

EXERCISE: YOUR INFLUENCES (A PRIMER)

This writing exercise is designed to get you thinking about the people and experiences that have influenced your career path and entrepreneurial journey. You may not have specific answers for every question right away and that is OK. Take additional time to reflect and revisit the questions you don't immediately have answers for another time. It is important that you complete as much of this exercise as possible.

1. What were your favorite subjects/extracurricular activities when you were in school (grades K-12)? What made them interesting/exciting to you?
2. What books/literature did you read as a child/young adult that influenced your life? How did they impact you?
3. What music/art/media did you experience as a child/young adult that influenced your life? How did they impact you?
4. What films/television did you view as a child/young adult that influenced your life? How did they impact you?
5. What community service did you do as a child/young adult? How did it impact you?
6. When you were a child, what career/business/lifestyle did you imagine for yourself? Why did it interest you?
7. When you were a young adult, what career/business/lifestyle did you imagine for yourself? Why did it interest you?
8. When did you discover you were entrepreneurial and how did you come to the realization? What action did you take?

EXERCISE: YOUR INFLUENCES (AS A CHILD/YOUNG ADULT)

This writing exercise is designed to help you zero in on specific people and events—both positive and negative—that influenced the direction of your life and career. If you're unable to recall a person or event in one of the categories, give yourself time to digest the question and come back to it later. Start by thinking about your childhood up to age 18.

1. **Family:** Write about one or two of the most influential family moments or events you experienced as a child or young adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
2. **Education:** Write about one or two of the most influential educational/school moments or events you experienced as a child or young adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
3. **Mentor:** Write about one or two of the most influential moments or events with a mentor/teacher/coach that you experienced as a child or young adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
4. **Career:** Write about one or two of the most influential job/career moments or events you experienced as a child or young adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
5. **Major life event:** Write about one or two of the most influential/impactful life events you experienced as a child or young adult (illness, death, parents' divorce, moving, changing schools, etc.). What was the event? Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What did you learn?

EXERCISE: YOUR INFLUENCES (AS AN ADULT)

Now think about specific influences on your career path as an adult and write about those specific people and events. Again, consider both positive and negative experiences you've had. If you can't think of a specific person or event in one of the categories, take some time away from the exercise and come back to it later.

1. Family: Write about one or two of the most impactful family moments or events you experienced as an adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
2. Education: Write about one or two of the most impactful educational/college/university moments or events you experienced as an adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
3. Mentor: Write about one or two of the most impactful moments or events with a mentor/teacher/coach that you experienced as an adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
4. Career: Write about one or two of the most impactful job/career moments or events you experienced as an adult. Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What was/were the outcome(s) or lesson(s) learned?
5. Major life event: Write about one or two of the most impactful life events you experienced as an adult (illness, death, parents' divorce, moving, changing schools, etc.). What was the event? Who was/were the influential person(s) involved? What was your age at the time? Why does it stand out? What did you learn?