

# INSPIRE

“The key to sustaining  
the spark is turning it  
into a flame.”

## DIRECTIONS:

---

**Inspiration is a valuable resource that needs to be managed in modern work.**

This card deck is designed to ignite inspiration. It offers ideas and activities to spark and sustain inspiration for leaders, teams, and cultures.



Inspiration first requires understanding. You'll find definition cards for this purpose.

---

Inspiration then requires a spark. There are cards with activities and reflections for this.

---

Lastly, there are ways you can systematically sustain and scale inspiration. The "sustain and scale" cards challenge you to take inspiration to the next level.



## SPARK OF INSPIRATION

---

We define the initial moment of inspiration - the spark - as the intersection of possibility and invincibility.

Possibility expands the boundary of what could be beyond our current conceptions of what may “work.”

Invincibility is the confident energy that complements possibility. It helps translate the spark of inspiration into action.

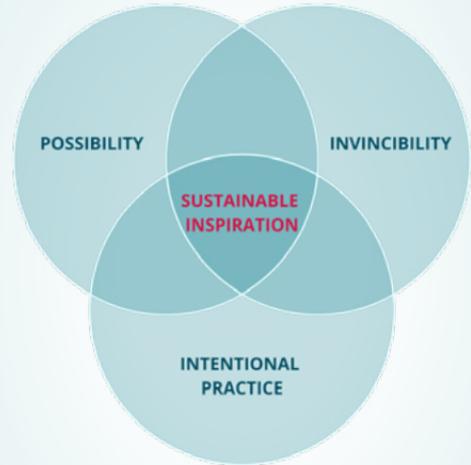


## SUSTAINABLE INSPIRATION

---

**Sustainable Inspiration  
is the intersection of  
possibility, invincibility, and  
intentional practice.**

Intentional practice builds an inspiration muscle that gets stronger over time so you can flex on demand. While once thought of as a fleeting emotion, with intentional practice, inspiration can last longer and happen more frequently.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

You are a personal engine of inspiration, the source of the inspiration spark, no matter who or what surrounds you. You can choose to think about or do certain things that will spark inspiration on a reliable basis.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU



VALUES AND  
PURPOSE

ACT



UNSTRUCTURED  
TIME



ACTIVATING  
STRENGTHS



NEW  
PERSPECTIVES



STRIVING, PROGRESS,  
AND ACHIEVEMENT



BODY PRESENCE  
AND MOVEMENT



## INSPIRATION SPARKED BY OTHERS

---

With relationship-based engines, the people around you or the relationships you cultivate spark inspiration. You can seek conversations or connections with others in specific ways that cultivate inspiration.



## INSPIRATION SPARKED BY OTHERS



BELONGING



SERVING OTHERS



MENTORS AND  
HEROES



SHARED MISSION



GETTING A LIFT



VULNERABILITY



## INSPIRATION SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

With circumstance-based engines, the environment itself or the specific situation around you sparks inspiration. Psychology theory has often debated person vs. situation.

Do we feel or act certain ways because of who we are, or because of how our environment influences us? Our research reveals both are true. In addition to personal and relationship-based engines, we found that environments and specific situations can spark inspiration.



## INSPIRATION SPARKED BY SITUATIONS



ENVIRONMENTS THAT MOVE US



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



OVERCOMING RESTRAINTS



SHARED GROUP EXPERIENCES



WITNESSING EXCELLENCE



GRIEF, LOSS, FAILURE



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## VALUES AND PURPOSE



Inspiration can be sparked by looking inward to your deeply-held values and beliefs. They reflect your purpose, mission, meaning - your inner “why.” You can feel more inspired when you know your why, when you voice it, and when you apply it across different areas of your work and life.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



What are your most cherished values? Using these values as your compass, define your driving purpose - your why.

(Tip: You may have multiple “whys” for the different areas of your life.)



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## VALUES AND PURPOSE



Inspiration can be sparked by looking inward to your deeply-held values and beliefs. They reflect your purpose, mission, meaning - your inner “why.” You can feel more inspired when you know your why, when you voice it, and when you apply it across different areas of your work and life.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



How connected are your everyday actions to your “why?” How can you build more connections? What behaviors can you practice or integrate into your day-to-day behavior that align with and express your purpose?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACHIEVEMENTS



Striving for meaningful goals, making ongoing progress toward them, and accomplishing those goals is inspiring! You can spark your inspiration by intentionally setting goals that matter and celebrating both achievements and day-to-day progress.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



What achievements are you most proud of in your work and life?  
Looking ahead, what are you striving to accomplish and what progress points can you celebrate along the way?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACHIEVEMENTS



Striving for meaningful goals, making ongoing progress toward them, and accomplishing those goals is inspiring! You can spark your inspiration by intentionally setting goals that matter and celebrating both achievements and day-to-day progress.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



Set a goal that would give you a wild sense of accomplishment for this week, month, and year. Who can you partner with for accountability? How will you create opportunities to celebrate your learning, effort, and progress at regular checkpoints along the way?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## NEW PERSPECTIVES



You can feel inspired when you re-imagine something by seeing it in a novel way. Being open to learning and exposing yourself to new ideas through reading, classes, events, collaborations, conversations, etc. can provide opportunities for developing new perspectives.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



Take a current belief or perspective you hold now. Turn it upside down and sideways. What's a new way to think about it? Consider asking others for their perspectives.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## NEW PERSPECTIVES



You can feel inspired when you re-imagine something by seeing it in a novel way. Being open to learning and exposing yourself to new ideas through reading, classes, events, collaborations, conversations, etc. can provide opportunities for developing new perspectives.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



Challenge yourself to learn something brand new or do something outside your comfort zone. Go into it with a growth mindset, being open to what you discover. How will you apply this new learning or insight to your current work or life?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACTIVATING STRENGTHS



You can spark inspiration by using your strengths in new and meaningful ways. Research shows that using your strengths regularly in your day-to-day work boosts feelings of inspiration. These can include virtuous strengths of character (creativity, kindness, wisdom) as well as talents, skills, or competencies.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



List your top strengths of character as well as your talents, skills, or competencies.

How are you currently using your strengths in your work and/or personal life? What cherished strengths do you have that aren't being used or expressed?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACTIVATING STRENGTHS



You can spark inspiration by using your strengths in new and meaningful ways. Research shows that using your strengths regularly in your day-to-day work boosts feelings of inspiration. These can include virtuous strengths of character (creativity, kindness, wisdom) as well as talents, skills, or competencies.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



What is one of your top strengths that you feel most proud of - your super-hero power? How can you use this strength in a new way this week?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## UNSTRUCTURED TIME



When you stop deliberately problem-solving, you are more likely to have new and inspiring ideas where solutions emerge. Giving your brain a sabbatical - unstructured time and space away from conscious thinking and problem-solving - often creates opportunities for inspiration to occur.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



What types of activities or situations give your brain a break, allowing your mind to relax and wander? Taking a walk? Folding clothes? Driving? How much time and space do you need for your brain to feel like it's on sabbatical? This is different for everyone.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## UNSTRUCTURED TIME



When you stop deliberately problem-solving, you are more likely to have new and inspiring ideas where solutions emerge. Giving your brain a sabbatical - unstructured time and space away from conscious thinking and problem-solving - often creates opportunities for inspiration to occur.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



Look at your calendar. When can you find or build in a chunk of time that can be unstructured so you can decompress, breathe, play? What is realistic for you in terms of building in time for this on a regular basis?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## BODY MOVEMENT AND PRESENCE



Bodies are powerful vehicles for inspiration. How you move and carry yourself, including your facial expressions and dress, can activate inspiration (or repress it) for yourself and those around you.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## REFLECT



What body postures, movements, and dress tend to make you feel more empowered and optimistic and therefore more inspired? In what ways do you currently use physical movement and presence to inspire yourself? Where are there opportunities to explore?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## BODY MOVEMENT AND PRESENCE



Bodies are powerful vehicles for inspiration. How you move and carry yourself, including your facial expressions and dress, can activate inspiration (or repress it) for yourself and those around you.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY YOU

## ACT



Look at your calendar. When and how can you build in physical movement or an activity-based reset into your day-to-day? Go for it!



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

**BELONGING**



In positive, high-trust relationships and communities, you are more likely to feel supported, safe, and appreciated if you have a strong and stable foundation. Revel in the foundation of this group you belong to. Find inspiration by thinking about what belonging empowers you to do.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

**REFLECT**



Imagine your ideal community where you feel connected, valued, and seen. What are the attributes of this gathering of people or organization? How does being with them impact your mood? What about this group brings you a greater sense of possibility and invincibility?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

**BELONGING**



In positive, high-trust relationships and communities, you are more likely to feel supported, safe, and appreciated if you have a strong and stable foundation. Revel in the foundation of this group you belong to. Find inspiration by thinking about what belonging empowers you to do.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

**ACT**



Consider communities, people, or groups where you feel disconnected and lack a sense of belonging. What can you do to create stronger connections with those communities? What common interests can you find? Also, consider ways you can lean on your current inspirational communities, seeking them out or asking for support when you need an inspiration boost.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

GETTING A LIFT



You may notice that there are people in your life who support you; cheer your efforts; and give you a positive lift through encouragement, humor, or motivation.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

REFLECT



Who gives you an emotional lift?  
What specifically do they do or say that boosts your feelings of possibility and invincibility?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

GETTING A LIFT



You may notice that there are people in your life who support you; cheer your efforts; and give you a positive lift through encouragement, humor, or motivation.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

ACT



Look at next week. Build in opportunities to be around people who give you a lift. Who can you give back to and lift up? What's an inspiring message or act of kindness that could create a positive spiral for both of you?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## SHARED MISSION



Sharing a mission with groups you work closely with will ignite feelings of inspiration as you strive to accomplish your shared goal(s) together.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## REFLECT



Think of a group you interact or work with regularly. What is your shared mission? If you don't have one, what common values or themes drive you as a group?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## SHARED MISSION



Sharing a mission with groups you work closely with will ignite feelings of inspiration as you strive to accomplish your shared goal(s) together.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## ACT



If you are part of a group without a clear shared mission, what actions can you take with the group to align on one? If you are a part of a group with a strong shared mission, how can you express and reinforce it regularly?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## MENTORS AND HEROES



Heroes are people you admire based on personal character, qualities, or accomplishments. Mentors share these admirable qualities while actively engaging in ongoing support of your goals. Ongoing communication with mentors, and keeping heroes in mind, can remind you of what's possible and help you feel invincible and spark your inspiration.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## REFLECT



Who are your top mentors and/or heroes who inspire you the most? What qualities do you admire most about them? What do they do or say that activates inspiration in you?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## MENTORS AND HEROES



Heroes are people you admire based on personal character, qualities, or accomplishments. Mentors share these admirable qualities while actively engaging in ongoing support of your goals. Ongoing communication with mentors, and keeping heroes in mind, can remind you of what's possible and help you feel invincible and spark your inspiration.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## ACT



Consider scheduling regular sessions with your mentors. During these meetings, build in opportunities to share your deeply held values, personal and professional goals, and aspirations. Share your gratitude for the ways the mentor inspires you.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## SERVING OTHERS



Human beings have an innate drive to support one another. The opportunity to help someone by using your unique strengths and expertise is an engine of inspiration. This can be acts of kindness, expressing gratitude, or offering support.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## REFLECT



In what ways can you uniquely make a difference in the lives of others based on your strengths, talents, interests, and skill sets?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## SERVING OTHERS



Human beings have an innate drive to support one another. The opportunity to help someone by using your unique strengths and expertise is an engine of inspiration. This can be acts of kindness, expressing gratitude, or offering support.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## ACT



How do you currently use your strengths, talents, interests, and skill sets to help others? If this is an area of opportunity for you, how do you want to serve others more broadly? And how can you bring this spirit of serving others into your work now?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## VULNERABILITY



Although it may seem counterintuitive, being vulnerable - open with others about your feelings and admitting you need help - can lead to inspiration. Admitting you're struggling or that you've encountered a problem you can't solve on your own opens the door to support and can generate ways you might take inspired action in the future.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## REFLECT



Consider an area where you are feeling stuck, frustrated, even down. Who might you trust enough to share information with about this situation? Who can help you?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## VULNERABILITY



Although it may seem counterintuitive, being vulnerable - open with others about your feelings and admitting you need help - can lead to inspiration. Admitting you're struggling or that you've encountered a problem you can't solve on your own opens the door to support and can generate ways you might take inspired action in the future.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY OTHERS

## ACT



Use your emotions as a guide. When you are struggling, rather than isolating yourself or going it alone, reach out to someone you trust. Share your concerns and ask for help. Notice how you feel as you share and receive support.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ENVIRONMENTS THAT MOVE US



Your environment - which includes the physical setting around you as well as the sounds, smells, colors, energy, mood - has a big impact on how you feel. Environments that move us emotionally can be incredibly inspiring.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## REFLECT



What types of environments inspire you? Consider places, colors, smells, textures, images - everything about the place. Look at your work environment's qualities as well as places outside of work. What themes do you notice?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ENVIRONMENTS THAT MOVE US



Your environment - which includes the physical setting around you as well as the sounds, smells, colors, energy, mood - has a big impact on how you feel. Environments that move us emotionally can be incredibly inspiring.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ACT



How can you change your current environment or find new places that inspire you more? Try a new driving route, or walking path, or swap offices with someone for the day.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## WITNESSING EXCELLENCE



When you witness excellence in others, especially in an area that is important to you, you feel inspired. Seeing excellence in others helps you visualize more possibilities for yourself and feel the confidence to achieve it.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## REFLECT



Who inspires you with excellence in their life, work, art, or other areas? What events or acts that showcase excellence move you?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## WITNESSING EXCELLENCE



When you witness excellence in others, especially in an area that is important to you, you feel inspired. Seeing excellence in others helps you visualize more possibilities for yourself and feel the confidence to achieve it.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ACT



Look for examples of excellence in areas where you want more inspiration. Find a thought leader to observe or a TED Talk on the topics. Perhaps there is someone you admire in your organization you could ask to shadow to learn more.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## SHARED GROUP EXPERIENCES



Emotions, including inspiration, are contagious. That's why shared group experiences and inspiring events provide opportunities for collective inspiration to occur.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## REFLECT



Think about shared group experiences in the past - concerts, movies, marches, weddings - that have moved you. What was so important to you about these group activities? Why or how did they inspire you?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## SHARED GROUP EXPERIENCES



Emotions, including inspiration, are contagious. That's why shared group experiences and inspiring events provide opportunities for collective inspiration to occur.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ACT



Organize a shared experience (physical activity, learning something new, watching a performance) that can inspire a whole group.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## OVERCOMING RESTRAINTS



Obstacles, constraints, even someone saying “no, you can’t do that,” can inspire you to rise above and overcome. Whether or not a challenge keeps you down or inspires you to achieve more depends on your mindset toward it.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## REFLECT



What types of barriers or obstacles currently stand in your way, keeping you from something you want? In what ways can you surmount those challenges?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## OVERCOMING RESTRAINTS



Obstacles, constraints, even someone saying “no, you can’t do that,” can inspire you to rise above and overcome. Whether or not a challenge keeps you down or inspires you to achieve more depends on your mindset toward it.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## ACT



Think about an obstacle as something pushing you to learn and grow more. What type of mindset will propel you to overcome it? Try out different ideas until one fully empowers you.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE



There are times when situations seem to literally call out for what you uniquely bring to the table.

When people see situations where they can use their distinct passions or qualifications to have a positive impact, they feel inspired to take action.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

## REFLECT



In what situations are you needed the most? How can you act to make a difference in these situations?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE



There are times when situations seem to literally call out for what you uniquely bring to the table.

When people see situations where they can use their distinct passions or qualifications to have a positive impact, they feel inspired to take action.



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

ACT



Identify opportunities to have an impact that makes a difference. Volunteer, coordinate others, start a campaign. Whatever is meaningful to you is the right place to direct your efforts.



**INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS**

**GRIEF, LOSS,  
FAILURE**



For some, it may seem counterintuitive, even off-putting, to think of grief, loss, or failure as inspiring. Yet, when channeled properly and after you've had enough time to process your sadness, loss or failure can become a source of inspiration going forward. What good can come out of what was lost?



**INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS**

**REFLECT**



If you have experienced a recent failure or a significant loss, what can you learn from it? Imagine how this experience might make you stronger over time. What insights do you want to carry forward?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

**GRIEF, LOSS,  
FAILURE**



For some, it may seem counterintuitive, even off-putting, to think of grief, loss, or failure as inspiring. Yet, when channeled properly and after you've had enough time to process your sadness, loss or failure can become a source of inspiration going forward. What good can come out of what was lost?



INSPIRATION  
SPARKED BY SITUATIONS

**ACT**



Challenge yourself to do something so far outside your comfort zone that you are almost guaranteed to fail. Give yourself permission to fail and notice what it's like after you do so. Do you feel small, or do you feel inspired to rise to the challenge, learn, and grow?



**SUSTAIN AND SCALE**

**INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



A spark of inspiration is exciting, but power comes from making it last and having more people experience it.

---

Use these cards to sustain and scale inspiration for yourself, your team, and your organization.



SUSTAIN  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE



ACTIVATE AND  
COMBINE ENGINES INTO  
A NEW COCKTAIL

---

Randomly pick 3 **spark** cards.

---

Make a plan to activate these  
**engines of inspiration** this week.



**SUSTAIN**  
**INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**DIRECTING INSPIRATION TO  
POSITIVE OUTCOMES**

Progress and results sustain  
inspiration

---

Where has inspiration led you to do  
great work, perform well, or make a  
difference?

---

Repeat this for someone else or  
redesign it to fit another situation.



**SUSTAIN**  
**INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**SOCIAL SUPPORT  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

---

Who can you use as your  
accountability partner to help you  
hold onto inspiration?

---

How will you meet with  
them regularly?

---

To whom can you provide  
accountability and support to help  
sustain their inspiration?



**SCALE**

**TEAM  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**SELECT CARDS AT RANDOM**

One for each person on your team

---

Distribute them by resonance with team members. That is, hand them out to team members according to how excited they make them, or how the engines tap into what is special about each person (or few people).

---

Have each person share how they will activate this engine on the team.



**SCALE**

**TEAM  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**ASK YOURSELF:**

---

“As a team, which engine do we lean on the most? What’s a new engine that will be critical for us in the next month and how will we activate it?”



SCALE

TEAM  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE



**“AS A TEAM, WHAT ARE  
WE ALL ABOUT AND WHY DOES  
THIS MATTER TO US?”**

**WHAT ARE OUR:**

- Values and Purpose
- Shared Mission



Create an artifact (symbol, quote, song, or mantra) that represents this for **your team**.



SCALE

**ORGANIZATION  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**WHAT IS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S  
HIGHER PURPOSE?**

How does it connect to your  
personal values and purpose?

What can you do to  
strengthen the connection  
between these for every employee  
in the organization?



**SCALE**

**ORGANIZATION  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**AUDIT YOUR CULTURE  
FOR INSPIRATION**

---

What are existing norms and behaviors in your culture that zap inspiration?

---

What norms and behaviors are truly inspiring?

---

Look for ways to reinforce the inspiring behaviors and to minimize those that drain inspiration away. Use stories, recognize people and behaviors publicly, and offer rewards for the behaviors you want to encourage.



**SCALE**

**ORGANIZATION  
INSPIRATION  
PRACTICE**



**LOOK AT ALL 18 ENGINES**

Select 2 or 3 that closely align with your organizational values.

---

How can you build these into your systems and processes?

---

For example, allow employees to use 5% of their time for unstructured thinking and developing new ideas. Or start an annual tradition of an organization-wide celebration of the previous year's progress (and failures). Make sure your reward system encourages exactly what you desire in terms of collaboration and innovation.



InspireCorps.com  
book@inspirecorps.com  
🐦: @InspireCorpsCo



# InspireCorps

IGNITING THE NEXT LEVEL NOW

Copyright InspireCorps 2019