

You built the company as an extension of yourself. Now it needs a different version of you. A new stage asks you to delegate work you still experience as identity, leave roles that once made you valuable, and lead without treating every company result as a verdict on who you are.

The Identity Forge gives you one operating system for that transition: FORGE. Frame your current identity. Own the evolution the next stage requires. Reassess at thresholds. Grow into the new role through visible practice. Exit identities that no longer serve the company or the person leading it.

This is identity work made operational. You will learn to:

- Map where role, status, company, and self have fused.
- Define the next identity without denying what the current one built.
- Turn a growth threshold into specific practices, decisions, and conversations.
- Delegate responsibility without quietly reclaiming the identity attached to it.
- Leave an outgrown role deliberately, publicly, and with clean boundaries.
- Use your calendar as evidence of the identity you are actually living.

Each chapter produces a working artifact: a fusion audit, identity frame map, threshold audit, growth plan, exit protocol, boundary map, delegation audit, calendar audit, and finally a personal FORGE protocol you can run at future transitions.

The aim is not reinvention for its own sake. It is a coherent self that can change scale without becoming rigid, performative, or trapped by its own history.

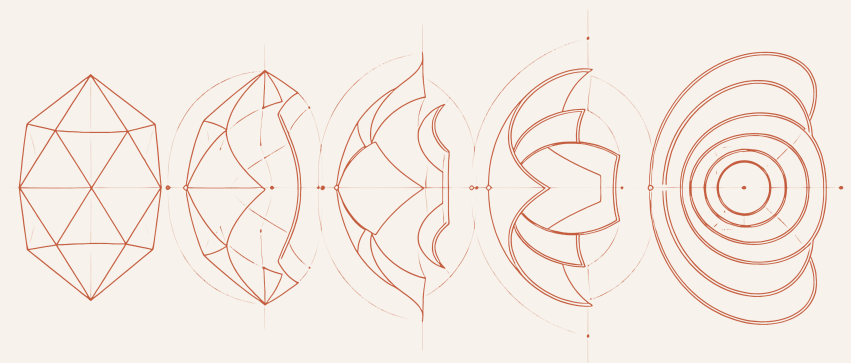
This book addresses ordinary founder experiences of role and identity change. It is not medical, psychological, clinical, or therapeutic advice. If identity loss, severe distress, or burnout symptoms are present, seek support from a qualified professional.

Len P. van der Hof, MSc

He builds operating systems for the strategic self. Treats entrepreneurship, AI and machine learning, marketing, philosophy, psychology, and health optimization as one engineering problem. MSc in Strategic Entrepreneurship, Rotterdam School of Management, Erasmus University.

The *Identity* Forge

The **Operating** System for **Identity** That Survives **Growth**



Len P. van der Hof

Systems for the Strategic Self