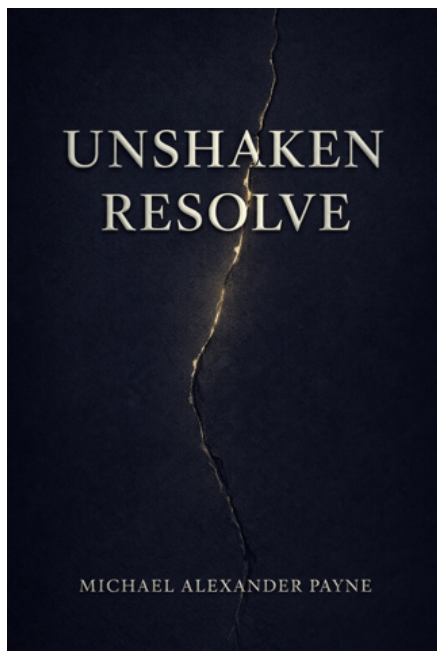




FREE LEADERSHIP FIELD GUIDE

How to Lead a 15-Minute Unshaken Team Huddle

A practical guide for business owners, managers, real estate leaders, first responders, coaches, and team leads who need to create calm, clarity, and action under pressure.

Created by Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Michael A. Payne

Author of Unshaken Resolve

The purpose of the huddle

Most teams do not need another long meeting. They need a repeatable leadership rhythm that names the pressure, clarifies the mission, reinforces the standard, and assigns the next right action.

Use this guide in your next weekly meeting, sales meeting, shift brief, after-action review, or leadership check-in.

Why This Huddle Works

Pressure does not create character. It reveals it. When pressure rises, teams rarely need more noise. They need a leader who can slow the room down, create structure, and point people toward the next right action.

The 15-Minute Unshaken Team Huddle gives you a simple rhythm to lead with calm, clarity, and conviction. It is short enough to use every week and strong enough to reset a team when the environment becomes uncertain.

Use this guide when your team needs to:

- regain focus after a hard week or difficult event
- align around the mission before a busy day or major push
- convert anxiety into useful action
- reinforce standards without giving a lecture
- create accountability without shame or drama
- build a culture where calm, clarity, and ownership become normal

Leader's standard

Do not use the huddle to vent, complain, embarrass, or ramble. Use it to steady the room, define reality, and move the team forward.

The rule of 15 minutes

Keep the huddle tight. The power is in the discipline. A short meeting with clear structure beats a long meeting with no direction.

The 15-Minute Structure

Use this format as written the first few times. Once the rhythm becomes natural, make it your own while keeping the same sequence.

Minutes	Move	Leader Focus
1-2	Set the tone	Open with calm. Remind the team why the work matters and what kind of presence the moment requires.
3-5	Name the pressure	Identify the real issue without exaggeration, blame, or panic. Facts first. Feelings acknowledged. Drama excluded.
6-8	Clarify the mission	State the priority. Make sure everyone knows what matters most right now.
9-11	Reinforce the standard	Define what right looks like. Connect behavior to values, culture, and trust.
12-14	Assign the next right action	Turn discussion into movement. Who owns what before the next huddle?
15	Close with conviction	End with a clear leadership statement that sends people back to work steady and aligned.

Remember

The goal is not to cover everything. The goal is to create enough clarity for the team to move with discipline.

Leader Script: Run the Huddle

Use the script below word-for-word until you are comfortable. Your team does not need a perfect speech. They need a steady leader with a clear structure.

1. Set the tone

“Team, we are going to take 15 minutes to get clear. The goal is not to create more noise. The goal is to name what is real, reinforce our standard, and leave here knowing the next right action.”

2. Name the pressure

“Here is the pressure we are facing right now: _____. Here is what we know. Here is what we do not know yet. We are not guessing. We are building the picture.”

3. Clarify the mission

“For the next 24 hours / this week / this project, the mission is simple: _____. If we get this right, we protect trust, create momentum, and move the team forward.”

4. Reinforce the standard

“This is what right looks like here: _____. We do not lower the standard because pressure increased. We become more disciplined because pressure increased.”

5. Assign the next right action

“Before we leave, each person needs one clear action. Who owns what? What is the deadline? What support is needed?”

6. Close with conviction

“We are capable of this. Stay calm. Stay clear. Stay accountable. Lead unshaken.”

Tip: If the team starts drifting into stories, excuses, or blame, bring them back with this phrase: “Let’s return to what we know and what we can control.”

The Unshaken Huddle Worksheet

Print this page or copy it into your notebook before every team huddle.

Date / Team:	_____
1. What pressure are we facing?	_____ _____
2. What facts do we know?	_____ _____
3. What do we not know yet?	_____ _____
4. What is the mission right now?	_____ _____
5. What standard must we reinforce?	_____ _____
6. What is the next right action?	Owner: _____ Action: _____ Deadline: _____ Support needed: _____
7. What will we review next time?	_____

After-action question

At the end of the week, ask: What happened? What did we learn? What will we do differently next time?

Huddle Versions by Team Type

The structure stays the same, but the pressure and the language may change. Use the examples below to apply the huddle in your environment.

Audience	How to Use It
Business owners / executives	Use the huddle to align priorities, remove confusion, and keep the team focused on the highest-impact work.
Real estate leaders	Use it before sales meetings, listing pushes, recruiting conversations, or after a difficult week in the market.
First responders	Use it for shift briefs, post-incident resets, training days, and

	moments when morale or clarity needs reinforcement.
Managers / team leads	Use it when projects drift, deadlines compress, communication breaks down, or the team needs accountability.
Coaches / mentors	Use it as a coaching tool to help clients identify pressure, define standards, and commit to action.

Three questions that keep the huddle clean

- What is real?
- What matters most right now?
- What is the next right action?

Do not skip this

The huddle should end with ownership. If nobody owns the next action, the meeting created awareness but not movement.

7-Day Unshaken Huddle Challenge

Use this challenge to install the rhythm with your team. Do one action per day for one week.

Day	Action
Day 1	Run the 15-minute huddle exactly as written.
Day 2	Ask one team member what pressure they see that leadership may be missing.
Day 3	Reinforce one standard publicly and one person privately.
Day 4	Remove one source of confusion for the team.
Day 5	Celebrate one example of calm, clarity, or ownership.
Day 6	Review the next right actions and follow through.
Day 7	Conduct a simple AAR: What happened? What did we learn? What will we do differently?

Measure the shift

After seven days, ask the team: Are we clearer? Are we calmer? Are we moving with more ownership? The answers will tell you if the rhythm is working.

Go Deeper With Unshaken Resolve

This guide gives you one practical rhythm. The full book, *Unshaken Resolve*, goes deeper into the leadership principles behind the rhythm: preparation, belief, mentorship, calm under pressure, identity before authority, influence without rank, proximity, culture, resilience, and legacy.

If this guide helped you bring clarity to your team, the book will help you build the internal standard required to lead when pressure rises.

Order the book

Visit www.unshakenresolve.com to learn more, order the book, or bring the Unshaken Resolve message to your team, organization, or leadership event.

Use this with your team this week

Print the worksheet.

Schedule a 15-minute huddle.

Run the script without over-explaining.

Assign one next right action.

Follow up before the next huddle.

Calm is contagious. Clarity is leadership. Resolve is built before pressure rises.

Created by Lieutenant Colonel (Ret.) Michael A. Payne | Author of *Unshaken Resolve* | www.unshakenresolve.com