

12 Leadership Hacks Program

Author: Paul J Hindelang Phone: 248-244-8550 Email: paulj@engineeredleadership.com

Engineered AI - 12 Leadership Hacks Program Compilation
Training Workbook for Supervisors, Leaders, Owners, Key Employees

INTRODUCTION - Why This Workbook Exists

The number one reason companies struggle is not a lack of effort or intelligence. It is the lack of simple, consistent leadership habits that create clarity, reduce waste, and make daily execution predictable.

This workbook teaches 12 foundational Leadership Hacks that:

- Eliminate confusion
- Reduce wasted effort
- Align teams
- Improve execution
- Strengthen culture
- Prepare the organization for AI-powered growth

These habits produce results before any technology is introduced. They make your team more confident, more capable, and more productive. Later, when you add AI tools, your organization will already have the rhythms, systems, and mindset needed for a strong return on investment.

How to Use This Workbook

You can use this workbook as:

- A leadership development tool
- A supervisor and foreman training tool
- A self-study guide for ambitious employees
- A foundation for building standard operating procedures (SOPs)
- A bridge into AI-readiness and digital systems

Recommended learning rhythm:

- One Hack per week over 12 weeks, or
- Two Hacks per week over 6 weeks, or
- A 1–2-day intensive workshop that covers all 12

Each Hack includes:

1. Purpose / Value
2. Why This Matters
3. Example Scenario
4. Step-by-Step Implementation
5. Pitfalls to Avoid
6. Team Exercise
7. Knowledge Check Questions

Overview of the 12 Leadership Hacks

1. Pick One 90-Day Outcome
2. The Weekly Value-Leak Huddle
3. Delete Dead Work
4. Document “Done Right”
5. The 10-Minute Daily Alignment Huddle
6. 30-Day Customer Save Campaign
7. Job Profit Sorting (Green / Yellow / Red)
8. The 8-Number Weekly Scorecard
9. Fix the Bottleneck
10. The Training Loop
11. Decision Filters
12. Rhythm: Weekly, Monthly, Quarterly Cycles

These 12 leadership habits create a strong foundation for the Engineered AI Leadership System and any AI Adoption Program you choose to implement in the future.

HACK 1 – PICK ONE 90-DAY OUTCOME

1. Purpose / Value

Businesses get stuck when they try to improve too many things at once. When everything is a priority, nothing moves.

Choosing ONE meaningful outcome for the next 90 days:

- Creates focus
- Gives your team clarity
- Reduces overwhelm
- Organizes resources
- Accelerates execution
- Increases confidence

A focused team is a powerful team.

2. Why This Matters

Leaders often underestimate the cost of fragmented attention. Employees jump between tasks, shift priorities mid-week, and lack a clear finish line.

This creates:

- Stress
- Rework
- Slow progress
- Confusion
- Missed deadlines
- Frustration across teams

A single 90-day outcome aligns supervisors, owners, and frontline staff on one direction.

3. Example Scenario

A commercial HVAC company was struggling with slow job closeout and invoicing delays. Cash flow was tightening.

They set a single 90-day outcome:

“Reduce invoice cycle time from 21 days to 5 days.”

Every meeting, every improvement, and every initiative pointed toward that one target.

Result:

- 16 days faster cash flow
- Rework reduced by 40%
- Supervisors reported clarity and less firefighting

Small focus led to big improvement.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

Step 1: Choose a meaningful problem

Pick something that truly matters for your team and customers.

Step 2: Define the outcome in measurable terms

Examples:

- “Reduce rework by 20%”
- “Improve customer response time to under 2 hours”
- “Increase weekly production completion by 15%”

Step 3: Share the ONE outcome with all teams

Everyone should know what the next 90 days are about.

Step 4: Align weekly meetings around it

Every discussion should answer the question:

“Does this move us closer to the 90-day target?”

Step 5: Track progress visibly

Use a simple chart, whiteboard, or dashboard that everyone can see.

Step 6: Celebrate progress and adjust

Recognize wins. If needed, adjust the plan without changing the outcome.

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Choosing too many outcomes
- Making the target vague
- Not communicating it daily or weekly
- Changing the target halfway through
- Failing to assign clear ownership

6. Team Exercise

1. As a group, list your biggest challenges.
2. Circle the one challenge that would create the most value if solved.
3. Write a clear, measurable 90-day outcome for that challenge.
4. Share the outcome with the team.
5. Describe what success “looks like” in simple terms.
6. Commit to tracking it weekly for the next 90 days.

7. Knowledge Check – Short Answer (5 Questions)

1. Why is focus on one 90-day outcome effective vs. multiple priorities?
2. Provide one example of a measurable 90-day outcome.
3. What is the benefit of aligning weekly meetings to the 90-day target?
4. What is one pitfall to avoid when selecting a 90-day outcome?
5. Why is visible tracking important for team progress?

8. Knowledge Check – True/False (5 Questions)

1. T/F: Choosing multiple 90-day outcomes increases the team’s ability to multitask effectively.
2. T/F: A 90-day outcome should be measurable and clearly defined.
3. T/F: Changing the 90-day goal at halfway is OK if new issues appear.
4. T/F: A single 90-day outcome helps reduce overwhelm for supervisors and employees.
5. T/F: Weekly tracking is optional. Progress will naturally occur anyway.

HACK 2 – THE WEEKLY VALUE-LEAK HUDDLE

1. Purpose / Value

Every company leaks time, money, and energy in small ways every day. Most leaks go unnoticed and quietly drain profit.

A Weekly Value-Leak Huddle:

- Catches waste early
- Reduces frustration
- Empowers employees
- Improves systems
- Saves thousands of dollars annually
- Builds a culture of continuous improvement

This hack reliably creates fast return on investment.

2. Why This Matters

Leadership often sees the big issues, but frontline workers see the tiny leaks that eat profit.

Examples of leaks:

- Missing materials
- Unclear instructions
- Repeated questions
- Waiting time
- Poor handoffs
- Miscommunication
- Unnecessary steps

One leak fixed each week equals 52 improvements per year. If five supervisors do this, that is 260 improvements in a year.

3. Example Scenario

A landscaping company used this hack and identified:

- Crews waiting 20 minutes each morning for materials
- Supervisors re-explaining the same instructions daily
- Two-way trips that doubled travel time

Within two weeks, they redesigned prep routines and fixed communication gaps.

Savings:

- More than 6 labor hours per day
- Over \$30,000 annual value
- Stronger morale and less frustration

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

Step 1: Schedule a weekly 15–20-minute meeting

Hold it at the same time every week.

Step 2: Ask three simple questions

1. Where did we lose time or money last week?
2. Why did it happen?
3. What simple fix can we test this week?

Step 3: Choose ONE improvement

Not five. Not three. One.

Step 4: Assign ownership

Someone must be responsible for testing the fix.

Step 5: Review results the following week

Keep what works. Replace what does not. Repeat weekly.

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Turning the huddle into a complaint session
- Trying to solve every leak at once
- Not assigning ownership
- Not tracking fixes
- Blaming people instead of fixing processes

6. Team Exercise

1. Individually, list 10 small leaks you experience daily.
2. Rank them by time or money cost.
3. Select the top ONE leak to fix.
4. Identify a simple change you can test this week.
5. Assign an owner to test the change.
6. Report back next week with results.

7. Knowledge Check – Short Answer (5 Questions)

1. What is the main goal of the Weekly Value-Leak Huddle?
2. Why should only one improvement be selected each week?
3. How can the huddle improve culture over time?
4. Give one example of a value leak in your area.
5. Why is it important to focus on fixing the process and not blaming people?

8. Knowledge Check – True/False (5 Questions)

1. T/F: The purpose of the value-leak huddle is to assign blame for mistakes.
2. T/F: Fixing one leak per week leads to steady, predictable improvement.
3. T/F: The huddle should identify and fix as many leaks as possible each session.
4. T/F: Frontline employees often see value leaks that leaders miss.
5. T/F: Value leaks only occur in operations, not in office or support teams.

HACK 3 – DELETE DEAD WORK

1. Purpose / Value

“Dead work” is any task, report, meeting, or routine that no longer creates meaningful value for customers, the team, or the business.

Deleting dead work:

- Frees up time for high-payoff activities
- Reduces frustration and burnout
- Shortens lead times
- Improves morale
- Creates capacity for new initiatives (including AI later)

This is one of the fastest ways to reclaim hours without hiring more people.

2. Why This Matters

Most organizations are carrying years of legacy work:

- Reports no one reads anymore
- Meetings that exist out of habit
- Double-entry and duplicate systems
- Approvals that add no real control

All of this clutters the day and makes people feel overwhelmed. When leaders intentionally stop doing low-value work, energy and attention shift toward what truly moves the needle.

3. Example Scenario

A 25-person electrical contractor realized foremen were filling out three separate job logs for each project: one on paper, one in a spreadsheet, and one in an old system “for accounting.”

They mapped the flow and discovered accounting only used one of them. The other two existed “because we always did it that way.”

By eliminating the extra logs, they recovered 4–6 hours per week, per foreman, and saw fewer errors and less frustration.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

Step 1: List recurring tasks

Have each supervisor and key employee list their recurring weekly and monthly tasks.

Step 2: Rate each task for value

For each item, ask:

- Does this directly serve a customer?
- Does this directly help us make better decisions?
- Does this fulfill a legal or safety requirement?

If the answer is “no” to all, it is a dead-work candidate.

Step 3: Mark DEAD / REDUCE / REDESIGN

- DEAD: Stop it completely.
- REDUCE: Do it less often or shorten it.
- REDESIGN: Combine or streamline it.

Step 4: Get leadership approval

Confirm with owners and managers so nothing essential is removed by mistake.

Step 5: Communicate clearly

Tell the team:

- What work is stopping
- When it is stopping
- What replaces it, if anything

Step 6: Track time reclaimed

Estimate hours saved per week and redirect that time into high-payoff activities such as sales, training, process improvement, and customer care.

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Killing tasks that do have legal or financial compliance value
- Not checking with stakeholders before deleting
- Failing to redirect time to meaningful work
- Letting dead work creep back in after a few months

6. Team Exercise

1. Individually, list your top 10 recurring tasks or reports.
2. Circle any that “nobody seems to use or care about.”
3. As a group, create three columns on a whiteboard: DEAD / REDUCE / REDESIGN.
4. Place each low-value task in one of the columns.
5. Choose 3–5 items to act on this month.
6. Estimate hours are reclaimed and agree on where those hours will be reinvested.

7. Knowledge Check – Multiple Choice (5 Questions)

1. What is “dead work”?
 - A. Tasks that employees enjoy but take extra time
 - B. Work that is required by leadership
 - C. Tasks or projects that produce no meaningful value
 - D. Work completed incorrectly
2. What is the first step when eliminating dead work?
 - A. Assign blame
 - B. Identify all recurring tasks
 - C. Increase staff to handle the workload
 - D. Remove all customer requests
3. Which of the following is a common symptom of dead work?
 - A. Clear communication
 - B. Duplicate efforts
 - C. Strong morale
 - D. High profitability

4. What is the primary benefit of removing dead work?

- A. More paperwork
- B. Increased employee stress
- C. Freed time for high-value work
- D. Longer meetings

5. Who should be involved in identifying dead work?

- A. Only senior executives
- B. Only frontline staff
- C. Everyone
- D. Customers only

Correct Answers: 1–C, 2–B, 3–B, 4–C, 5–C

8. Knowledge Check – True/False (5 Questions)

- 1. Dead work is usually easy to see and obvious to managers. (False)
- 2. Removing dead work increases available time for higher-value tasks. (True)
- 3. Dead work often continues simply because “we’ve always done it.” (True)
- 4. Eliminating dead work typically reduces morale. (False)
- 5. The goal is to eliminate some work even if it is valuable. (False)

HACK 4 – DOCUMENT “DONE RIGHT”

1. Purpose / Value

This Hack builds a clear, shared definition of what “good work” looks like for key tasks. Documenting “Done Right” reduces rework, speeds onboarding, improves quality, and eliminates guesswork.

2. Why This Matters

Teams struggle because everyone imagines a different version of “done.” Without a standard, inconsistency becomes normal and mistakes multiply.

3. Example Scenario

A medical cleaning company used a one-page checklist with pictures for room sanitization. Complaints dropped 60%, training time in ½. half.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Observe your best performer
- Capture materials, sequence, and quality checks
- Add simple visuals, post the sheet and train from it
- Test with an average performer
- Review quarterly

5. Pitfalls to Avoid: Overexplain, Skip user testing, Using old documents

6. Team Exercise --- Document one recurring task as a team using the template.

HACK 5 – THE 10-MINUTE DAILY ALIGNMENT HUDDLE

1. Purpose / Value

A short stand-up meeting eliminates early confusion, aligns priorities, and removes obstacles before they cause delays.

2. Why This Matters

Without alignment, teams waste hours each day on re-communication, missing tools, and conflicting priorities.

3. Example Scenario

A roofing company cut wasted travel time dramatically by using a 10-minute morning huddle to review jobs and materials.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Fixed time and place
- Use a four-question agenda
- Capture blockers
- End with verbal clarity

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Solving problems in the huddle
- Inconsistent timing
- Allowing side conversations

6. Team Exercise --- Run a practice huddle and review clarity afterward.

HACK 6 – 30-DAY CUSTOMER SAVE CAMPAIGN

1. Purpose / Value

A structured outreach program rescues at-risk customers and stabilizes revenue.

2. Why This Matters

Most customers leave quietly—without complaining. A save campaign detects and repairs issues early.

3. Example Scenario

A service company retained 70% of at-risk accounts using a four-touch personal outreach sequence.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Define at-risk signals
- Build the list monthly
- Create a four-touch campaign
- Assign ownership
- Track outcomes

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Waiting too long
- Using generic scripts
- Becoming defensive

6. Team Exercise --- Identify at-risk signals for your business.

HACK 7 – JOB PROFIT SORTING (GREEN / YELLOW / RED)

1. Purpose / Value

Sorting jobs reveals which work types generate profit—and which quietly destroy it.

2. Why This Matters

Companies often run unprofitable work without realizing it.

3. Example Scenario

A contractor discovered patch jobs were unprofitable and redesigned pricing and scope. Profits rose meaningfully.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Review 3–6 months of work
- Assign Green/Yellow/Red
- Diagnose Red work
- Strengthen Yellow
- Scale Green

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Using estimates instead of real data
- Ignoring non-financial pain
- Keeping bad customers

6. Team Exercise --- Sort the last 10–20 jobs by margin and difficulty.

HACK 8 – THE 8-NUMBER WEEKLY SCORECARD

1. Purpose / Value

A small set of KPIs provides a clear picture of performance and prevents surprises.

2. Why This Matters

Leaders often run on feelings instead of facts. Scorecards align discussion and reveal trendlines.

3. Example Scenario

A distributor used an 8-number scorecard to quickly reduce errors and aged receivables.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Brainstorm metrics
- Narrow to 5–8
- Assign owners
- Review weekly
- Adjust quarterly

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Too many metrics
- Measuring the easy instead of the important
- Reviewing without action

6. Team Exercise --- Build your first 8-number scorecard.

HACK 9 – FIX THE BOTTLENECK

1. Purpose / Value

Fixing the true constraint increases total output without extra labor.

2. Why This Matters

Improving non-bottleneck areas creates no overall gain.

3. Example Scenario

A packaging bottleneck fixed through layout redesign increased output 18% with no added staff.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Map the flow
- Identify pileups
- Confirm bottleneck
- Test small fixes
- Measure throughput

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Fixing easy areas instead
- Large complex changes
- Not measuring before/after

6. Team Exercise --- Map one core workflow and identify its bottleneck.

HACK 10 – THE TRAINING LOOP

1. Purpose / Value

A repeatable cycle that builds consistent skills and reduces mistakes.

2. Why This Matters

One-time training creates uneven performance. The loop creates mastery.

3. Example Scenario

A plumbing company cut callbacks 30% using the Loop.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Demonstrate
- Practice
- Observe
- Coach
- Repeat

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Interrupting practice
- Giving vague feedback
- One-and-done training

6. Team Exercise --- Practice the loop with a simple task.

HACK 11 – DECISION FILTERS

1. Purpose / Value

Filters reduce leader overwhelm and speed up execution.

2. Why This Matters

Too many unfiltered decisions choke the organization.

3. Example Scenario

A service business owner freed 8–10 hours weekly by delegating reversible, aligned decisions.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Teach filters
- Apply to every decision
- Delegate reversible items
- Clarify decision rights

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Keeping decisions “just in case”
- Delegating without expectations

6. Team Exercise --- Sort 10 recent decisions using the filters.

HACK 12 – RHYTHM: WEEKLY, MONTHLY, QUARTERLY CYCLES

1. Purpose / Value

Execution rhythm prevents stop-start momentum and builds steady progress.

2. Why This Matters

Without rhythm, goals die quickly and chaos fills the gap.

3. Example Scenario

A mechanical contractor tripled clarity by adopting weekly check-ins and quarterly resets.

4. Step-by-Step Implementation

- Define weekly rhythm
- Define monthly rhythm
- Define quarterly reset
- Calendarize everything
- Keep agendas simple

5. Pitfalls to Avoid

- Meeting overload
- Letting rhythms slip
- Not assigning follow-ups

6. Team Exercise --- Design your ideal company rhythm for the next 12 months.