

100 WAYS INTO IMPACT, INFLUENCE & LEADERSHIP

**The Project Expert's Guide to
Packaging Expertise
Into Impact**

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Hi, I'm James

James Compton is the founder of Limitless Leading – a transformational membership for project experts ready to step beyond their job titles and into leading with impact. With over 20 years leading global change programmes, and a former IIBA Professional Development Director, James blends neuroscience, ancient wisdom, and practical frameworks to help people redesign their identity, overcome self-doubt, and create careers that feel meaningful, not mechanical. His clients have gone on to secure promotions, industry recognition, and new ventures by unlocking the leader within.



The Project Expert's Guide to Packaging Expertise Into Impact



What's In This Guide?

This guide gives you an honest reflection of the challenges and adventure of your project expertise. A role in this space is the **best positioning for now and the future**, but it comes with challenges - to keep going, keep growing and make sure everything you're doing is meaningful, impactful and fulfilling. This guide will take you from where you are now to where you can truly be - and it concludes with 50 possible ideas for your future across 10 themes which aligns with your personality, skillset and risk appetite. Enjoy!

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Chapter 1:

Why You're More Than Your Job Title

If you've ever thought "I'm just a Business Analyst" or "I'm only a Project Manager," you know the feeling of being boxed in. Job titles keep HR departments tidy, but they do nothing for your potential. They shrink your whole being down to a line on LinkedIn, when in truth you're carrying around a wealth of transferable skills that could open doors into leadership, influence, and impact.

I know this because I lived in that box for far too long.

For twenty years I was a highly paid consultant, the go-to person for complex change projects. On the outside, I had everything: money, reputation, the network. But on the inside, I was anxious, frustrated, and stuck. I was far away from my best work, my best self.

The breaking point came on a transformation project in an investment bank. Politics everywhere, no strong programme manager, and me – the BA – holding everything together. The stakes were high, the vendor missed critical deliveries, and eventually the project snapped.

And so did I.

In a meeting to plan how we'd "cover the story" with the client, my body betrayed me. Heart racing. Sweaty palms. Vision blurring. I rushed out, gasping for air, convinced I was dying. It was my first panic attack, and it floored me.

That moment was my wake-up call.

Soon after, I asked for feedback from a senior sponsor. His words burned into me:

"You shouldn't stay in the background. Step up and make yourself more visible."

It terrified me. Visibility was the very thing I had avoided my whole career. But I knew he was right. If I wanted to do something meaningful, something bigger, I couldn't hide anymore.

That breakdown became my breakthrough. It was the signal that my identity as "just a BA" had to end.



Chapter 2: Recognise You're Actually A Leader

Here's the truth: leadership isn't a job title, **it's an identity.**

The old-fashioned model told us leadership was about hierarchy and seniority. You moved up the ladder, got more authority, and people reported to you. But in today's world, that model is broken.

Modern leadership is about empathy, listening, and guiding others through uncertainty. And that's exactly what you do.

And the most important form of leadership?

Leading yourself.

Authentic leadership is not about being the loudest voice in the room. It's about being the voice of clarity when others are confused. It's about influence, not authority.

And chances are, you're already doing this – just not naming it leadership.





Chapter 3:

Career Progress is Broken

We were raised on the story of the career ladder: climb step by step, wait for your turn, eventually get promoted. That story no longer fits. The ladder is splintered, and in many industries it doesn't exist at all.

What counts now is not technical seniority but human connection and adaptability. The World Economic Forum calls it out clearly: the skills of the future are creativity, resilience, and emotional intelligence.

And yet, most professionals drift. They keep their head down, wait to be noticed, and ten years slip by. Drift is the real career killer.

The real problem isn't just that the ladder is broken – it's that we're too busy climbing to step back and see what we actually want. Rather than pushing further up the ladder, real leadership clarity comes from creating space to reconnect with your authentic vision.

The people who thrive are the ones who reset, reinvent, and refuse to be boxed in by a title.



Chapter 4: The Change Skillset, Turned Inward

This is the great irony: change professionals are brilliant at helping others move forward, but we rarely apply the same tools to ourselves.

We run workshops that unlock vision. We create clarity from chaos. We align warring stakeholders. We design transformation journeys.

And yet when it comes to our own careers, we stall.

The truth is, your change toolkit works just as powerfully when you turn it inward. You can use it to illuminate your blind spots, shift your perspective, and design the next version of yourself.

And here's the key: you're not starting again. You're not throwing away years of experience. You're pivoting. **You're already 70% qualified for many leadership paths you haven't yet considered.**





Chapter 5:

Finding the Impactful Leader Within You

Leadership begins not with a promotion but with a mirror.

- **Your nature** – the quirks and talents that make you unique. Even traits you once labelled “weakness” (perfectionism, introversion, neurodivergence) can become defining strengths.
- **Your purpose** – the passions and missions that give you energy. When you connect to these, your work stops draining you and starts fuelling you.
- **Your why** – the deeper motivation behind everything you do. Not just a pay cheque, but contribution, meaning, legacy.

When these align, leadership flows naturally. Not the corporate version of leadership that demands perfection, but authentic leadership – messy, human, real.



Chapter 6: Unblocking the Biggest Growth Barriers

So why don't more of us step into this? Because of the stories we tell ourselves:

- "I'm not unique."
- "Networking isn't for me."
- "I overthink everything."
- "I don't have time. I'm not good enough. It's too late."

None of these are facts. They're propaganda. Internal stories that keep us safe, small, and invisible.

These internal stories persist because we never give ourselves permission to pause and examine them. When we create sacred space away from the noise – even ten minutes daily – these limiting beliefs lose their grip.

The truth? Uniqueness is your advantage. Introverts can build networks on their own terms. Analytical overthinking, channelled properly, becomes foresight. And self-doubt is not proof you're incapable – it's proof you care.

Every barrier you face can be reframed into fuel.



Pip unblocked her biggest barriers to become BA of the Year 2023, paid more, sponsored for her PhD and a step up into a leading role.



Chapter 7: Why 100 Ideas?

Now comes the fun part.

This guide isn't here to hand you a single "five-step formula" to impact. It's here to open many doors by presenting validated ideas to you.

Some high-risk. Some low-risk. Some visible, some behind the scenes. But all of them possible starting points for the impactful expert already inside you.

The goal is not to pick one "correct" path, but to see what resonates, combine ideas, and sketch your own authentic identity.

Because your career isn't a ladder. It's a canvas. And creating impact & showing up to lead is not a job description – it's a design you co-create.

In the next chapter of this guide, you'll find the first 50 ideas which we curated from a live workshop with real professionals in your field. These people are **part of my community**, creating impact in their work today, pushing themselves to grow.

And the mantra we use which one of our prize members inspired is this:

"It's not our day job that gets us recognised. It's the stuff we do outside of it that does."

That's why we create our own projects in Limitless Leading. That's why we work on creating time freedom, unboxing ourselves from our limited role, and creating ways to build strategic visibility.

As a first step in our journey together I invite you to peruse the 10 themes on the next page and just get a sense of which 1, 2 or 3 stand out to you. Then go to the page that theme is expanded on to get ideas for what you could do and make sure it matches your mindset.

After this?

If this guide made you think, made you inspired, made you say 'Yes, I want to create more impact' then you could be a fit for my Limitless Leading membership - where we solve **every** single problem that's stopping you moving forward and growing your career properly. We can speak, and if you're a fit then I'll invite you in.



Chapter 8: 50 Ideas, 10 Themes - Find Your Match

So here's the 10 themes. Pick as many as resonate with you and then explore the ideas, what you need to succeed and then score if it's for you. This way you can pick what's authentic to you.

Once you're done, email me at james@confidentsage.com and tell me what spoke to you and why. I read and reply to every email.

Mentorship & Coaching

Guiding individuals or teams to grow through your experience and support

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Thought Leadership & Industry Influence

Building visibility and credibility as a recognised voice in your field

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Strategic Entrepreneurship

Turning expertise into your own business, product, or venture

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Intrapreneurship

Acting like an entrepreneur within your company to lead innovation

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Community Building & Advocacy

Connecting people around shared goals and representing their needs

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Innovation & Product Development

Creating new solutions, tools, or services to meet unmet needs

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Facilitation & High-Impact Workshops

Designing and leading group sessions that spark collaboration and results

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Consulting & Advisory Roles

Becoming the trusted problem-solver and advisor leaders turn to

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Public Speaking & Training

Educating, inspiring, and engaging larger audiences through your expertise

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Cross-Disciplinary Leadership

Leading across business, tech, and operations to make big, complex change happen

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Theme 1: Mentorship & Coaching

What's this about? Guiding individuals or teams to grow through your experience and support

Top 5 ideas

- Travel the world teaching in diverse disciplines
- Shadowing programme for Junior and aspiring BAs
- Mentorship for charity or SME BAs (low budget, high impact)
- "Lunch & Learn" sessions inside organisations
- Set up a buddy system for new joiners

Who you need to be to succeed

Enjoy guiding others and seeing them grow

Naturally supportive and empathetic

Patient, approachable, and a good listener

Gain satisfaction from helping colleagues succeed

What you need to face or let go of

Imposter syndrome

Fear of not adding value

Reluctance to step into authority

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 2: Thought Leadership & Industry Influence

What's this about? Building visibility and credibility as a recognised voice in your field

Top 5 ideas

- Write a book on change and analysis
- Launch a podcast with diverse, inspiring guests
- Deliver talks at conferences and industry events
- Regular, insight-driven LinkedIn posts
- Share thought leadership on industry trends and organisational strategy

Who you need to be to succeed

Curious and opinionated about industry trends

Confident sharing ideas publicly (or eager to build this muscle)

Enjoys writing, speaking, or debating

Likes to inspire others and shape conversations

What you need to face or let go of

Fear of visibility

Overthinking content quality

Comparisons with others

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 3: Strategic Entrepreneurship

What's this about? Turning expertise into your own business, product, or venture

Top 5 ideas

- Create and sell digital courses on change skills
- Build a consulting business for start-ups
- Set up joint ventures to build legacy and scale impact
- Develop web & social media skills to fuel business growth
- Launch a passive income portfolio to support entrepreneurial freedom

Who you need to be to succeed

Self-starter with a high tolerance for risk and ambiguity

Enjoys building things from scratch

Sees opportunities where others see problems

Driven by independence and legacy building

What you need to face or let go of

Risk aversion

Fear of failure

Financial insecurity

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 4: Intrapreneurship

What's this about? Acting like an entrepreneur within your company to lead innovation

Top 5 ideas

- Set up an internal BA service to formalise impact
- Become the internal troubleshooter / "fixer"
- Lead cross-grade workshops to flatten hierarchy and solve problems
- Create cross-disciplinary Communities of Practice
- Establish internal mentorship programmes

Who you need to be to succeed

Enjoys innovating within established organisations

Skilled at navigating internal politics and winning buy-in

Influences without formal authority

Likes improving processes and systems from the inside

What you need to face or let go of

Resistance to internal politics

Fear of rejection by leaders

Low organisational confidence

Suitability Check Is this for me?

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 5: Community Building & Advocacy

What's this about?

Connecting people around shared goals and representing their needs

Top 5 ideas

- Establish Communities of Practice for BAs
- Build a community for young BAs to share and connect
- Start a BA consulting/project management business as a hub for others
- Collaborate with User-Centred Design to bridge disciplines
- Leverage collaborative initiatives across skills instead of hierarchy

Who you need to be to succeed

Connector who thrives on relationships

Believes in fairness, inclusion, and collaboration

Enjoys bringing diverse people together

Energised by helping others find belonging and support

What you need to face or let go of

Shyness in group settings

Fear of lack of engagement

Overcommitting time

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 6: Innovation & Product Development

What's this about? Creating new solutions, tools, or services to meet unmet needs

Top 5 ideas

- Facilitate design thinking and innovation management sessions
- Develop apps that encourage positive behaviour change
- Explore automation and Artificial Intelligence specialist pathways
- Introduce new tools/technologies into the workplace
- Create personal products and test their market fit

Who you need to be to succeed

Creative, experimental, and future-focused

Curious about new tools, tech, and trends

Loves prototyping and testing ideas

Comfortable with trial-and-error and learning through iteration

What you need to face or let go of

Fear of untested ideas

Perfectionism

Resistance to ambiguity

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 7: Facilitation & High-Impact Workshops

What's this about? Designing and leading group sessions that spark collaboration and results

Top 5 ideas

- Lead culture-change workshops that win hearts and shift mindsets
- Run user research sessions that give voice to end-users
- Use technology to deliver on-demand, meaningful content
- Join Continuous Improvement initiatives
- Design workshops on themes that directly improve lives

Who you need to be to succeed

Confident in group settings, even with conflict

Strong communicator and listener

Enjoys structuring discussions to unlock insights

Energised by helping groups reach clarity and consensus

What you need to face or let go of

Stage fright

Fear of losing control of group

Self-doubt in managing conflict

Suitability Check **Is this for me?**

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 8: Consulting & Advisory Roles

What's this about? Becoming the trusted problem-solver and advisor leaders turn to

Top 5 ideas

- Specialist consulting in a niche (e.g., Agile, AI, demand planning)
- Help SMEs escape “Excel hell” with an AI platform
- Develop structured delivery frameworks for clients
- Coach teams to improve their businesses and scale sustainably
- Build and lead BA/product teams in start-up organisations

Who you need to be to succeed

Analytical and structured thinker

Trusted advisor personality — calm, confident, credible

Enjoys diagnosing problems and offering solutions

Comfortable challenging clients or stakeholders constructively

What you need to face or let go of

Imposter syndrome

Fear of charging for value

Discomfort challenging clients

Suitability Check Is this for me?

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 9: Public Speaking & Training

What's this about? Educating, inspiring, and engaging larger audiences through your expertise

Top 5 ideas

- Deliver keynote speeches at industry conferences
- Host summits bringing together cross-disciplinary speakers
- Present engaging, thought-provoking talks that drive change
- Facilitate learning sessions inside organisations
- Run workshops to improve public speaking confidence for others

Who you need to be to succeed

Storyteller at heart, enjoys engaging an audience

Energised rather than drained by being on stage

Passionate about teaching or inspiring change

Confident or aspiring to become confident in front of groups

What you need to face or let go of

Fear of public speaking

Performance anxiety

Worrying about audience judgment

Suitability Check Is this for me?

Appeals to me

/ 10

Total

Matches my skill / personality

/ 10

I could overcome the challenges

/ 10



Theme 10: Cross-Disciplinary Leadership

What's this about? Leading across business, tech, and operations to make big, complex change happen

Top 5 ideas

- Establish Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP) setups in SMEs
- Run leadership networks to nurture emerging leaders
- Manage complex projects and programmes across silos
- Cross-pollinate ideas between industries for innovation
- Lead initiatives that bridge business, technology, and customer needs

Who you need to be to succeed

Systems thinker with broad interests across domains
 Comfortable leading diverse teams and building bridges
 Natural at seeing the “big picture” while managing details
 Values collaboration across functions and industries

What you need to face or let go of

Self-doubt about authority
 Fear of stepping outside domain
 Conflict avoidance

<u>Suitability Check</u> Is this for me?	Appeals to me	<input type="text" value="/ 10"/>	Total <input type="text"/>
	Matches my skill / personality	<input type="text" value="/ 10"/>	
	I could overcome the challenges	<input type="text" value="/ 10"/>	