

Who Shows Up When It Matters?

A Practical Guide to Engineering Your Internal Frequency

There is a minute before every important moment. A few seconds when you are no longer preparing but you haven't performed yet.

- You're standing outside the meeting.
- Waiting to walk onto the field.
- Sitting in the car before the difficult conversation.
- Looking at the phone before making the call you really don't want to make.
- Waiting for your name to be called.

That moment matters. Because what happens next isn't determined only by what you know.

It is influenced by *who* shows up.

Seven Seconds of Chaos

Baseball gives us a pretty good metaphor for life. For much of a game, very little happens.

Then suddenly:

Seven seconds of chaos. The pitch comes. You have less than a second to see it. Decide. React. Execute.

And then it's over.

The remarkable thing is that you don't get to choose when your seven seconds will arrive.

You just have to be ready when they do.

That's true far beyond baseball.

- The big presentation.
- The sales call.
- The job interview.
- The conversation that could change a relationship.
- The decision that could change a company.

The moment when everyone in the room looks at you and waits.

You don't control the pitch, but you can control the frequency you bring to the plate.

Most of Us Walk Up in Silence

Think about how you prepare for the moments that matter the most.

You probably prepare your presentation, study the numbers, practice your swing, review your notes, learn the material.

You prepare for the *what*.

But what about the *who*?

Most people simply walk into their high-stakes moments carrying whatever emotional state happened to be there five minutes earlier. It could have been a stressful email or a bad night's sleep, a mistake from yesterday, a rejection, or an argument. It could be self-doubt, your last at-bat.

And then the moment arrives. The pressure arrives. The doubt arrives. The fear arrives.

Most of the time, it is simply unmanaged frequency. That frequency is your emotional state and the energy you project. Some call it confidence, but it's more than that.

Pros understand something different, so they don't just prepare for the moment.

They prepare *themselves* for the moment.

Performance begins before you say a word. Walk in ready. Every time.

You Are Not Your Last Out

Failure is part of the game.

- The greatest hitters in baseball fail more often than they succeed.
- The best pitchers give up runs.
- The best salespeople hear “no.”
- The best leaders make bad decisions.
- The best parents lose their patience.
- The best of us have moments we wish we could replay.

The trap isn't the failure. It's that we carry the last at-bat into the next one.

We walk into today's meeting still thinking about yesterday's failure. We step to the plate trying not to repeat what just happened. We let one mistake become an identity.

The Walk-Up Protocol begins somewhere else:

You are not your last out. You are your next hit.

The past matters.

But it doesn't have to walk to the plate with you.

So Who Is the Best You?

A great Walk-Up Song helps you be ready. But before you can choose your Walk-Up Song, you have to answer a harder question.

Who do you need to be?

Not who you usually are. Not who you were yesterday. Not who somebody else expects you to be.

Who is the best version of you for this particular challenge?

Maybe you need to be:

- calm,
- fearless,
- focused,
- joyful,
- relentless,
- steady,
- powerful.

The Protocol calls this your Identity Statement—a clear description of the best you in the role you're about to play.

Once you know who you need to be, you can begin to determine what it takes to get there. And that's where the music comes in.

Your Walk-Up Song Isn't Your Favorite Song

This may be the part that surprises you.

Your Walk-Up Song isn't necessarily the song you love most. It isn't the song that sounds cool. It isn't the song your coach thinks you should use.

It's the song that inspires you and tells the truth about the person you need to become in that moment.

Greg Maddux and Nolan Ryan were both extraordinary pitchers, but their identities were completely different. Maddux was deception. Ryan was domination.

Same game.

Same objective.

Completely different frequency.

They didn't need to hear the same song.

Neither do you.

Your song should become an emotional trigger. It should be a sound that you've practiced associating with the state you need. When it begins, you don't just hear music. You know who you are.

It Isn't Just One Song

Here's where the idea gets even wilder and more useful.

Not every important moment requires the same version of you.

Sometimes you need **Power**: confidence and energy.

Sometimes you need **Clutch**: focus, determination, and grit.

Sometimes you need **Reset**: clarity, grounding, and decompression.

And sometimes the challenge isn't to push forward at all.

Sometimes you need **Recovery**: hope, comfort, and perspective.

The challenge changes, so your frequency may need to change with it.

The question is always the same:

Who do I need to be for precisely this moment?

When you can answer that, there's another question:

What will help me get there?

Your Next Seven Seconds Are Coming

Believe me, they are coming. You don't get to choose every pitch. You don't get to control every outcome. You can't prevent every rejection, mistake, loss, awkward conversation, bad day, or unexpected curveball. But you can learn to stop walking into those moments by accident.

- You can learn to recognize the state you're in.
- You can decide the state you need.
- You can practice the transition.
- And you can build a trigger that helps you get there.

That's what The Walk-Up Protocol is really about.

Not hype.

Not pretending you're fearless.

Not convincing yourself that everything will go your way.

It's about intentionally becoming the version of yourself that can handle whatever comes next.

Because another seven seconds of chaos is coming. It's not a question whether it will.

The only real question is:

Who will show up when it does?

What's Your Song?

I'm going to tell you something before you ask:

No, I can't find your Walk-Up Song for you.

And neither can your coach, or your spouse, or your best friend, or even AI.

Because your Walk-Up Song isn't a song that somebody else thinks is cool. It's not the song that worked for Derek Jeter. It's not the song that sounds intimidating. It's not even necessarily your favorite song.

It is a song that connects to your identity, your challenge, and your frequency. And it has to connect so well that the person who is the absolute closest to you says, "Oh, yeah. That's right."

That's why I don't give you a playlist. I give you a process. The Walk-Up Protocol workshop is where we take this idea out of the book and put it to work.

1. You'll identify a challenge that matters to you.
2. You'll define the version of yourself you need to bring to that moment.
3. You'll explore what that frequency feels like.
4. And you'll begin the search for the sounds that can help you get there.

You may walk out with one song. Or you may walk out with three. (I have four.)

You may discover that the song you thought was "your song" isn't your song at all, and that's okay. Because the goal isn't to find a cool song.

The goal is to find you.

Ready to Find Your Walk-Up?

- See the Protocol in action.
 - Watch the short video, see upcoming public workshops, and find the next opportunity to experience The Walk-Up Protocol.
 - <https://TheWalkUpProtocol.com>
- Or, if you'd rather talk about what this could look like for you, schedule a conversation with me. I'll help you decide whether the workshop is the right next step.
 - Schedule a time at <https://tidycal.com/walk-up-protocol> and let's chat or have a catch.

One warning:

Don't ask me what your song *should* be. I'll probably ask you a much harder question: “Who do you need to be when you walk into the room?”

We'll start there.

Now get on deck.

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