feels paid every single time.

KEY MOVES

- **Influence beats authority. Every time.**
- **Catch people doing it right — and say so out loud.**
- **Know one personal thing about every person you lead.**
- **Recognition in public. Correction in private.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

'The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.' — Ken Blanchard. You can bark orders all day. The crew will do the minimum to avoid getting yelled at. Or you can build influence — and they'll go through a wall for you. Your choice. Every day.

TRY THIS WEEK

Tell three different people on your crew — by name, in front of others — exactly what they did well this week and why it mattered. Specific. No 'good job.' Spell it out.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I gave specific, public recognition to at least 3 people
- ☐ I corrected somebody privately, not in front of the crew
- ☐ I asked someone about something outside of work
- ☐ I used influence — not my title — to get something done

Communicating Like a Leader

THE BIG IDEA

Most jobsite conflict isn't about the work. It's about the way somebody said something. Communication is 7% words, 39% tone, 54% body language. So if you're barking with your arms crossed, your crew is hearing the tone and the body — not the message. And the biggest communication move you can make? Shutting up and actually listening.

KEY MOVES

- **Listen to understand, not to respond.**
- **Paraphrase what you heard before you reply.**
- **Watch your tone and your body — they speak louder than words.**
- **Say thank you. Out loud. On the jobsite. It's not weak — it's leadership.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

Saying 'thanks' on a jobsite isn't soft. It's strategic. It costs nothing, takes two seconds, and builds more loyalty than a bonus. Same with owning a screw-up — say 'that was on me, my bad' and the whole crew will run through fire for you. Try it. You'll see.

TRY THIS WEEK

Catch yourself in one conversation where you'd normally interrupt or jump in with the answer. Don't. Let them finish. Then paraphrase what they said before you respond. See what shifts.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I said 'thank you' to someone on the crew — by name
- ☐ I owned a mistake out loud instead of deflecting
- ☐ I paraphrased before I responded in a tough conversation
- ☐ I caught my body language working against my message

Accountability & Tough Conversations

THE BIG IDEA

Accountability is the part everybody knows they should do and most foremen dodge. Why? Because we want to be liked. We don't want the discomfort. We're hoping the problem fixes itself. It won't. Waiting isn't a solution — it's how small problems become big problems. Boss before friend. Always.

KEY MOVES

- **Be the boss first. The friend second.**
- **Have the conversation when it's small — not when it's a fire.**
- **Be specific: name the behavior, name the impact, name what changes.**
- **Document it. Then follow up. Accountability without follow-through is a lecture.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

Here's what gets in the way: wanting to be one of the group. Wanting to be liked instead of respected. Not wanting to feel weird. I get it. But your crew already knows who's slacking. They're watching to see if you'll do anything about it. When you don't — you lose them. All of them. Even the good ones.

TRY THIS WEEK

Pick the ONE accountability conversation you've been putting off. The one you keep telling yourself you'll handle next week. Have it this week. Use the Tough Conversation Prep Sheet in the back of this guide.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I had a tough conversation I'd been putting off
- ☐ I named the specific behavior — not the person
- ☐ I followed up within 72 hours to check progress
- ☐ I held myself to the same standard I held them to

Coaching, Mentoring & Delegating

THE BIG IDEA

Your job isn't to be the smartest person on the crew. Your job is to build field leaders who are smarter than you were at their stage. That means coaching in the moment, mentoring for the long haul, and delegating like you actually mean it. If you can't take a vacation because the job falls apart — that's not a sign you're indispensable. That's a sign you didn't build anyone.

KEY MOVES

- **Coach in the moment** — short, specific, and on the spot.
- **Mentor over time** — invest in one or two for the long haul.
- **Delegate the outcome, not the steps.** Let them figure it out.
- **The field leaders you build today are your bench for tomorrow.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

The day you leave this jobsite for the last time, the only thing that matters is who you built behind you. Not the buildings — those will outlast nobody's memory. The field leaders you developed. That's the gift. Mentorship is leadership. Period.

TRY THIS WEEK

Pick ONE field leader on your crew with potential. Tell them you see it. Give them one task this week that stretches them. Walk them through it once. Then step back and let them work.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I identified one field leader I'm actively mentoring
- ☐ I delegated something — and didn't take it back
- ☐ I gave on-the-spot coaching without making it a big deal
- ☐ I asked a field leader where they want to be in 5 years

Building Teams and Relationships

THE BIG IDEA

A crew is just a group of people until you turn them into a team. The difference? Trust. Respect. Knowing each other beyond the tools. The best foremen don't just manage people — they BUILD relationships that hold up under pressure. When the schedule slips, the weather turns, or the client gets ugly — a team that trusts each other will out-perform a crew of strangers every single time.

KEY MOVES

- **Know your people beyond the job. One personal thing about every one of them.**
- **Build trust in small moments — not big speeches.**
- **Set the standard for how the crew treats each other.**
- **Strong relationships beat strong rosters. Every time.**

REAL TALK FROM MARK

Construction is a relationship business. Always has been. The crew, the trades, the GC, the owner — the work runs on trust. If your handshake means something, you get the call back. If your crew has each other's backs, you'll get the tough job done when nobody else can. Build the relationships. The work follows.

TRY THIS WEEK

Pick three people on your crew and learn one thing about their life outside of work this week. Their kid's name. Their weekend plans. What they did before construction. That's the foundation. Build on it.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ I learned something new about somebody on my crew
- ☐ I shut down a behavior that was hurting team trust
- ☐ I introduced two people who needed to know each other
- ☐ I built a relationship with another trade or partner this week

PART TWO

FIELD TOOLS

Pull these out when you need them.
Tear them out. Tape them up. Use them.

BUILD THE PEOPLE WHO BUILD THE WORK.

Fixed to Growth Mindset

Your mindset shows up in your words. Listen to yourself this week. When you catch a Fixed Mindset thought — flip it. Write the Growth version next to it. The more reps you put in, the faster the flip becomes automatic.

FIXED MINDSET (CATCH IT)

"I'm just not good at that."

"That's just how I am."

"This crew doesn't get it."

"I already know how to do this."

"It's not worth trying — it'll fail."

"I don't need feedback."

"Other people get the lucky breaks."

GROWTH MINDSET (FLIP IT)

"I'm not good at that — yet. What do I need to learn?"

"That's how I've been. I can choose different."

"How can I lead them better so they do?"

"What could I learn here that I'm missing?"

"Even if it doesn't work, I'll know more than I did."

"What's one thing I could do better?"

"What did they do that I haven't done yet?"

MARK'S RULE

If you hear one of these Fixed Mindset lines come out of your mouth this week — STOP. Don't beat yourself up. Just flip it out loud. Say the Growth version next. That's the rep. That's how the muscle gets built. Five seconds a day. Compounds over a career.

Tough Conversation Prep Sheet

Don't wing the hard ones. Five minutes of prep saves you an hour of cleanup. Work through this before you have the conversation — not during it.

THE BEHAVIOR What specifically did they do (or not do)? Be factual. No labels.

THE IMPACT What did it cost the job, the crew, or the company? Be concrete.

WHAT CHANGES What does 'fixed' look like? When? How will you know?

YOUR PART Did you set clear expectations? Did you give them the tools? Own it if you didn't.

THE FOLLOW-UP When are you checking in? 24 hours? 1 week? Put it on the calendar before you walk in.

DON'T B.S. YOURSELF

If you find yourself saying 'they should just know better' — that's a flag. Maybe they should. But your job is to make sure they do. Set the expectation. Coach the gap. Document the conversation. Then follow through.

The Player-to-Coach Scorecard

Honest score. Nobody's watching. Rate yourself this past week. 1 = I'm still playing. 5 = I'm coaching. Add it up at the bottom.

THIS WEEK I...	1	2	3	4	5
I delegated tasks I could have done faster myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I asked questions instead of giving answers	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I recognized someone's effort out loud — by name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had a tough conversation I'd been avoiding	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I listened more than I talked in a 1-on-1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I caught myself in a fixed-mindset thought — and flipped it	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I checked in with somebody about how they were really doing	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I taught a skill instead of fixing the problem myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I stayed calm when something went sideways	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I made one person on my crew better this week	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

YOUR SCORE

40-50: Coaching like a pro. Keep stretching.

30-39: On the way. Pick 2 to double down on next week.

Below 30: Still playing more than coaching. That's fixable. Pick ONE move and run it daily.

The 30-Day Five Minute Foreman Challenge

One move a day. Five minutes or less. Check it off as you go. By day 30, you won't recognize yourself.

DAY 01 ☐ Introduce yourself as a Professional Construction Leader	DAY 02 ☐ Give specific recognition to one person	DAY 03 ☐ Ask 'how would you handle this?' instead of telling	DAY 04 ☐ Have a tough conversation you've been dodging	DAY 05 ☐ Delegate one task you'd normally do yourself
DAY 06 ☐ Listen — don't interrupt — in one full conversation	DAY 07 ☐ Say thank you to a crew member by name	DAY 08 ☐ Walk the site asking 'what's getting in your way?'	DAY 09 ☐ Teach one person one new skill	DAY 10 ☐ Catch a mistake and own it out loud
DAY 11 ☐ Identify one field leader you'll mentor this year	DAY 12 ☐ Praise effort, not just results	DAY 13 ☐ Eat lunch with somebody you don't usually talk to	DAY 14 ☐ Set one clear expectation in writing	DAY 15 ☐ Build a relationship with another trade or partner
DAY 16 ☐ Ask a field leader about their 5-year plan	DAY 17 ☐ Read one chapter of the book again	DAY 18 ☐ Coach in the moment — short, specific, on the spot	DAY 19 ☐ Check in with somebody you haven't heard from	DAY 20 ☐ Catch one Fixed Mindset thought and flip it
DAY 21 ☐ Recognize somebody in front of their peers	DAY 22 ☐ Document one accountability conversation	DAY 23 ☐ Ask the crew: 'what would make tomorrow better?'	DAY 24 ☐ Delegate the outcome — not the steps	DAY 25 ☐ Learn one personal thing about someone on your crew
DAY 26 ☐ Catch yourself stepping in — and step back	DAY 27 ☐ Follow up on something you said you'd do	DAY 28 ☐ Hand a tough decision to somebody on your crew	DAY 29 ☐ Recognize the whole crew — not just one person	DAY 30 ☐ Pick the ONE move you'll keep doing forever

WHAT'S NEXT

Don't Stop Here.

This guide is the warmup. If you're serious about elevating yourself and the field leaders you build — there's more in the toolbox. Scan to learn more.

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