Objectives
To be able to articulate who you are, what you believe, and what you stand for, which is the first step toward being a credible leader.

Audience
- current or emerging leaders
- any size

Time Required
30 minutes

Materials and Equipment
A Personal Credo Worksheet for each leader

Process
1. Hand out Personal Credo Worksheet
2. Say: “Through their extensive research, Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner have found that credibility is not based on job titles or hierarchical positions but with the human being in the leader's shoes. Above all else, they found that leadership is personal. It's not about the corporation, the community, or the country. It's about you and your relationship with others. If people don't believe in the messenger, they won't believe the message. If people don't believe in you, they won't believe in what you say. And if it's about you, then it's about your beliefs, your values, and your principles. It's also about how true you are to your values and beliefs. Your credibility journey begins with the process of self-discovery. Their research indicates that, to genuinely know the level of commitment you are willing to make, you must discover three essential aspects of yourself: your credo, your areas of competence, and your level of self-confidence.”
3. Encourage participants to pair and discuss their understanding of the phrase “personal credo,” then share their thoughts with the group.
4. Say: “Let’s revisit your childhood, say, until you were ten years old. This is when you learned to think and act and navigate in the world. Think about parents, relatives, neighbors, friends, and teachers who influenced you. What do you remember being told about how to act and what to think? Do you remember hearing “If you can’t say anything nice, don’t say anything at all”? How about, “Don’t be such a tomboy” or “boys don’t cry”? Or “You must respect your elders”? Did you hear that work could be exciting and meaningful, or drudgery to be carried out? What were your beliefs about education? What shaped your beliefs about marriage and family? What did you learn about money and the definition of success or failure? What were the implicit messages about happiness, or making mistakes, or asserting yourself?”
5. Instruct participants to fill out their Personal Credo Worksheet. Allow ample time for completion.
6. Encourage participants to pair and share before moving on to the next lesson.
PERSONAL CREDO WORKSHEET

You can't do what you say if you don't know what you believe. The first stage of your credibility journey is to clarify your values and determine the roots of your personal credo.

1) Where did your beliefs about what is important in life come from?
2) Which of these ideas or principles still guide you now?
3) Which are still useful? How do they help, support, or guide you in your daily life now?
4) Which are no longer useful? Do any ever cause you conflict or uneasiness?
5) Is it time to let go of some old ways of thinking and acting?