

EARNED SUCCESS

A roadmap from idea to evidence.



Project / practice

Your name / team

Start date

Day-90 review date

Make the workbook a working record.

1 / Choose one bounded project.

Name the person, difficulty, and change that matter. This workbook is for a single 90-day cycle. The dates organize your practice; they do not guarantee another person's response.

2 / Fill it on screen or print it.

Use a PDF reader that supports fillable forms. Save a local copy before entering answers, then save regularly and reopen it to confirm the answers remain. The same light writing boxes work on paper.

3 / Keep the evidence nearby.

Record file names, links, dates, or observations that someone else can inspect. Keep private participant information in a separate protected record; write only the reference you need here.

4 / Revisit a stage when its assumption fails.

Do not advance because a date arrived. A revised attempt, an honest stop, and a smaller promise can all represent responsible progress.

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Companion article

Six stages. Six things to bring back.

01 / Days 1-7

Choose the change

A one-page commitment.

02 / Days 8-14

Make it testable

A small working expression and a written test.

03 / Days 15-30

Meet the world

An observation record with limits.

04 / Days 31-45

Correct the work

A visible revision and a next test.

05 / Days 46-60

Deliver again

A repeatable method that fits capacity.

06 / Days 61-90

Earn the next yes

A decision another person can judge.

Success = useful outcomes + defensible conduct + capacity to continue.

Move at the speed of evidence. Return to a stage when a central assumption fails.

Give the idea a job in someone's life.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / Person: Who experiences the difficulty? Who else is affected when you intervene?

02 / Starting state: What happens now, and what record supports that account?

03 / Desired change: What would be observably different for that person?

Illustrative commitment: "For one workshop, we will test whether new participants can reserve a seat and receive an accurate confirmation without staff assistance. We will preserve a staffed alternative and record every request for help."

Give the idea a job in someone's life.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / Boundary: What must remain protected: access, accuracy, consent, time, or an existing commitment?

05 / Capacity: How much work can you sustain without borrowing from obligations you already made?

06 / Decision date: When will you inspect the evidence and decide what follows?

Illustrative commitment: "For one workshop, we will test whether new participants can reserve a seat and receive an accurate confirmation without staff assistance. We will preserve a staffed alternative and record every request for help."

Build the smallest expression that can teach you.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / Write: "We think this change will help this person complete this task because..."

02 / Pick a task someone can actually attempt, rather than asking whether they like your idea.

03 / Define what counts as completion, assistance, abandonment, and an error.

Illustrative test: "New participants will attempt a reservation using the first page. We will record whether they finish unaided and whether the confirmation matches the seat actually reserved. A mismatch in confirmations pauses further use until repaired."

Build the smallest expression that can teach you.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / Keep the first attempt bounded enough to watch closely and repair quickly.

05 / Name the finding that would make you pause. Do not treat every objection as a request for another feature.

Next bounded action / owner / review date

Illustrative test: "New participants will attempt a reservation using the first page. We will record whether they finish unaided and whether the confirmation matches the seat actually reserved. A mismatch in confirmations pauses further use until repaired."

Watch use. Record what happened.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / Record the date, version, task, and relevant conditions.

02 / Count attempts, completions, assisted completions, abandonment, and important errors using the definitions you wrote.

03 / Separate what you saw from what you infer. "Stopped at the date field" is an observation; "does not care about attending" is an interpretation.

Useful record: "In this round, six of eight participants completed without help. Two needed assistance with selecting a date. The confirmation matched the reservation in all eight attempts."

Watch use. Record what happened.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / Collect a participant's own account of the difficult moment without correcting their experience.

05 / Write the narrowest defensible finding and the uncertainty that remains.

Next bounded action / owner / review date

Useful record: "In this round, six of eight participants completed without help. Two needed assistance with selecting a date. The confirmation matched the reservation in all eight attempts."

Make the mismatch useful.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / We previously believed: State the assumption plainly.

02 / We observed: Identify the event or evidence that challenged it.

03 / We changed: Name the actual revision and its date.

Illustrative correction: "We treated the date selector as self-explanatory. Two participants needed help. We replaced it with a clearer control and revised the instructions. That revision is complete; we have not yet tested whether it resolves the difficulty."

Make the mismatch useful.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / We notified: Identify the affected audience, when notice is needed.

05 / We have not established: Preserve the open question.

06 / We will check: Specify the next task and observation.

Illustrative correction: "We treated the date selector as self-explanatory. Two participants needed help. We replaced it with a clearer control and revised the instructions. That revision is complete; we have not yet tested whether it resolves the difficulty."

Turn the good attempt into a dependable practice.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / Define the conditions under which the method is intended to work.

02 / Repeat the delivery and record the assistance or repair each occasion required.

03 / Write a short handoff, then observe where another capable person still needs your private knowledge.

Illustrative operating promise: "Reservations are confirmed against the live seat count. If the count cannot be verified, the request is held for staff review rather than presented as a confirmed seat."

Turn the good attempt into a dependable practice.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / Name the exception that stops normal operation and the person who handles it.

05 / Compare the real effort with the capacity you committed in week one.

06 / Adjust the scope or method before increasing the number of people depending on it.

Illustrative operating promise: "Reservations are confirmed against the live seat count. If the count cannot be verified, the request is held for staff review rather than presented as a confirmed seat."

Make your record useful to someone else's decision.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

01 / What completed change can an affected person verify?

02 / Which part of the result remains dependent on favorable conditions or your personal intervention?

03 / What did you get wrong, and what evidence shows the response?

Useful final report: "We built and tested a reservation process for this workshop, corrected the date-selection problem, and documented staff review for uncertain seat counts. Here is the record, including the sessions that required help. Our next proposal is limited to another workshop under these conditions."

Make your record useful to someone else's decision.

Write an answer you can support with a record.

04 / What effort does the current promise require?

05 / Who bears the downside if you expand too early?

06 / What is the smallest next commitment the evidence actually justifies?

Useful final report: "We built and tested a reservation process for this workshop, corrected the date-selection problem, and documented staff review for uncertain seat counts. Here is the record, including the sessions that required help. Our next proposal is limited to another workshop under these conditions."

Keep the denominator. Keep the failures.

Date / version / task / relevant conditions

Use one row per attempt. Record assistance instead of quietly counting a rescued task as unaided success.

Attempt	Outcome	Assistance / error	What you actually observed

Totals / attempts / unaided / assisted / abandoned / important errors

Size the sentence to the evidence.

What did you observe?

Name the denominator, setting, version, and the relevant result.

What has not been established?

Name the limits, alternative explanations, and untested settings.

Write the narrowest defensible claim.

Use a sentence another person could check against the record.

Illustrative model: "Six of eight participants completed without help in these sessions. Two still needed assistance. We have not established performance in ordinary use over time."

Before you make a bigger promise.

☐ An intended person can identify the useful change.

☐ The result has a record, including attempts that failed or needed help.

☐ The claim names the limits of what was observed.

☐ Someone owns correction, exceptions, and the next commitment.

☐ The current delivery fits the capacity you can sustain.

Checking all five prepares a review. It does not establish success or justify expansion. Ask an affected person to inspect the record.

Find the missing work.

I keep planning and never finish.

Your next commitment may be too large, too protected from judgment, or attached to an identity you are afraid to test. Reduce it to one meaningful act. Set a date. Decide who will encounter it. Bring back a modest completion rather than a larger announcement.

I finish things, but nobody benefits.

Return to the person and difficulty. Watch the existing process. Ask what your artifact changed after it left your hands. More production may be amplifying an incorrect premise. Change the task before accelerating the output.

People benefit, but the work consumes me.

Inspect the delivery you actually perform, including rescue and maintenance. Narrow the promise, clarify the exception path, change the method, or decline another obligation. A practice that destroys its capacity to continue needs correction too.

Week 01: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 02: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 03: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 04: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 05: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 06: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 07: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 08: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 09: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 10: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 11: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 12: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Week 13: speak from the record.

Monday: choose one finish. Midweek: make and expose. Thursday: correct. Friday: report.

Review date

We completed...

We observed...

We corrected...

We have not established...

Our next bounded commitment is...

Evidence references / who can verify this

Effort, maintenance, or scope to adjust next week

Choose the smallest justified next step.

Choose one decision, then explain it. Expansion is one possible decision, not the automatic reward for reaching day ninety.

☐**Continue**☐**Revise**☐**Expand**☐**Stop**

What evidence supports the decision?

The next bounded commitment / intended person / limits

Owner / review date / exception path

Who needs notice, and what must remain on the record?

Keep the questions the work creates.

Notes, evidence references, or questions for the next review

Read the companion essay and the full roadmap

johnrector.me / Earned Success: A Roadmap from Idea to Evidence

John Rector / October 2026. This workbook adapts all six stage worksheets, the evidence gate, and the diagnostic guidance from the article. Illustrations were created with AI for the article and do not depict an actual project.