

The 5-QUESTION CLARITY CHECK

A new job. A hard conversation. An acquisition. A shift you didn't see coming.

In high-stakes moments, it's easy to respond before you've processed what's actually happening. As an executive coach, I help leaders navigate complexity, communicate with clarity, and lead with confidence under pressure. These are the five questions I ask clients to sit with first, before they act.

Pull this out before a difficult conversation, a major decision, or any moment where you feel the urge to react before you've thought it through. Work through it in five minutes. Come back to it as many times as you need.

1. WHAT IS ACTUALLY TRUE?

Separate what you know for certain from what you're assuming or fearing. Are you reacting to facts or to a story you are telling yourself?

2. WHO IS THIS AFFECTING, AND HOW?

List the people most impacted, including yourself. What do they likely need to hear from you right now?

3. CULTURAL INTEGRATION

What do you want this moment to say about you later? This is not just about how you want to show up today.

4. WHAT AM I AVOIDING...AND FOR WHOSE COMFORT?

Is there a conversation, decision, or truth you've been sitting on? Whose discomfort are you actually protecting? Theirs or your own?

5. WHAT IS ONE SMALL STEP I CAN TAKE TODAY?

Not the whole plan. Just the next step that moves you forward.

WHERE TO FOCUS

If most answers came easily, you are already leading from clarity. Trust that. The leaders who handle high-stakes moments well aren't the ones who have all the answers; they're the ones who trust themselves enough to pause, reflect, and act from a grounded place.

If a few gave you pause, step away briefly and run through the questions again. Clarity rarely arrives in the moment. Give it time and be honest with yourself about what you already know but may not be ready to face.

If you struggled to answer most of these, that's not a weakness; it's a signal. This kind of honest self-dialogue is harder than it looks, and it's exactly the work that separates reactive leaders from intentional ones. That's where I can help.