SECOND IN COMMAND CLUB · LESSON 3 TOOL

The Partnership Operating *Manual*

The document that eliminates the most damaging phrase in any Dreamer-Driver relationship: I thought you knew.

Jake and Sara's partnership began to break down not when things got hard, but when assumptions went unspoken. A Partnership Operating Manual is the document that eliminates the most damaging phrase in any Dreamer-Driver relationship: I thought you knew.

This is a dual-sided document, one page for the Dreamer and one for the Driver, that converts the general intention to work well together into a specific operating agreement. It is completed together, ideally before the real work begins, and reviewed regularly as the relationship evolves.

PART ONE

How to Win with Me

Written by the Dreamer, for the Driver

WHAT TO CAPTURE

How I delegate best. Do I give full context upfront, or do I prefer to hand you the big picture and trust you to fill in the execution?

How I want to be updated. Frequency, format, and when something is urgent enough to interrupt my focus immediately.

My communication preferences. Which channel for what kind of topic. What topics must be flagged immediately regardless of timing.

How I make decisions. Do I decide quickly, or do I need to process? Do I want options with your recommendation, or do I want to arrive at the conclusion myself?

What good support looks like for me. How to turn what lives in my head into a system. When I want you to hold me accountable to my own commitments.

My personal operating style. When I do my best thinking. What I look like when I am overwhelmed and how you can help. What frustrates me and how I prefer to address it.

My calendar expectations. When I am protected, when I am available. How to handle meeting requests.

PART TWO

How to Win with Me

Written by the Driver, for the Dreamer

WHAT TO CAPTURE

My communication standards. What channel for what kind of task. Expected response times. What constitutes an urgent interruption.

How I receive task delegation. What I need in order to execute well. Clear outcomes, deadlines, and any guardrails I should know about.

My personal operating standards. My commitment to initiative, follow-through, and surfacing problems before escalating them.

My calendar rules. When I do deep work. When interruptions are always welcome. How I structure my time to show up at my best for you.

How I want to grow. What I am learning, where I want to develop, and what opportunities in this role align with my own mountain.

What I need to do my best work. Space, feedback cadence, the kinds of problems I am most energized by.

How to Use This Tool

DREAMER PERSPECTIVE	DRIVER PERSPECTIVE
The Partnership Operating Manual is most powerful when you treat it like a contract, not a bureaucratic form but a real commitment between two people who are choosing to move mountains together. Block 60 minutes. Fill out your side in advance. Ask your Driver to fill out theirs. Then sit together and walk through both sides. Look for the places where your expectations do not match your Driver's needs. Those gaps are the future friction you are preventing right now. Revisit it at the 90-day mark, and again at any major inflection point: a new hire, a pivot in strategy, an acquisition conversation. Relationships drift when the operating agreement becomes invisible. This document makes it visible again.	Complete your side of the Partnership Operating Manual before you sit down with your Dreamer, not as homework but as an act of respect. Showing up with your thinking already done signals that you take this relationship seriously. Pay special attention to the section on how you want to grow. Most Drivers never say this out loud, and most Dreamers never ask. The Dreamer-Driver relationship that lasts is the one where both people can see how this work moves them toward their own mountain, not just someone else's. Sara's letter to Jake was, at its core, a Partnership Operating Manual that she built under pressure. Do not wait until that moment. Build it now.