

# Bosses are People Too

*Why Leadership Engagement is at an all time low*

Bob Kelleher, The Employee Engagement Group

April 19, 2024





# My Plan Today

- I will share concepts, ideas, best practices, and studies on why ‘boss’ engagement has dropped, and how to select, retain, and engage your ‘people who manage people’
- ...and will post this presentation and a few tools on the Summit cloud website



## Welcome to the HR Summit Cloud

Thank you to all of our wonderful A/E/C HR Summit 2024 attendees and sponsors! We sincerely appreciate your continued attendance and hope you enjoyed your time with us in Austin.

**\*\*Please take a moment to complete the General Summit Evaluation and the Breakout Speaker Evaluations\*\***

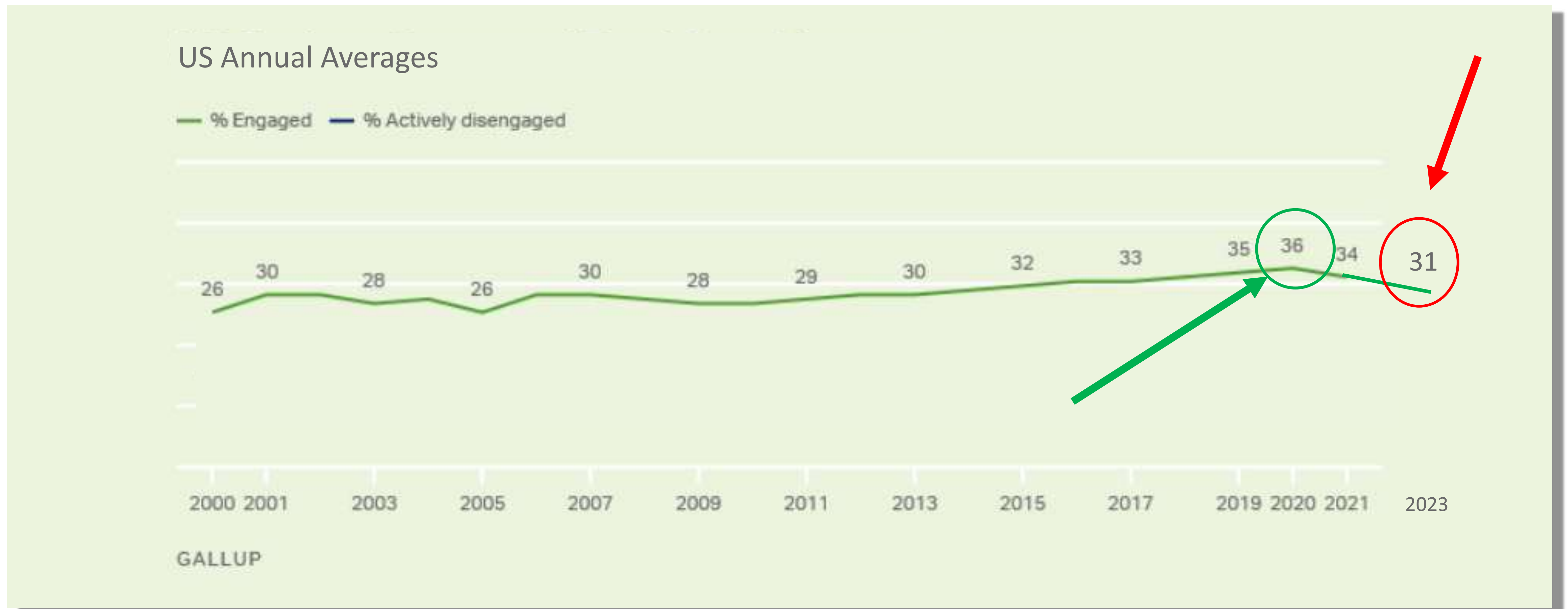
[2024 Summit Evaluation](#)

[Breakout Sessions & Evaluations](#)

[Keynote Presentations](#)

[Credits, Live Poll Results, and Event Photos](#)

# Overall, all workplace engagement is down





# State of the Workforce

Manager Engagement  
Dropped 7%\*

...and Hybrid Managers experienced the highest level of burnout in 2022\*\*

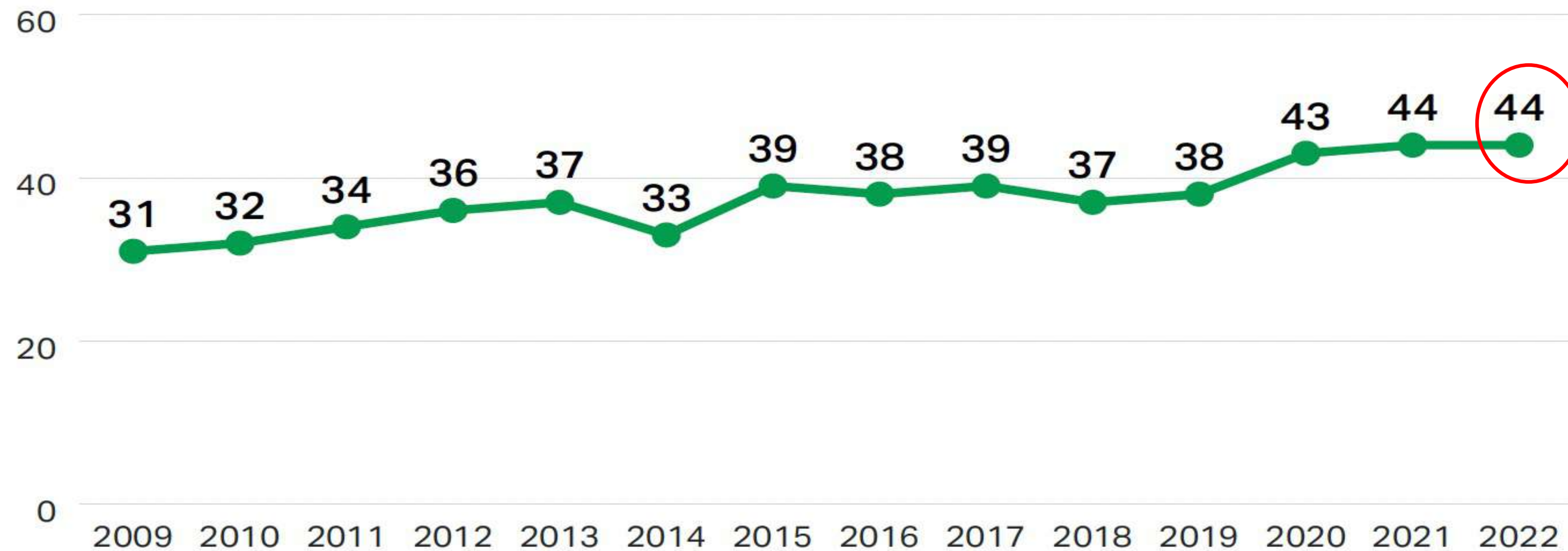


\*Gallup's State of the US Workplace Report, January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022, *US Engagement Drops First Time in a Decade*  
\*\* 6 Trends Leaders Need to Navigate This Year, *Gallup Workplace*, January 31, 2023

## Daily Stress

Did you experience the following feelings during A LOT OF THE DAY yesterday? How about stress?

● % Yes





# Scary Statistics

- According to a June 2023 Gallup data, **59%** of of global workers say they're 'checked out' of their workplace.
- A recent SHRM study reveals that:
  - **84%** of American workers say poorly trained people managers create a lot of unnecessary work and stress
  - **57%** of American workers say managers in their workplace could benefit from training on how to be a better people manager
  - **50%** of employees feel their own performance would improve if their direct supervisor received additional training in people management per SHRM



# What's Going On?





*6 Reasons Boss  
Engagement  
is so low*





# 1. Perception of the Boss





# The Boston Globe

MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2017

## Students stuck with private loans from failed schools

Thousands being targeted by third-party collectors to pay for services that many say were promised, but never delivered

By Delvive Fernandez

Thousands of former students in Massachusetts and across the country continue to be hounded about private loans they took out to attend for-profit schools that many say

failed to provide the education they promised and have since shut down. The US Department of Education has agreed to wipe out some of the millions of dollars in federal loans that students loaded up on to attend institutions such as Corinthian Col-

leges Inc. and ITT Technical Institute, because regulators allege that they were predatory and left students in the lurch when they abruptly closed. But many of those same students continue to be stuck with their private loans.

Shoulding this private debt, held by collection companies, credit union organizations, and investment firms, has proven to be much more difficult, leaving students with thousands of dollars in loans from schools.

"For the private student loans, it's harder to get immediate relief," said Toby Merrill, director of the Project on Predatory Student Lending at the Legal Services Center at Harvard Law School. "There's a lot of damage done to students."

Students took out these private loans when they couldn't afford the school tuition and federal loans weren't enough to cover the costs. Many students were urged to take on private debt by the for-profit schools.

## Fuel plan draws critics

Some wood products could be designated as renewable energy

By David Abel

WOOD PRODUCTS

The Baker administration plans to designate a fuel derived from logging and clearing trash in lands as a form of renewable energy, a move that environmental advocates say would increase emissions and weaken provisions the governor made after President Trump pulled out of the Paris climate accord.

The proposed rules, which stem from provisions in a 2014 law supported by the logging industry, would provide financial incentives for the energy source known as woody biomass — wood chips and pellets made from tree trunks, branches, needles, and other plant matter.

Administrative officials say biomass is part of an effort to diversify the

BIOMASS, Page 24

### In the news



#### Summer break

Monday: Mostly cloudy, 64-74.  
High: 72-77, Low: 61-66.  
Tuesday: Mostly cloudy, 64-74.  
High: 75-80, Low: 59-64.  
High: 70-75, Low: 57-62.  
Sunrise: 5:43, Sunset: 7:48  
Complete report, B13

Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson met with his South Korean and Chinese counterparts in hopes of reducing the tensions on Pyongyang. A3.

The Cambridge City Council is set to vote on a measure to limit short-term rentals, capping a year of debate over balancing a growing industry. B8.



Boston marked its first "Caturday," a peculiar cat meetup that's already spread to other major cities, offering cat people a common space to mingle with one another and their pets. B8.

A woman is creating a first-of-its-kind digital map of the global Catholic Church to address Pope Francis' call for action on climate change and care for the poor. B1.

Chris Young brought the power to the Red Sox 4-3 win, going 3 for 4 with five RBIs and two deep home runs down the left-field line. C3.

The next sign-up period for the federal health program is due to start Nov. 1, but the government appears to be operating on contradictory tracks, according to insurers, state officials, and others. A3.

Retailers are scrambling to get spaces near Amazon's new offices in Fort Point. B5.

POINT OF VIEW: NEXUS REAM

"The vast size of these people and their constant by-product of noise pollution... But you have to admit, these are awfully noisy times, both figuratively and literally." A16.

By Jerrold Francis

As the political crisis worsens

At the political crisis worsens



## A GOLDEN AGE FOR TOXIC BOSSES?

By Katie Johnston

Toxic bosses have long been a reality for many beleaguered workers. The volatile manager who yells and kicks filing cabinets. The condescending director who blames everyone but himself when things go wrong. The demanding supervisor with no patience for employees who have to leave early to pick up a sick child.

And now we have Donald Trump, arguably the most high-profile boss in the world, who has — shall we say — somewhat aggressive leadership

style. He has been known to publicly question his subordinates (see: the steady stream of statements lambasting Attorney General Jeff Sessions), announce huge personnel changes without informing his department heads (see: the sudden ban on transgender people in the military), and revel in unusual proclamations of loyalty (see: the Cabinet meeting at which members publicly ingratiated themselves to Trump, among other instances).

While there has been some movement

to fully understand the wide smile on the face of the man in the bright yellow jersey as he rolls into Kennedy Square the other day, you have to go back half a lifetime — 41 years to be precise — to a decision John Bessmer would come to regret for the rest of his life.

Sweeney and Stephen Jaenica are Red Soxies, but they're closer than that. They're brotherly, boys who grew up in each other's shadows in Brighton, best friends, constant companions.

In the summer of 1976, Bessmer was knocked for the knothood, 13 feet

he last free summer after studying at

FARRAGHER, Page 24

## Venezuelan violinist's plight resonates around Boston

By Jeremy Kieber

He has played his violin amidst explosions of tear gas. He has lifted spirits of countless marching protesters. He has faced lines of riot police holding nothing more than his bow and his skills.

As the political crisis worsens

day by day in Venezuela, the forces of repression have found an unlikely symbol in a slight-framed 23-year-old violinist named Wally Arango. Dressed in the colors of his country, he plays his violin at the front lines of pro-democracy protests, often floating, with a pure tone and a classical vibrato, the notes of the Venezuelan national anthem while



ARRANGO, Page A4



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FARRAGHER, Page 24



# State of the Global Workplace 2023 Report

THE VOICE OF THE WORLD'S EMPLOYEES



Discover how employees around the world experienced life and work last year.

Employee Engagement | Daily Negative Emotions | Job Market

GALLUP



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.



MANAGING YOUR CAREER

## First It Was Quiet Quitting, Now Workers Are Facing Off With Their Bosses

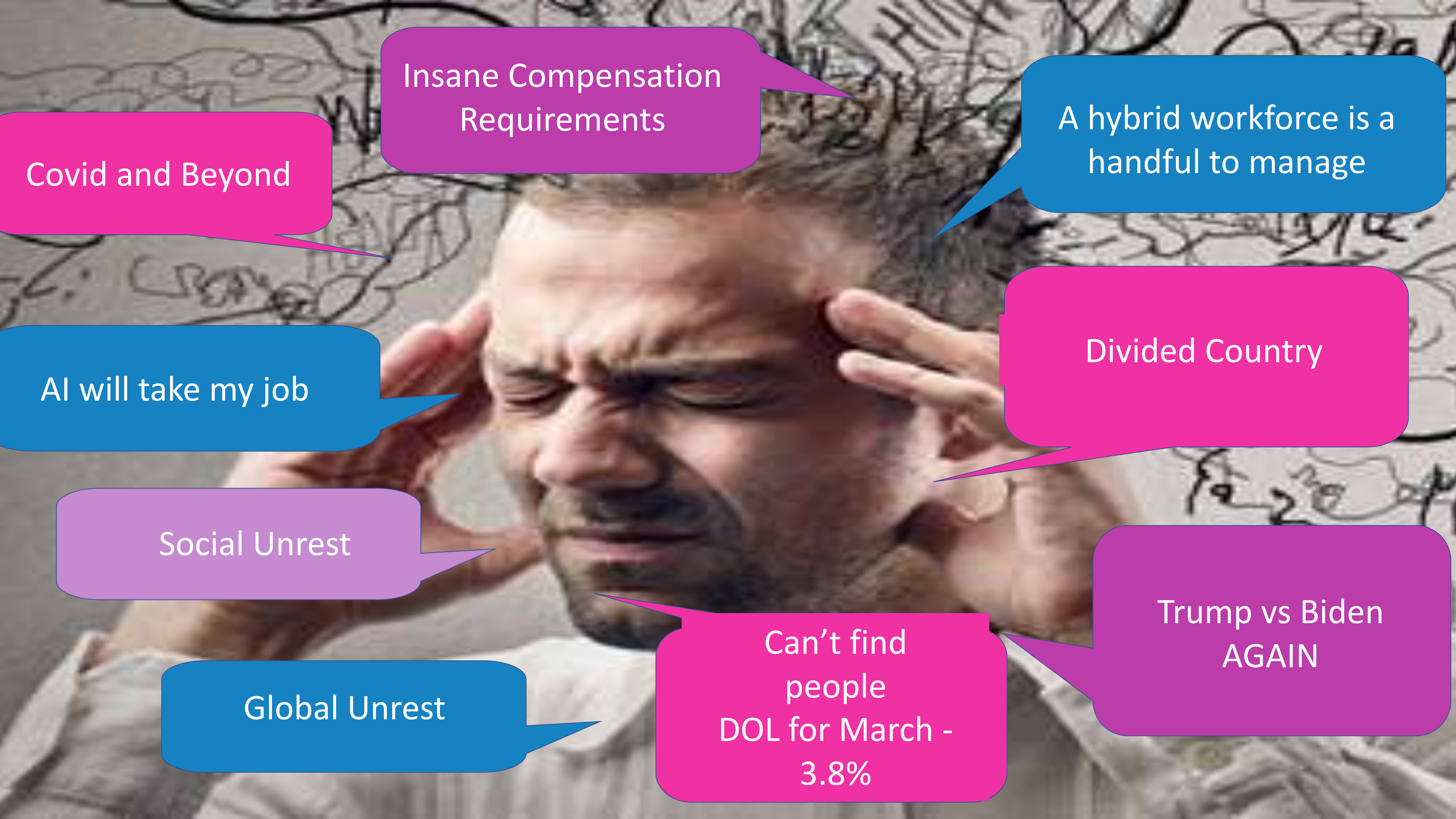
Employee frustrations impact productivity and worker retention, Gallup says



2. Today's leaders are dealing with a lot







Covid and Beyond

Insane Compensation Requirements

A hybrid workforce is a handful to manage

AI will take my job

Divided Country

Social Unrest

Trump vs Biden AGAIN

Global Unrest

Can't find people  
DOL for March - 3.8%



3. Hello, maybe they don't want to manage people











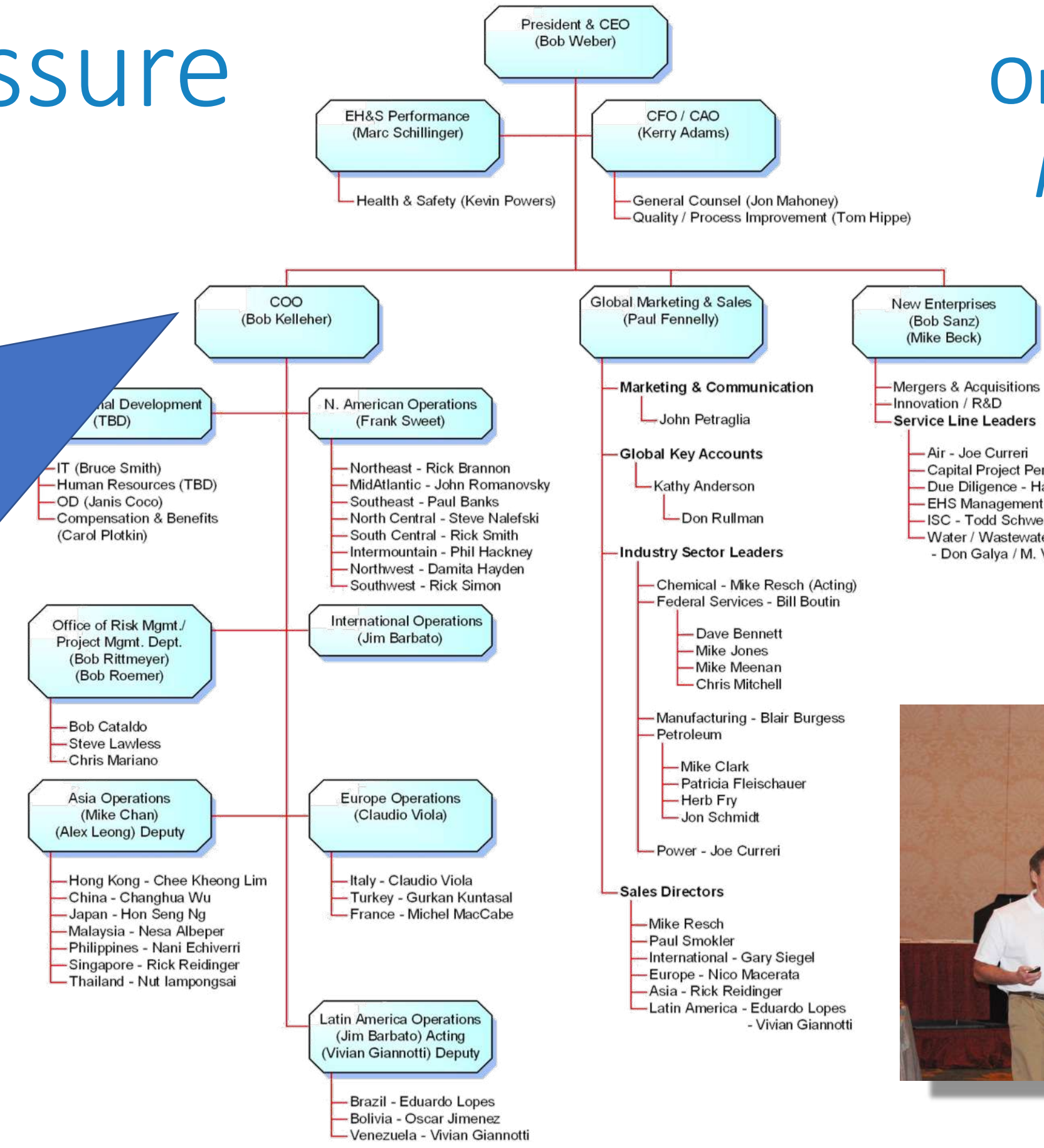
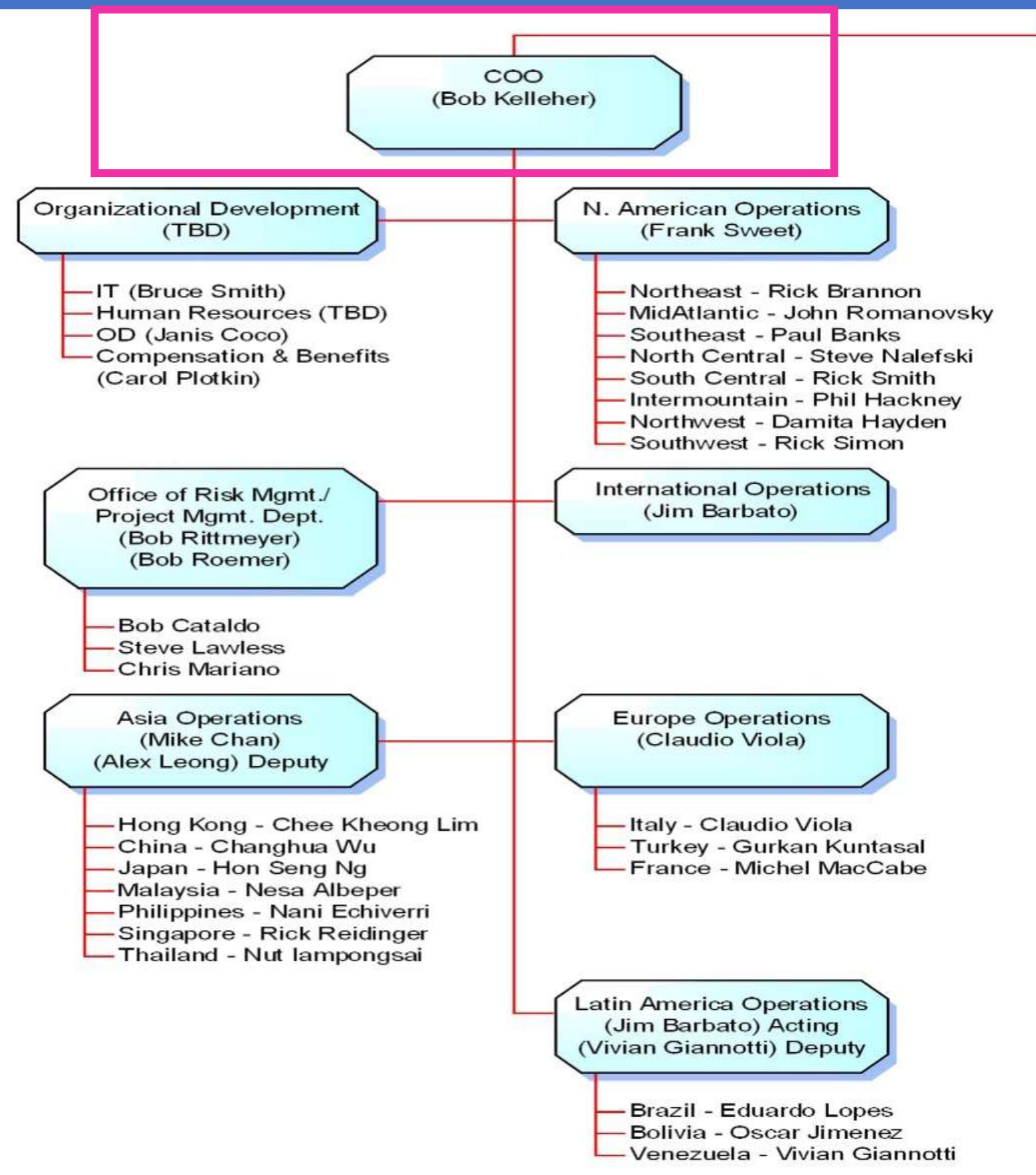






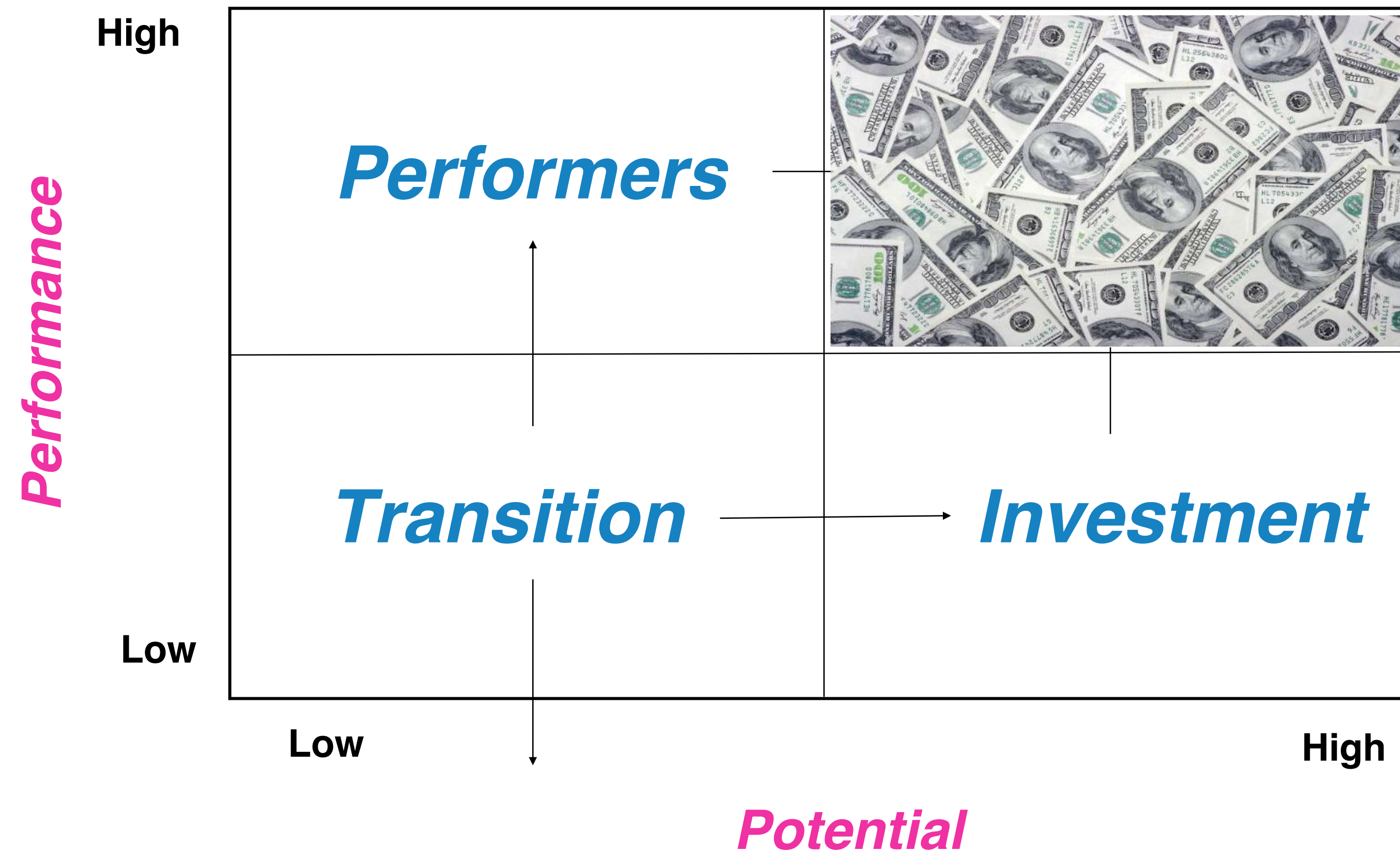
# Case Study – Organization Pressure

ENSR's New Organizational Model  
Kicked off 10/1/06





# Performance / Potential Matrix



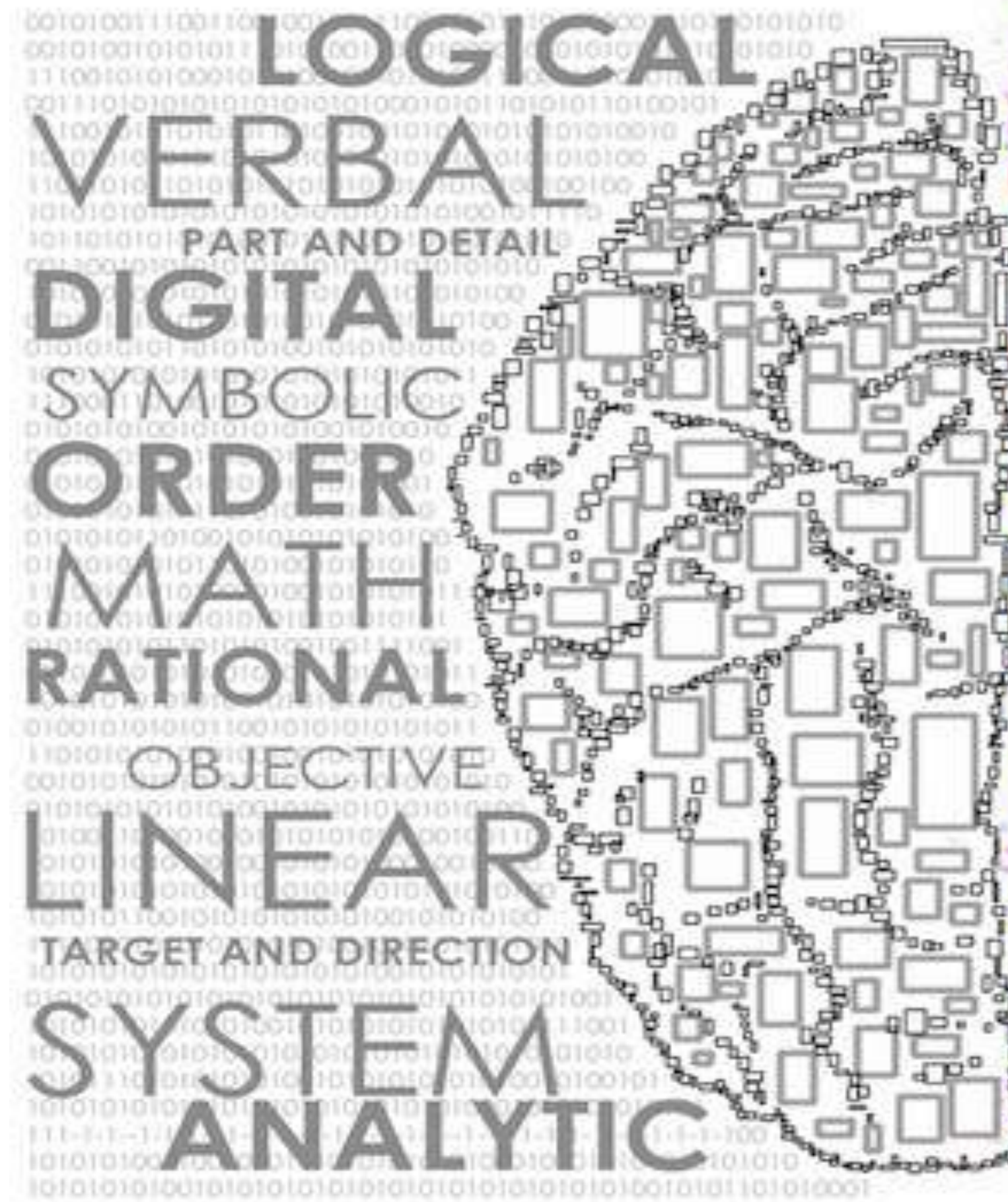


## 4. Management consumes EMOTION





# Most leaders are left brain oriented





# Empathy more natural with right brain types





# It is not 'Either / Or'





# Good managers and gender

- There are great male and female managers
- But....female managers tend to be more engaged (41% to 34%)
- Plus, employees working for female managers are 6% more engaged than those working for male managers
- Best combo? Females working for females (35% engaged)
- Worst combo? Males working for males (25% engaged)





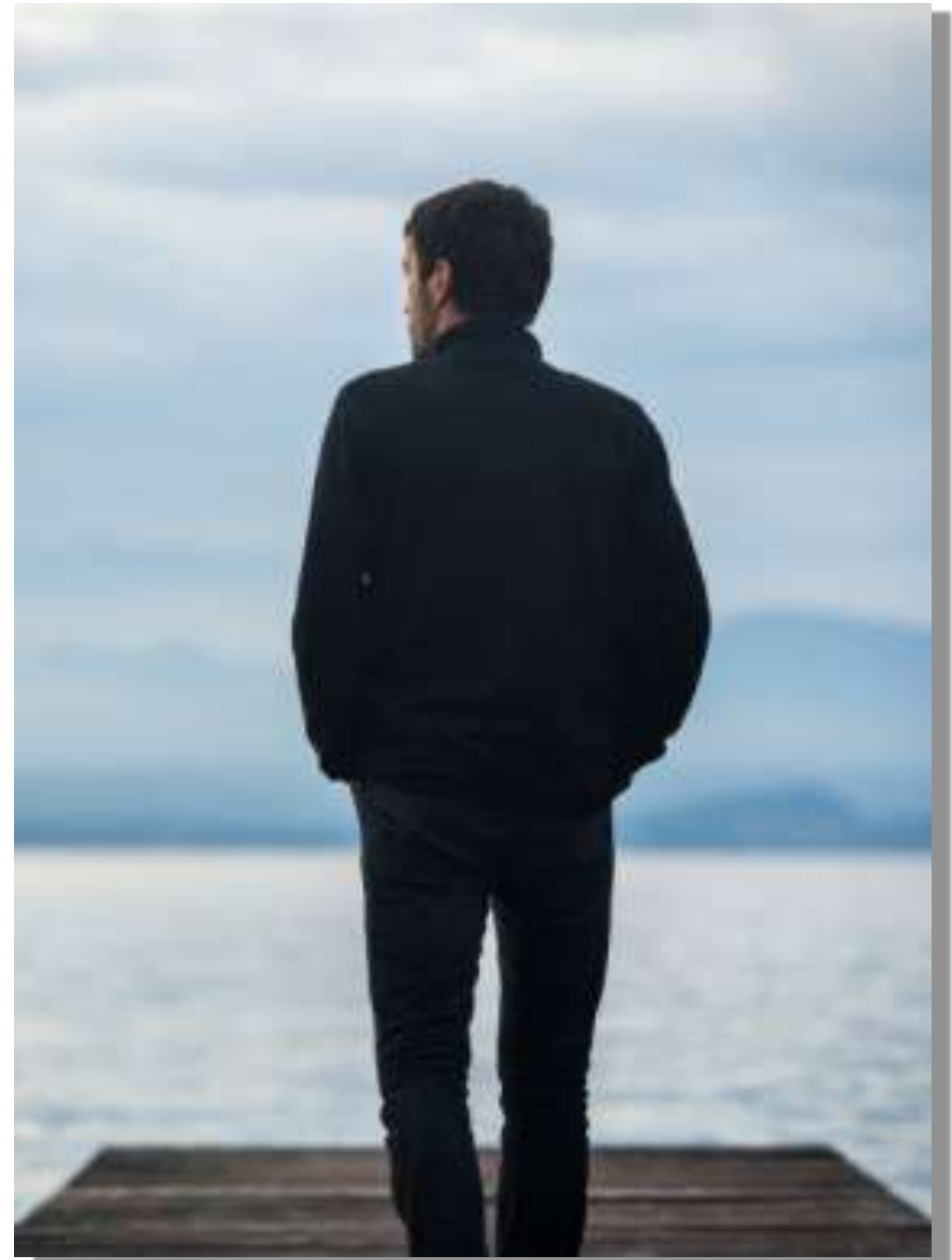
# 5. Management is lonely





# Why so lonely?

- You now have fewer peers
- Need to be always ON
- Perception that you must have distance with your employees to remain objective
- Many tough decisions require independent thinking...





# 6. You might have to support decisions you don't like





# The Consequences of Bad Boss Selection





*75% of people voluntarily leaving jobs say their boss is the reason\**

\* Gallup survey of 80,000 Global Employees



*The #1 Driver of both  
Employee Engagement and  
Employee Disengagement?*

*....one's first line  
supervisor (the boss)*

\* Gallup survey of 80,000 Global Employees



# 8 Steps To Engage and show LOVE to the Boss





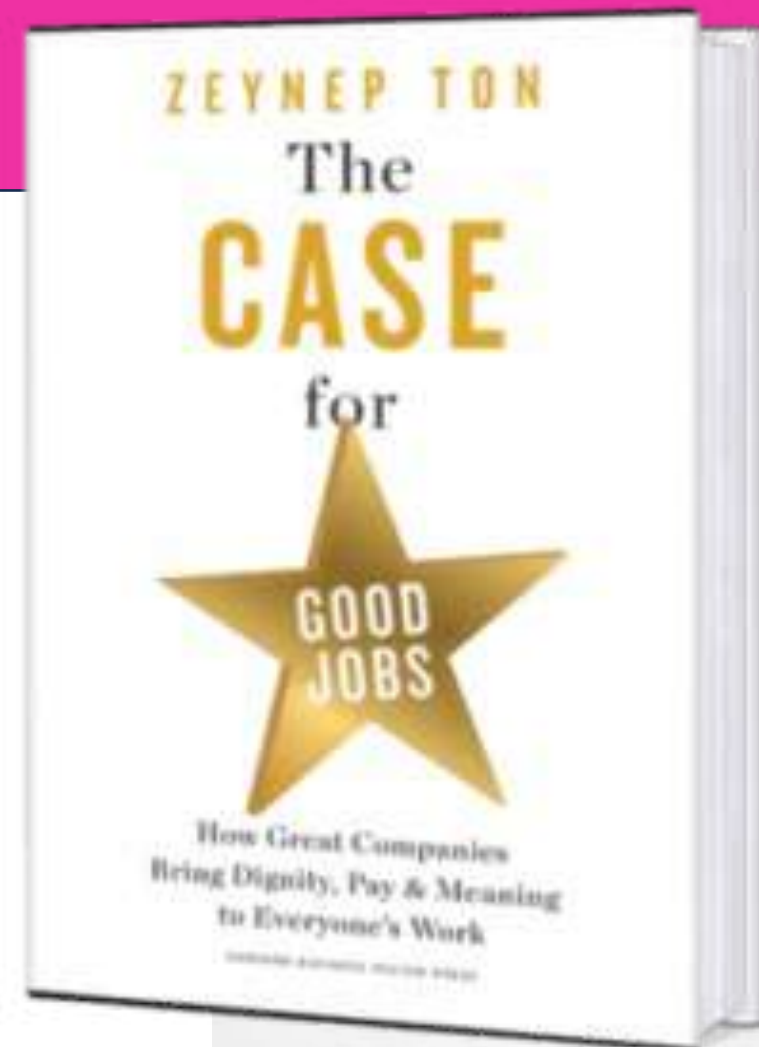
# 1. Treat them as employees first





*“If you don’t do the people stuff well, you are going to screw up your company pretty badly”*

Zeynep Ton, professor at MIT Sloan School of Management, and author of *The Case for Good Jobs*



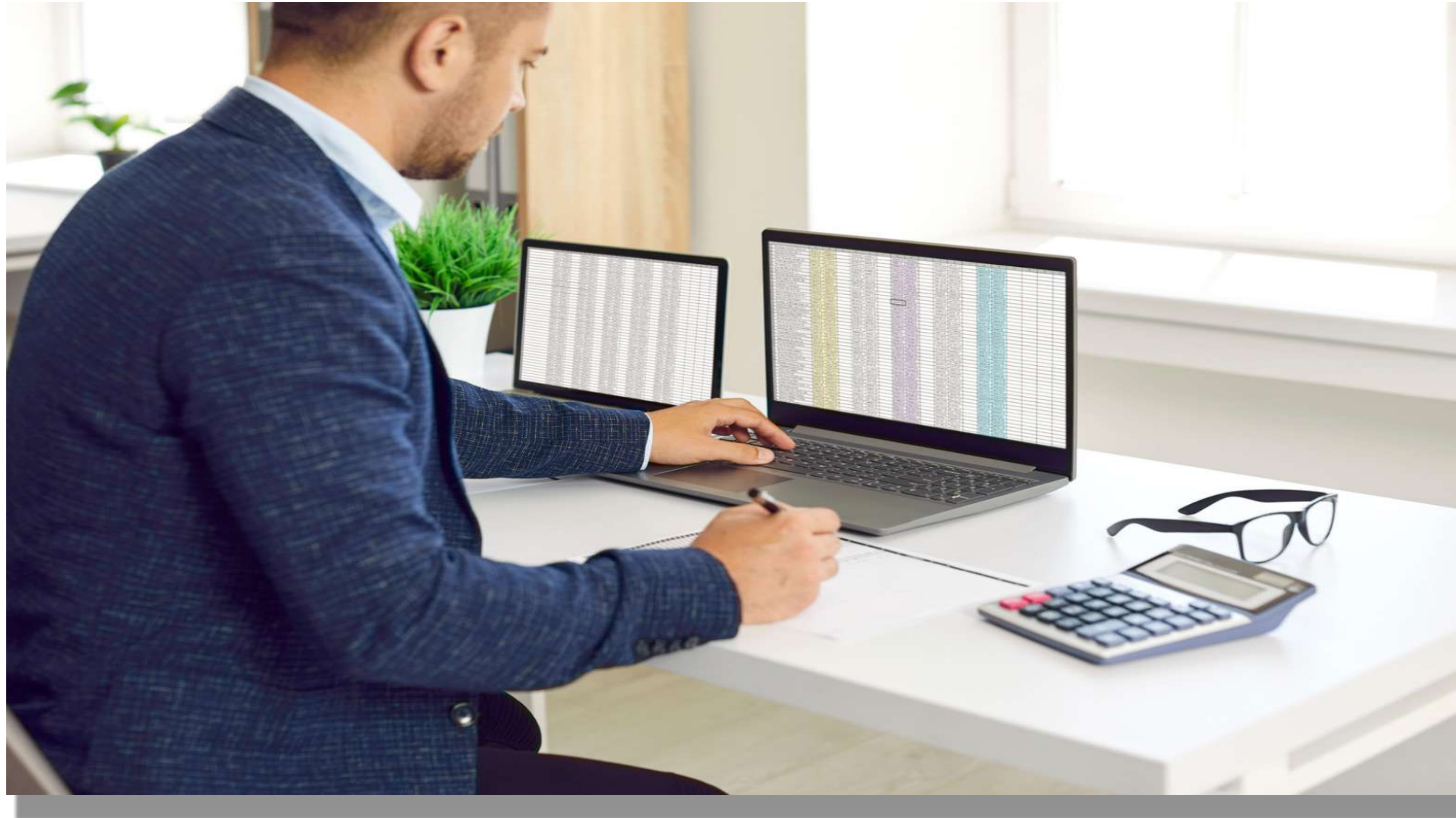


## 2. Reduce their workload





# *Case Study* – Reduce their workload





# 3. Pay Them

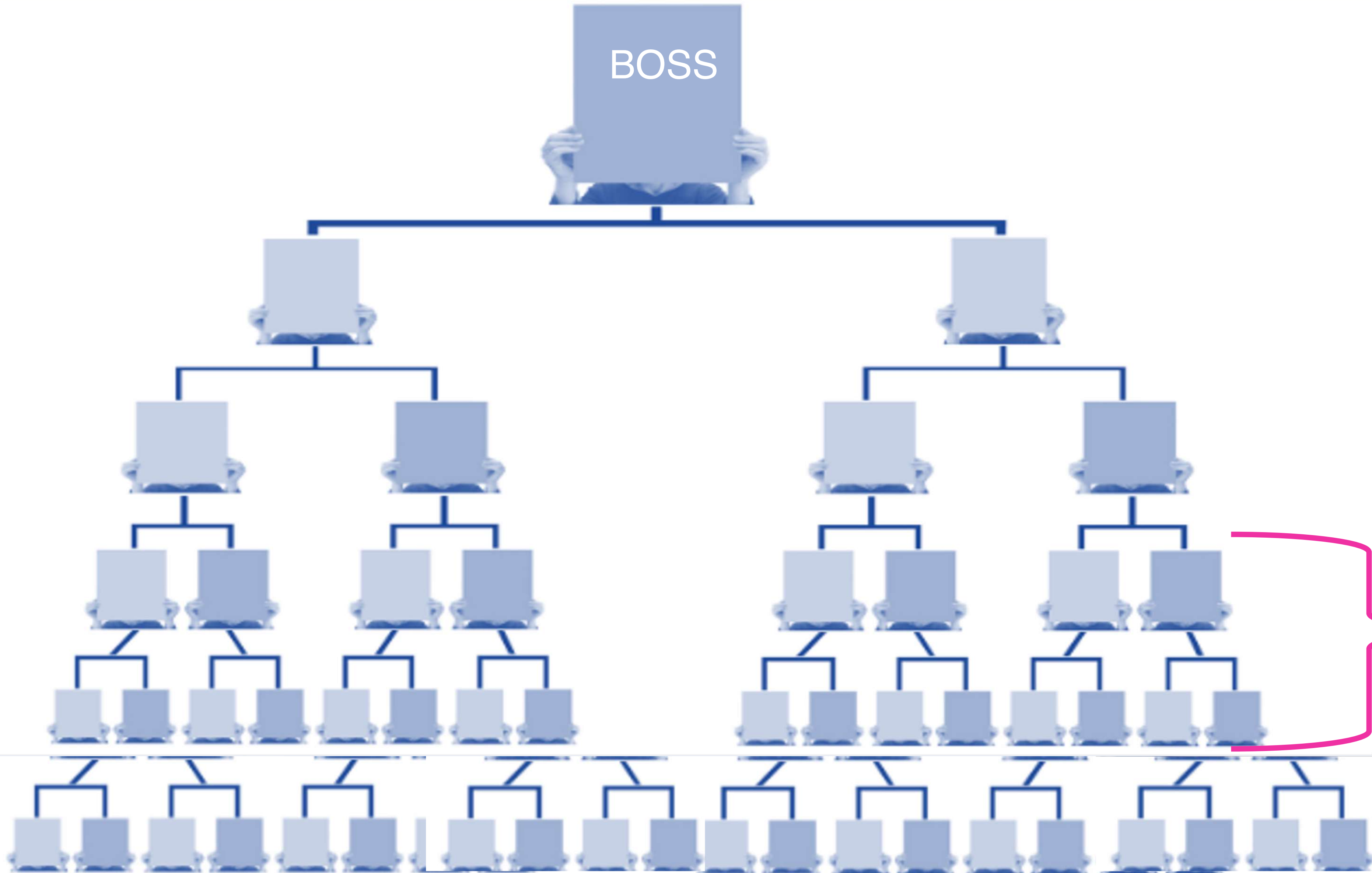




Good People Leaders are  
Your Most Important Employees



BOSS



Leverage



## 4. Communicate to them FIRST









# Communication and *Line of Sight*

Between “My Job” and “Where is the Company Going?”





# *Case Study* - Communication and Line of Sight





# Communication Alignment



## Build a communication protocol

Using this template, begin to map out your communication protocol process by completing specifics on

- Message (profit, growth, engagement, etc.)
- Deliverer
- Venue
- Audience
- Frequency

Message	Who Delivers	Venue	Audience	Frequency



# 5. Train and Develop Them







*“I’m an  
Engineer, what  
do I know about  
managing  
people?”*



*“Green will Grow,  
Ripe will Rot”*

Anonymous

*“I don’t want to train them  
and have them quit!”*

*“Would you rather they not be  
trained and stay?”*

Anonymous





**Anthony Fasano, PE, F. ASCE** • 1st  
 Consultant on Engineering Firm Growth, TEDx Speaker, Trainer & Executi...  
 1yr •



ENGINEERS WHAT DO YOU VALUE MOST? I have been asking this question to engineers and getting a wide variety of answers so I thought I would post here. Please note for the first option: Career Growth Opportunities represent a clear path to grow in your firm and their support through mentoring and training to achieve it. [#engineers](#) [#career](#)

Engineers, which is the MOST IMPORTANT thing your company can provide:

The author can see how you vote. [Learn more](#)

Career Growth Opportunities	51%
High Salary with Bonus Option	26%
Great Health/401k Benefits	4%
Work from Home Flexibility	19%

712 votes • Poll closed

## SKILLS TRAINING A/E TALENT VALUES MOST

*Professionals want management and leadership training above everything else*



Q: In your current role, which of these types of trainings would be valuable? (Shown as %.)

ActionsProve & EMI | 2022



# 6. Empower and Trust Them







Team members who *strongly agree* that they **trust their team leader** are 8 X as likely to be fully engaged as those who don't.



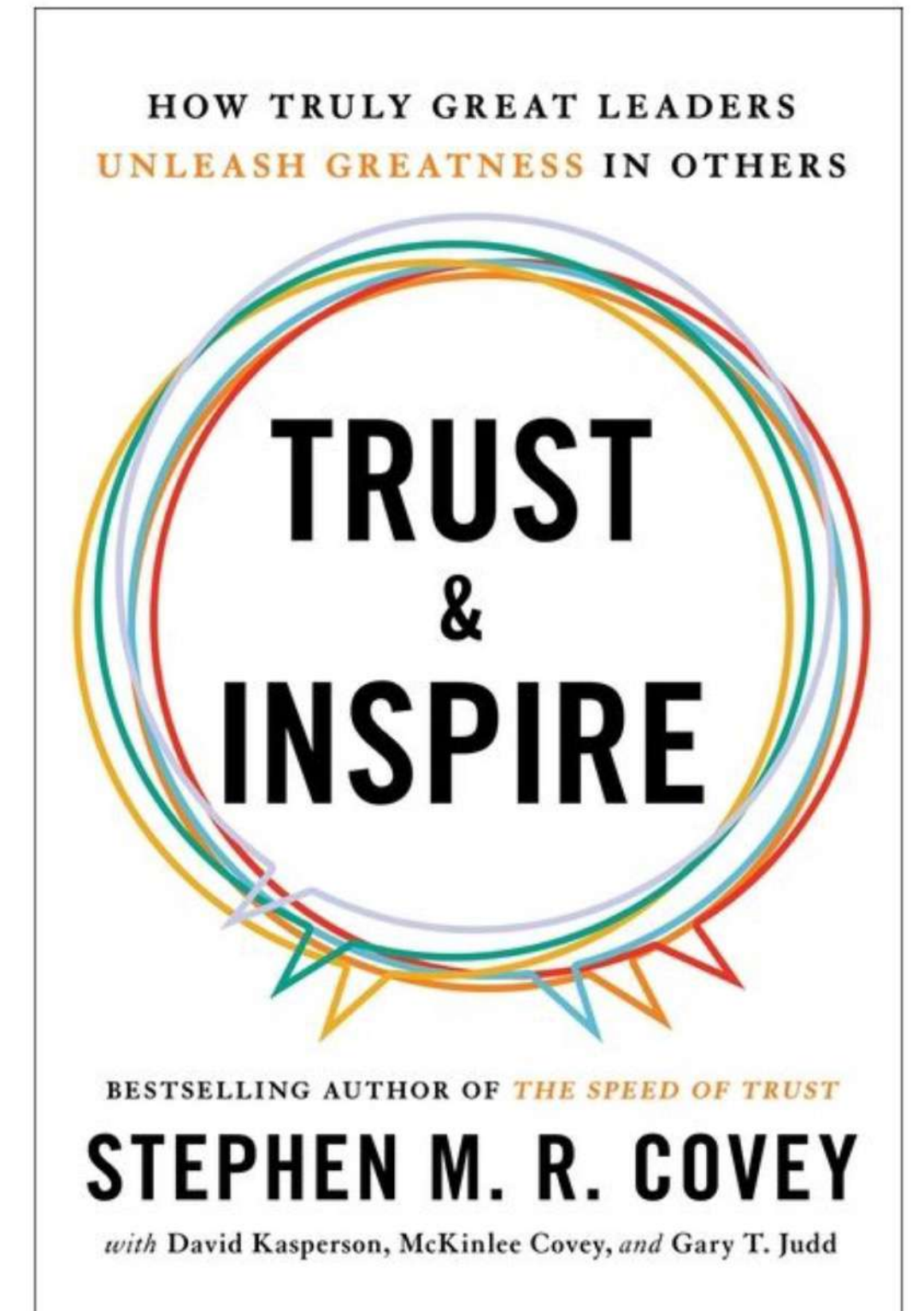


# TRUST AND INSPIRE

*How Truly Great Leaders Unleash Greatness in Others*



*Stephen M.R. Covey*





# Senior Leader need to Trust those who LEAD People

*You must be trusting, not just trustworthy.  
We are not trusting enough when trusting  
our people or our teams.*

*Stephen Covey*

Trustworthy  
+ Trusting =  
TRUST



# 7. Recognize and Appreciate Them





What's behind RECOGNITION?

We're all driven to ACHIEVE





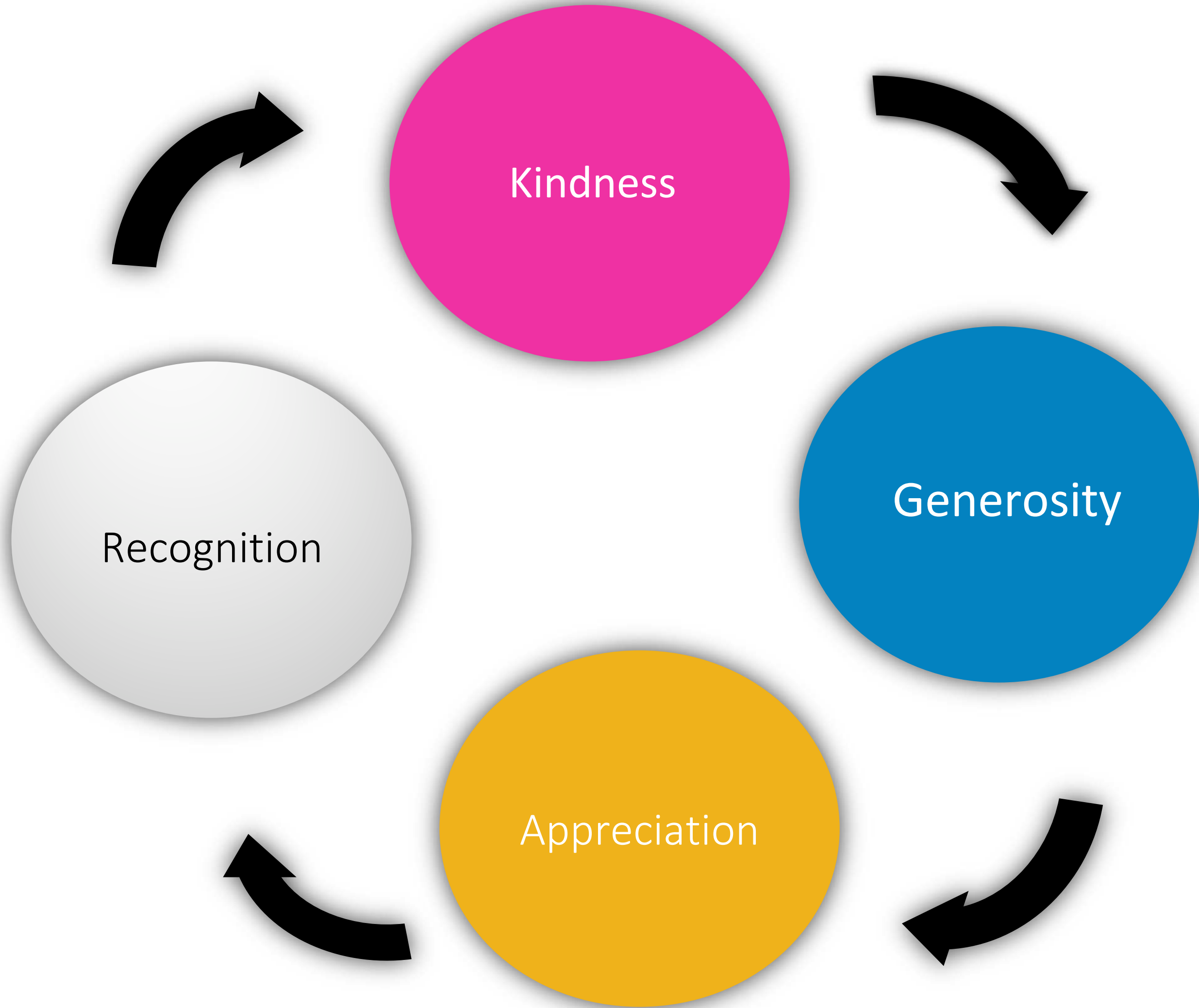




# People are Motivated by Recognition and Appreciation



Simon Sinek



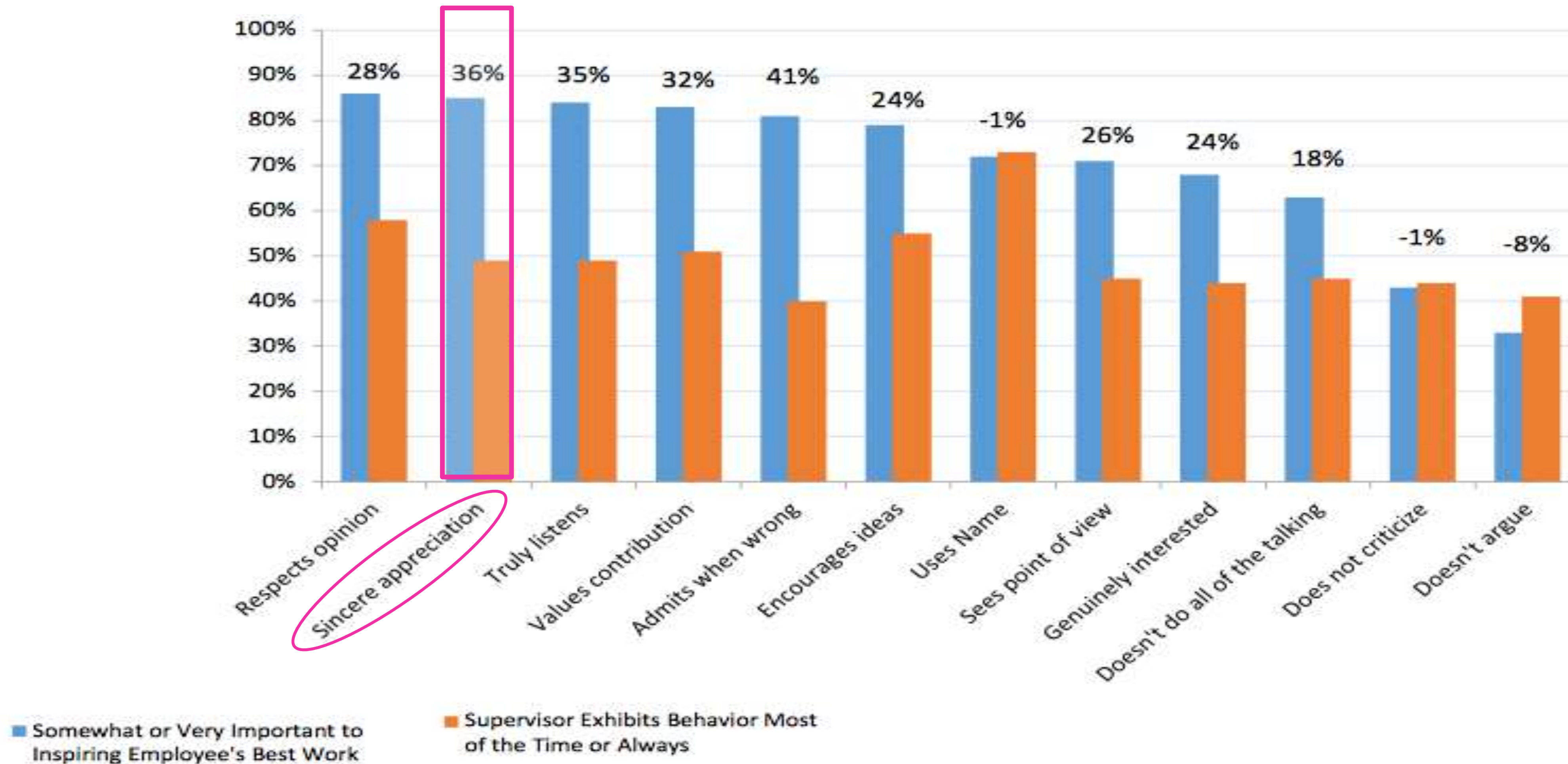


69% of employees say they'd work  
harder if they were  
better appreciated\*\*

\*\*8 Employee Engagement Statistics you need to know,  
SMARP, December 2021



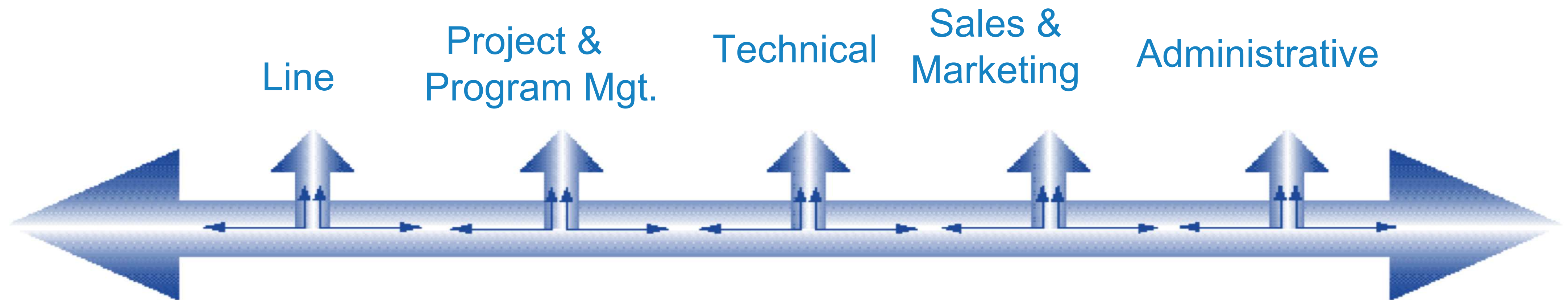
# Sadly, we have some work to do





# 8. Make other career options attractive

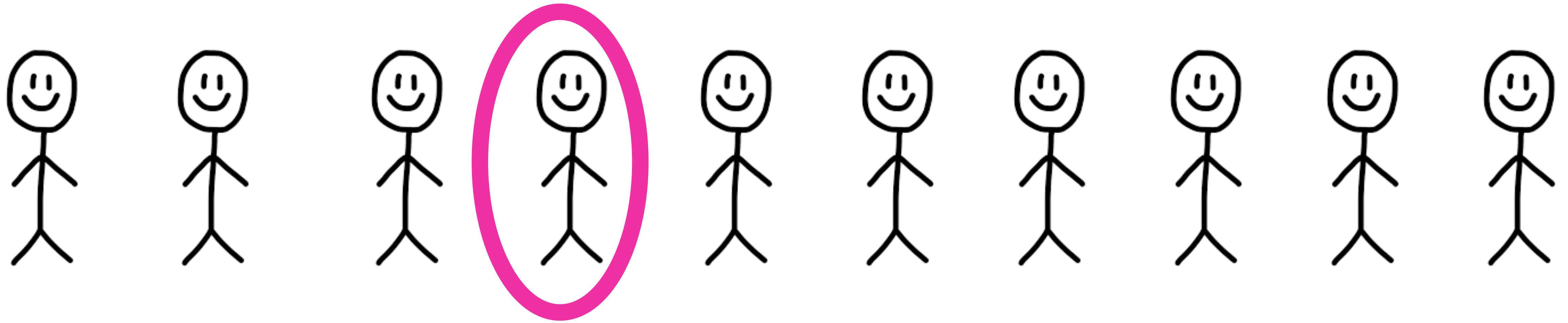
## Career Lattice Model





Look to promote 'people leaders' IN or OUT





**ONLY 10 %** of people have  
the combination of attributes  
that make a **GREAT** manager



# The Magic Matrix



Qualitative performance  
(The HOW You Do It)

Desired Behaviors and Traits – **Empathy, Trust, Vulnerability, etc.**



Look for (and avoid) the ~~7~~ 9 deadly characteristics of terrible bosses.





# 1. They Lack Empathy

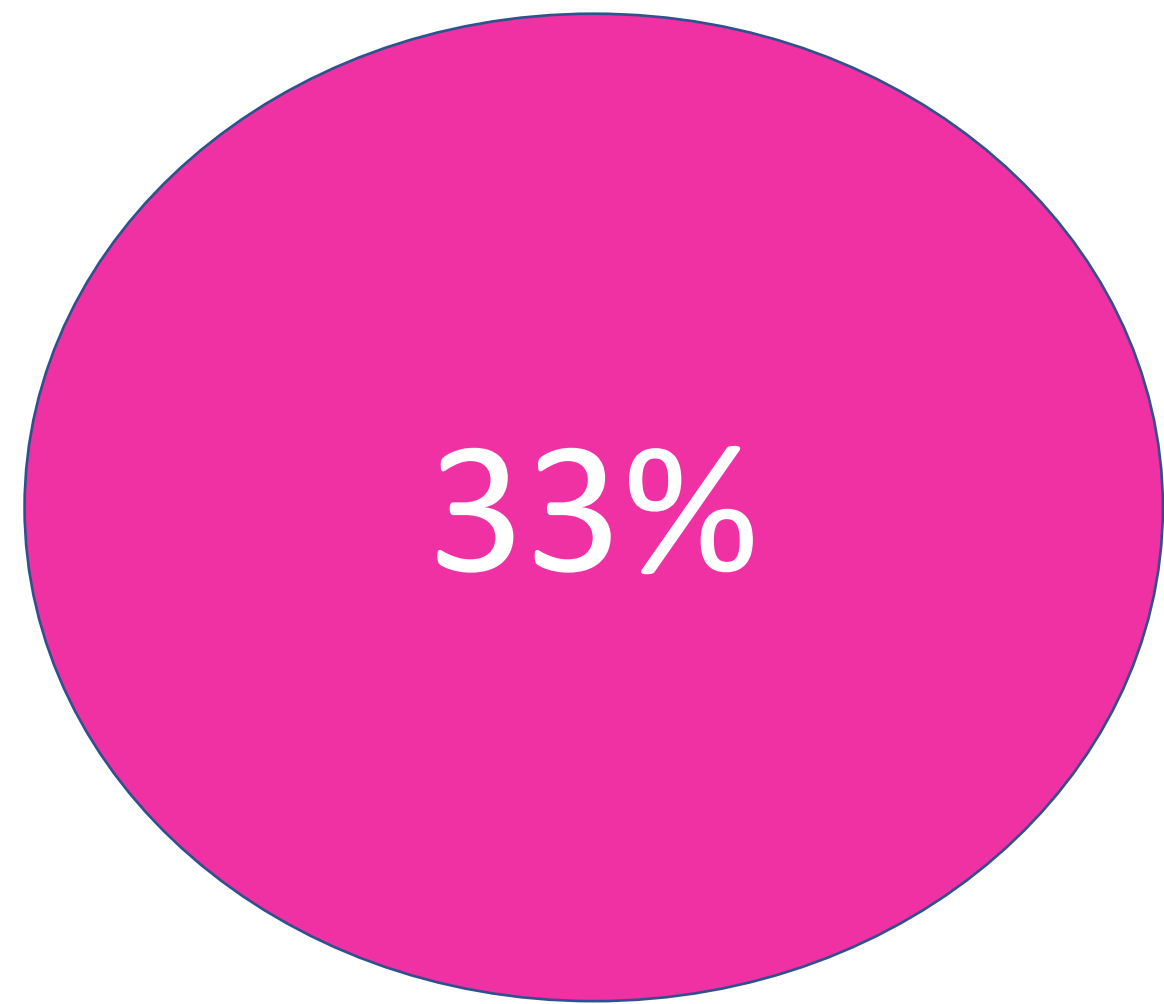




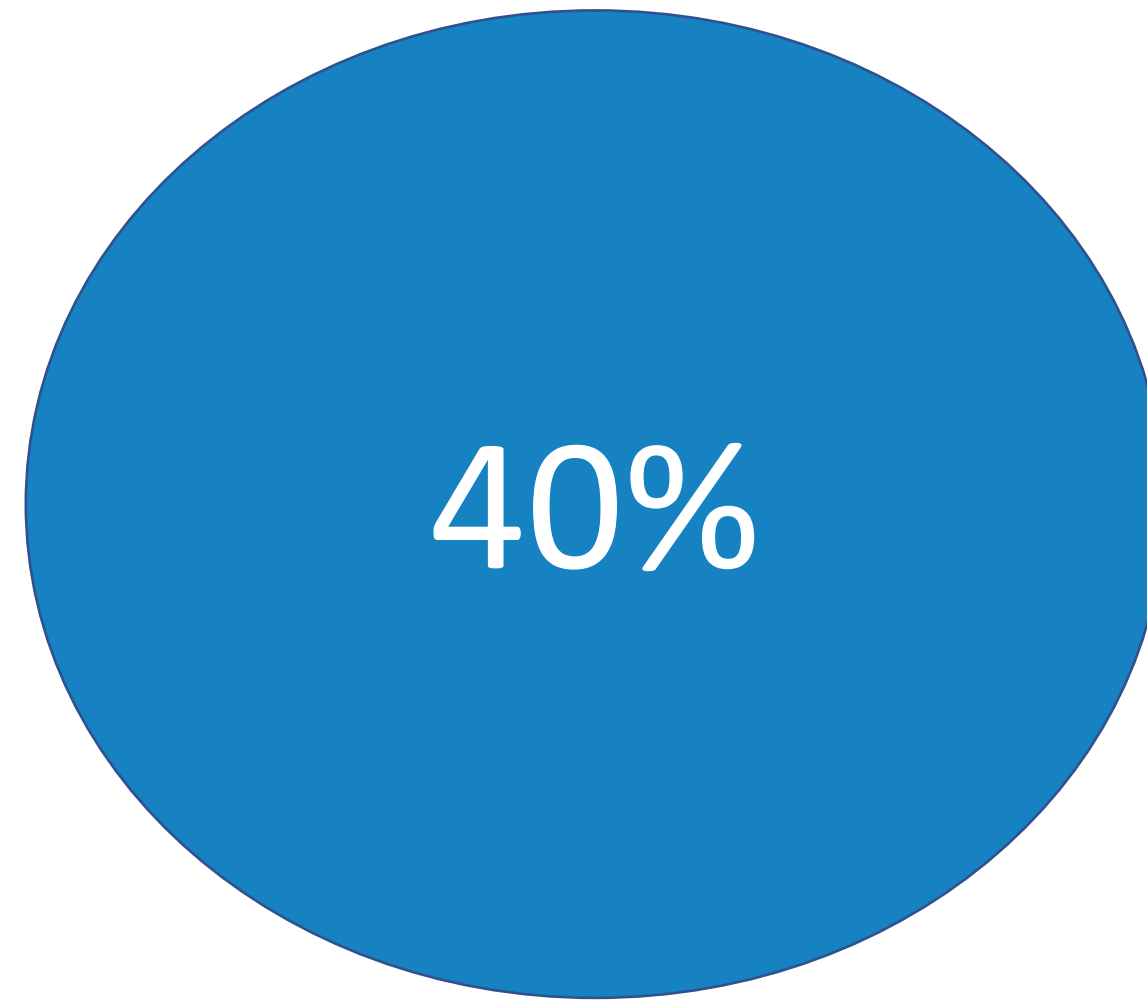
Include 'Empathy' as a Key Competency when evaluating candidates to hire or promote to 'people leaders'



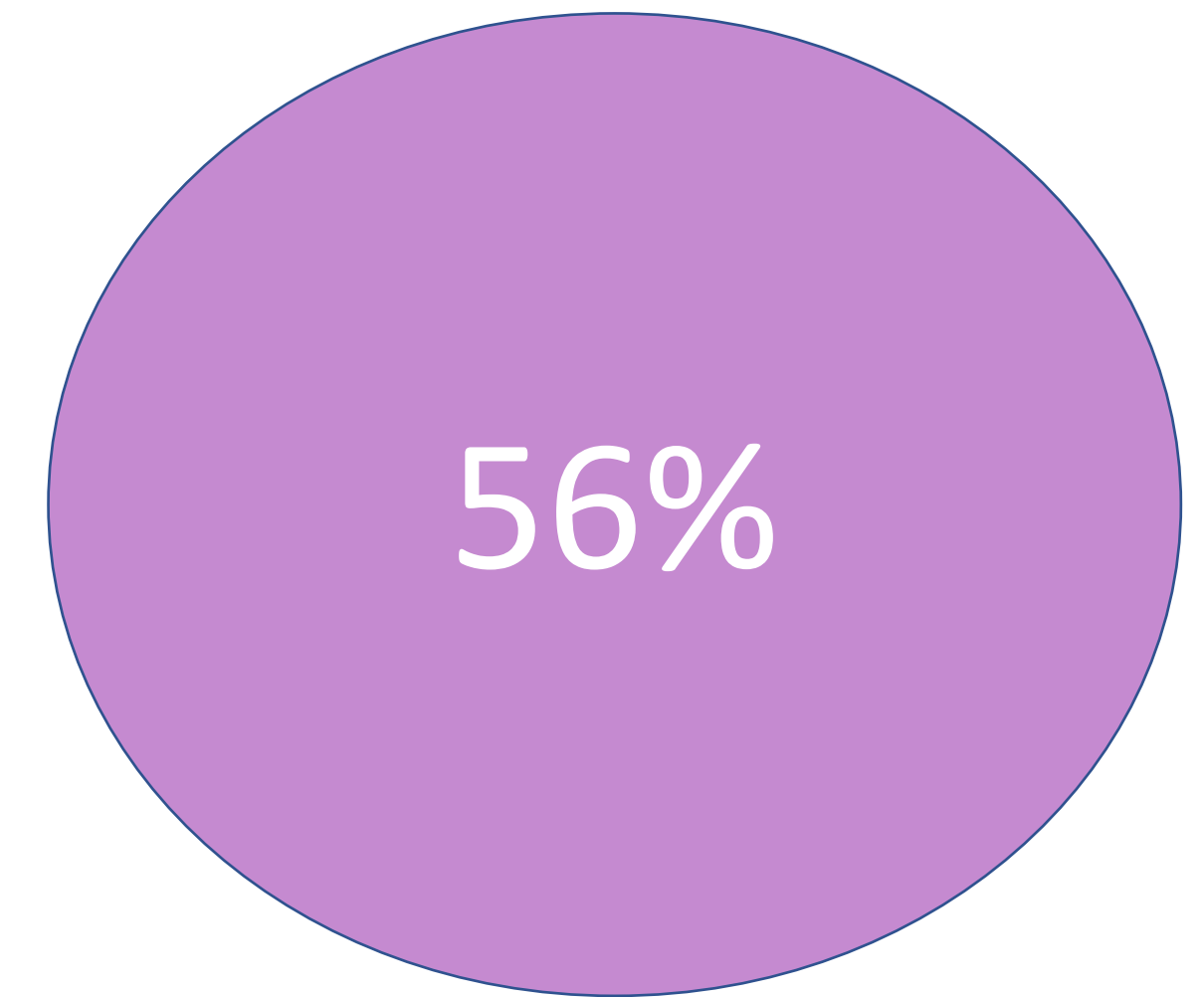




Would change jobs to work for an empathic employer



Would work longer hours for an empathetic employer



Would stay in their jobs if they felt valued and cared for

\*Businessolver 2017 Survey of 2,000 employees and CEO's



# The Disconnect

92% of polled employees say that empathetic employers drive retention\*




But only 49% of employees polled described their organization as empathetic\*

\*Businessolver 2017 Survey of 2,000 employees and CEO's

\*2017 Workplace Empathy Monitor study



# Case Study



glassdoor

Jobs Companies Salaries Interviews

Search Jobs or Companies...

52 Jobs More

4.6 ★★★★★ Rating

94% Recommend to a friend

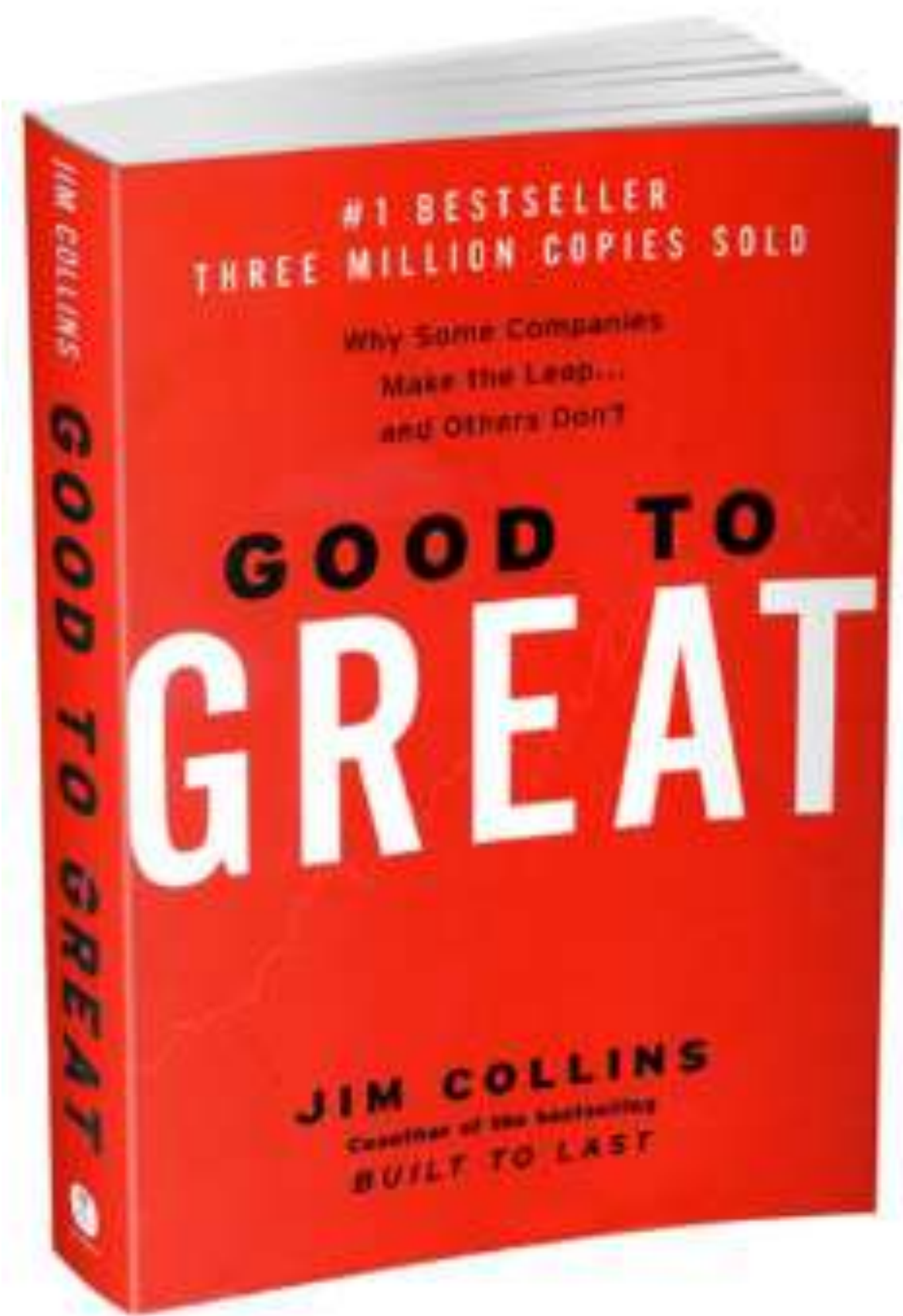
99% Approve of CEO

*“Empathy is the most essential quality for a successful career”*  
Bob Bechek, Managing Director at Bain & Co  
99% Approval Ranking and #1 rated Chief Executive on [glassdoor.com](https://www.glassdoor.com)





## 2. They Lack Humility and Vulnerability



*“...good leader combines both **HUMILITY** and fierce resolve. And for a leader to be seen as humble, they must be able to demonstrate **VULNERABILITY...**”*



# Case Study - Vulnerability

*“I have no idea how to do a 5-year Strategic Plan”*

Bob Weber, CEO of ENSR





### 3. They Fill the Wrong Voids

- Negativity
- Cynicism
- Skepticism





# 12 Needs a Leader Must Fill



## Twelve Needs a Leaders Must Fill Self-Assessment

Force rank yourself on the following 12 needs a leader must fill as follows:

1 = Highly Effective

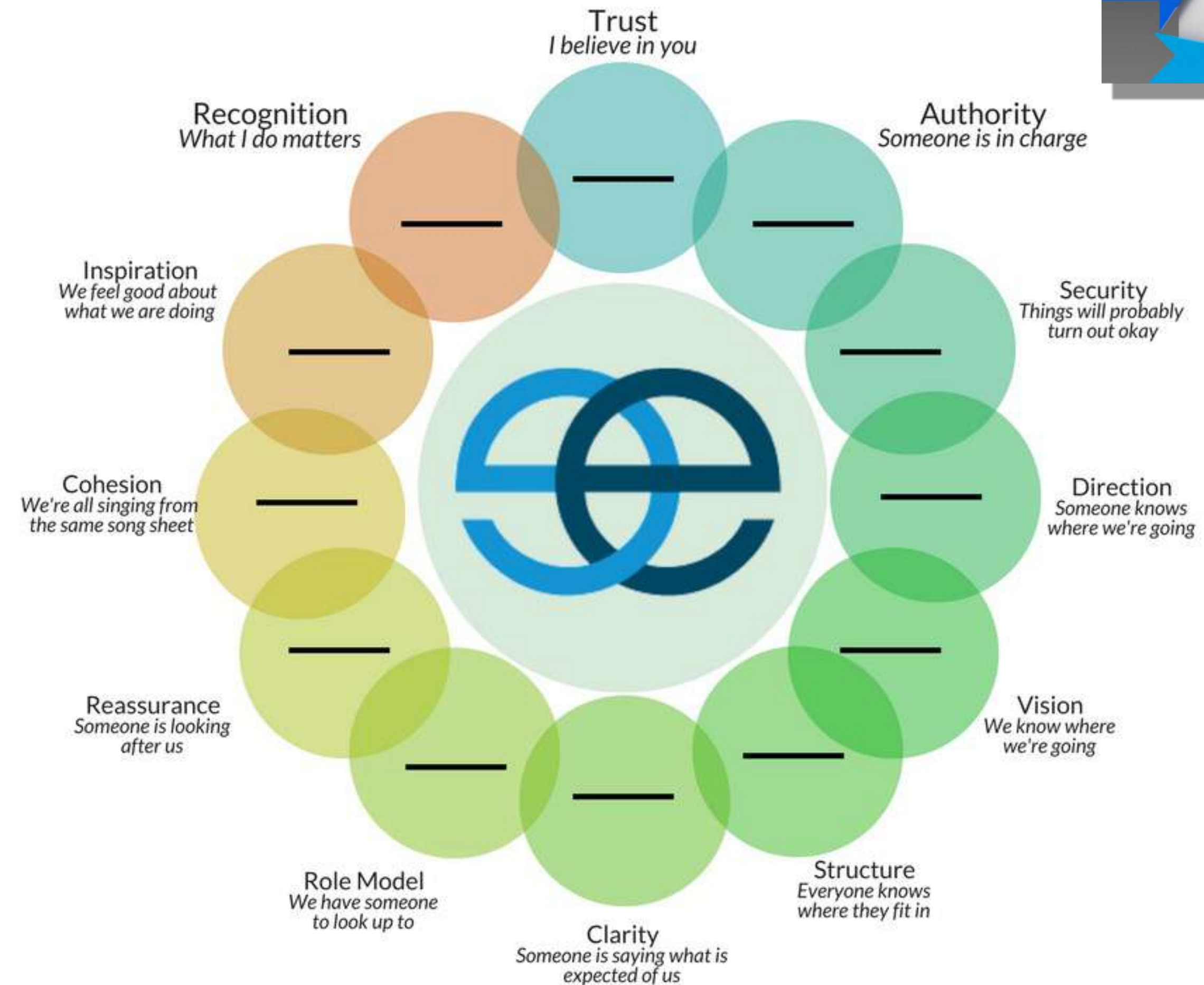
12 = Needs most work

Remember to you each number, 1 – 12, only once.

Need	Rank	Team members say...	I can improve by...
Trust		<i>I believe in you</i>	
Authority		<i>Someone is in charge</i>	
Security		<i>Things will probably turn out okay</i>	
Direction		<i>Someone knows where we're going</i>	
Vision		<i>We know where we're going</i>	
Structure		<i>Everyone knows where they fit in</i>	
Clarity		<i>Someone is saying what's expected of us</i>	
Role model		<i>We have someone to look up to</i>	
Reassurance		<i>Someone is looking after us</i>	
Cohesion		<i>We're all singing from the same song sheet</i>	
Inspiration		<i>We feel good about what we are doing</i>	
Recognition		<i>What I do matters</i>	

After completing your ranking, look at the areas that you feel need improvement – what can you do in order to increase your effectiveness in each of these areas? How can you maintain your skills in the areas you rated yourself as being highly effective?

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## 4. They Hunt People to Blame





## 5. They don't hold people accountable





## Accountability and Engagement

**"My manager helps me set work priorities,"**

- Among employees who **disagree**, only 4% are engaged.

**"My manager holds me accountable for my performance,**

- Among employees who **disagree**, only 6% are engaged.



# Remember, seek respect, not friends





## Case Study –

*“They’re not  
your friends!”*





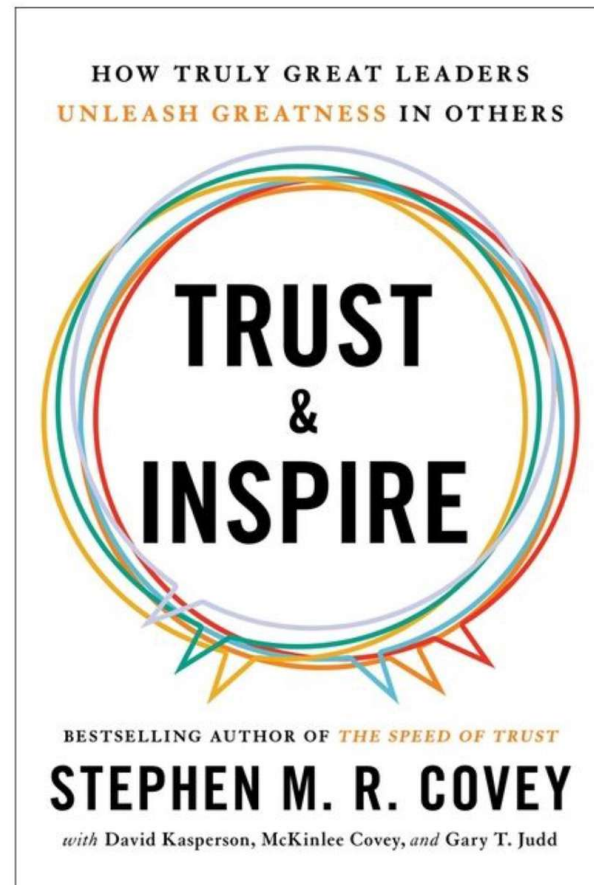
## 6. They are not Trusting







*Stephen M.R. Covey*



Leadership has moved from

Command  
and Control



Enlightened  
Command and  
Control



Trust and  
Inspire

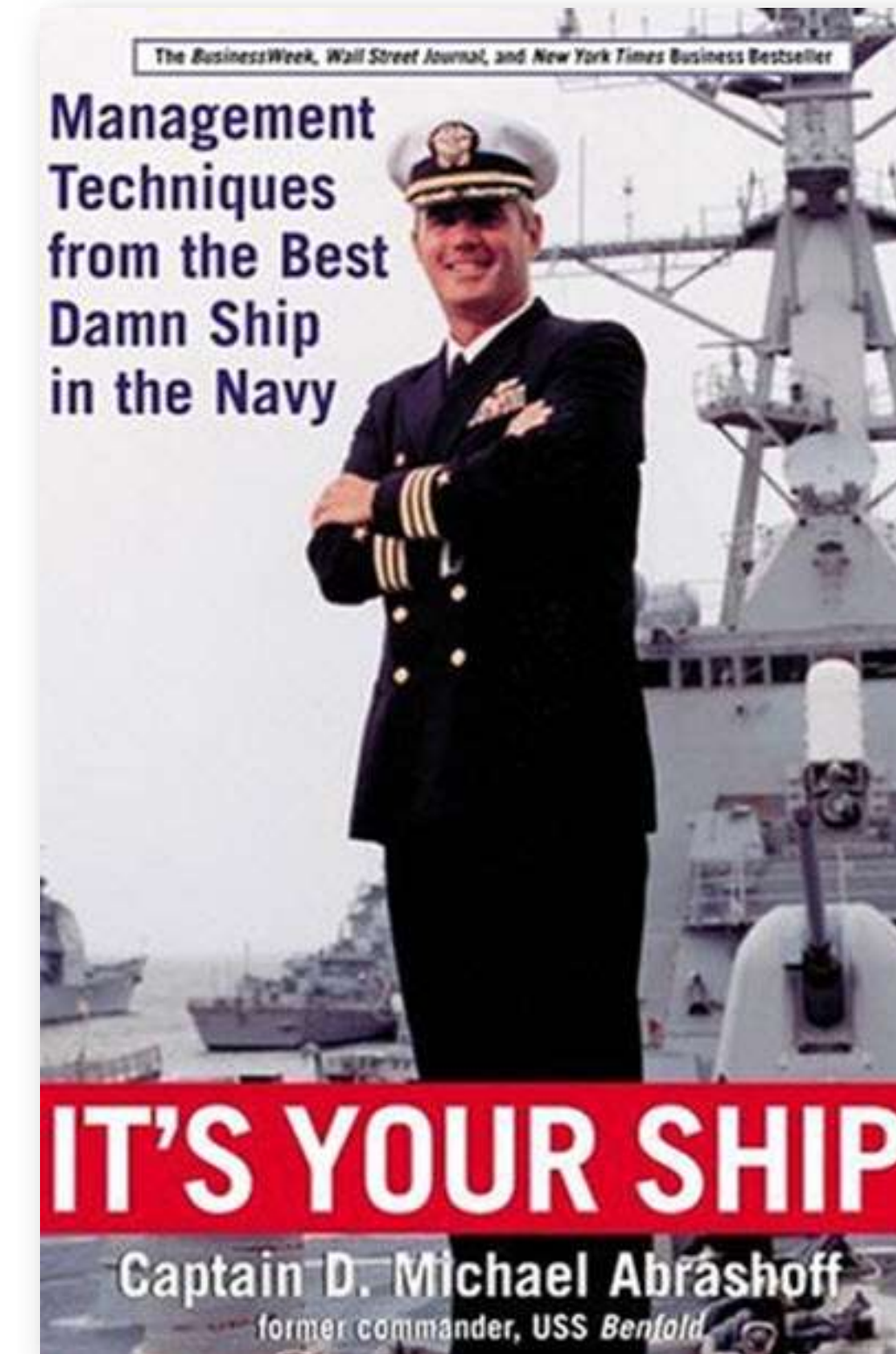


# 7. They don't walk the talk





# Case Study – ‘Walking the Talk’



**Captain Abrashoff  
and the USS Benfold**



## 8. They are glass 'half filled' people





# Negative Emotions that drive Dis-engagement

## – Disinterested

- Bored
- Lethargic

## – Irritated

- Insulted
- Manipulated

## – Uncomfortable

- Anxious
- Vulnerable
- Intimidated
- Fearful





# Positive Emotions that drive Engagement

- Valued
- Confident
- Inspired
- Enthusiastic
- Empowered





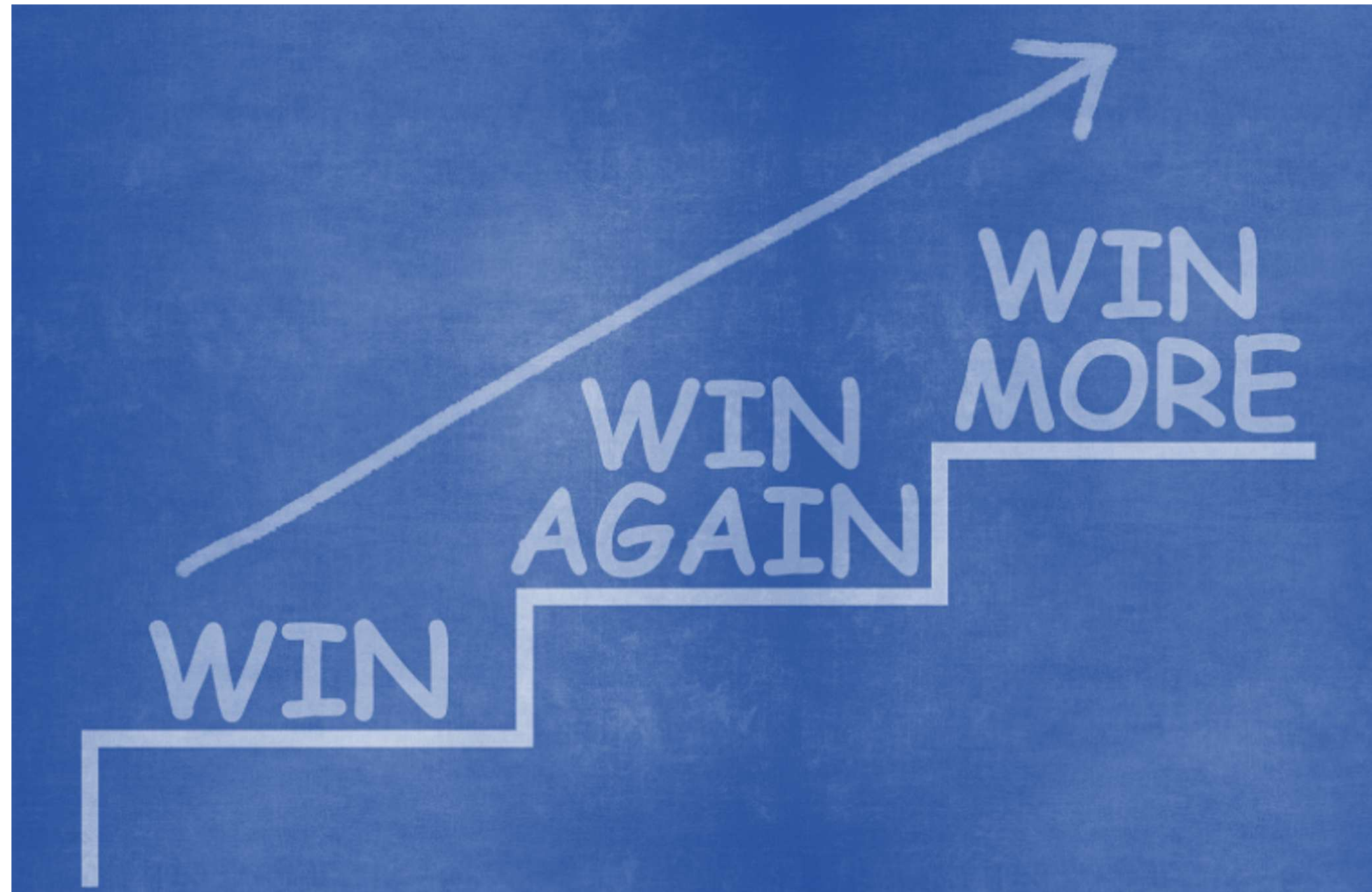
## Why Care?

Managers who feel NEGATIVE emotions are 10 X more disengaged than managers who feel positive emotions.

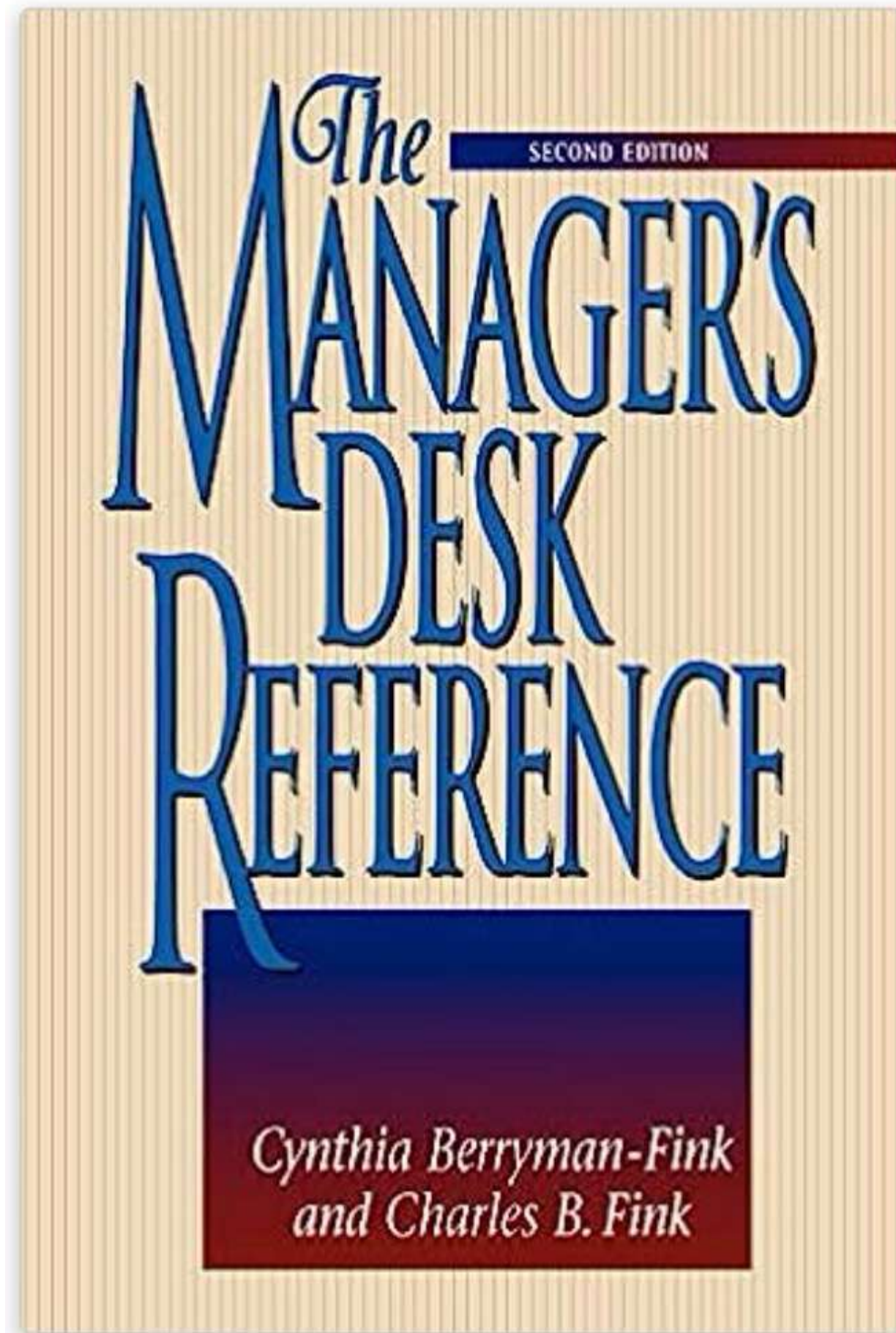
Negative emotions are more **contagious** than positive emotions and spread to other co-workers, customers, and future hires



## 9. They Are Not Achievement Driven







# The 7 Intrinsic Motivational Drivers

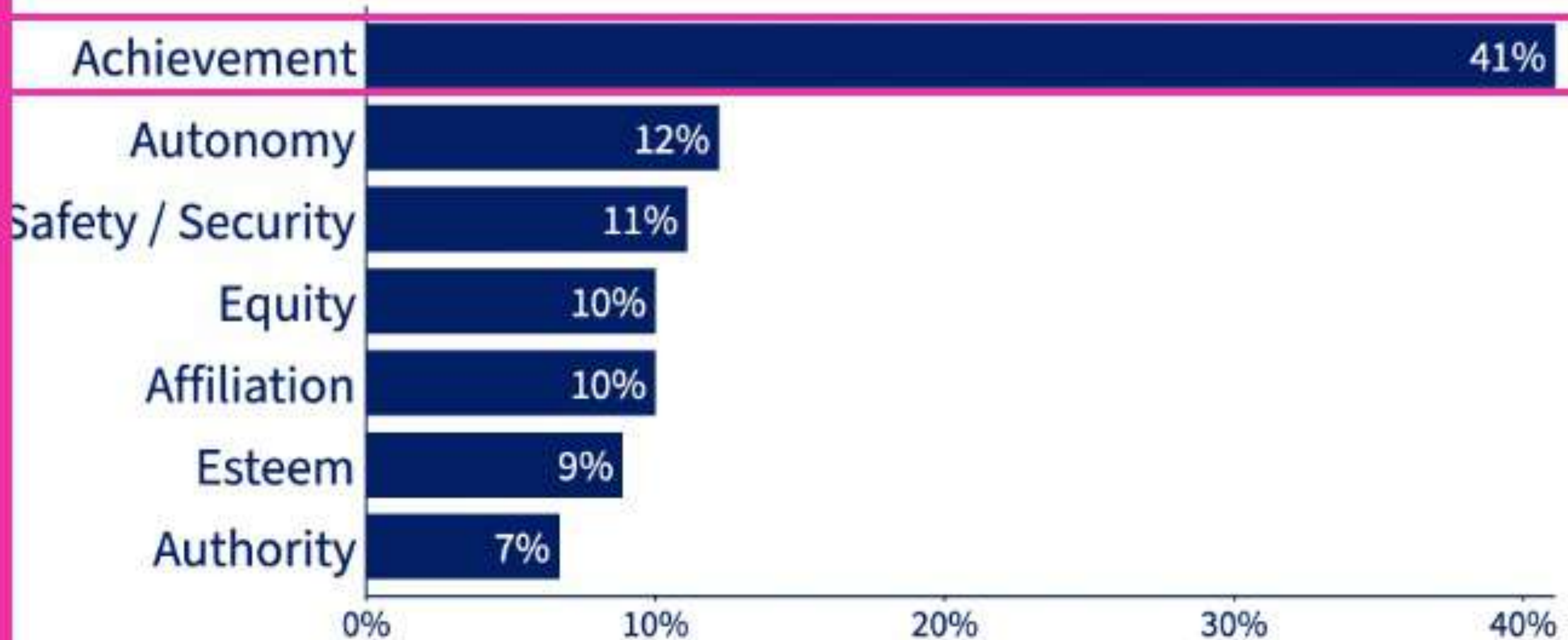


Poll

Respond at [PollEv.com/iengage](https://PollEv.com/iengage)



## What are your top 2 motivational drivers?





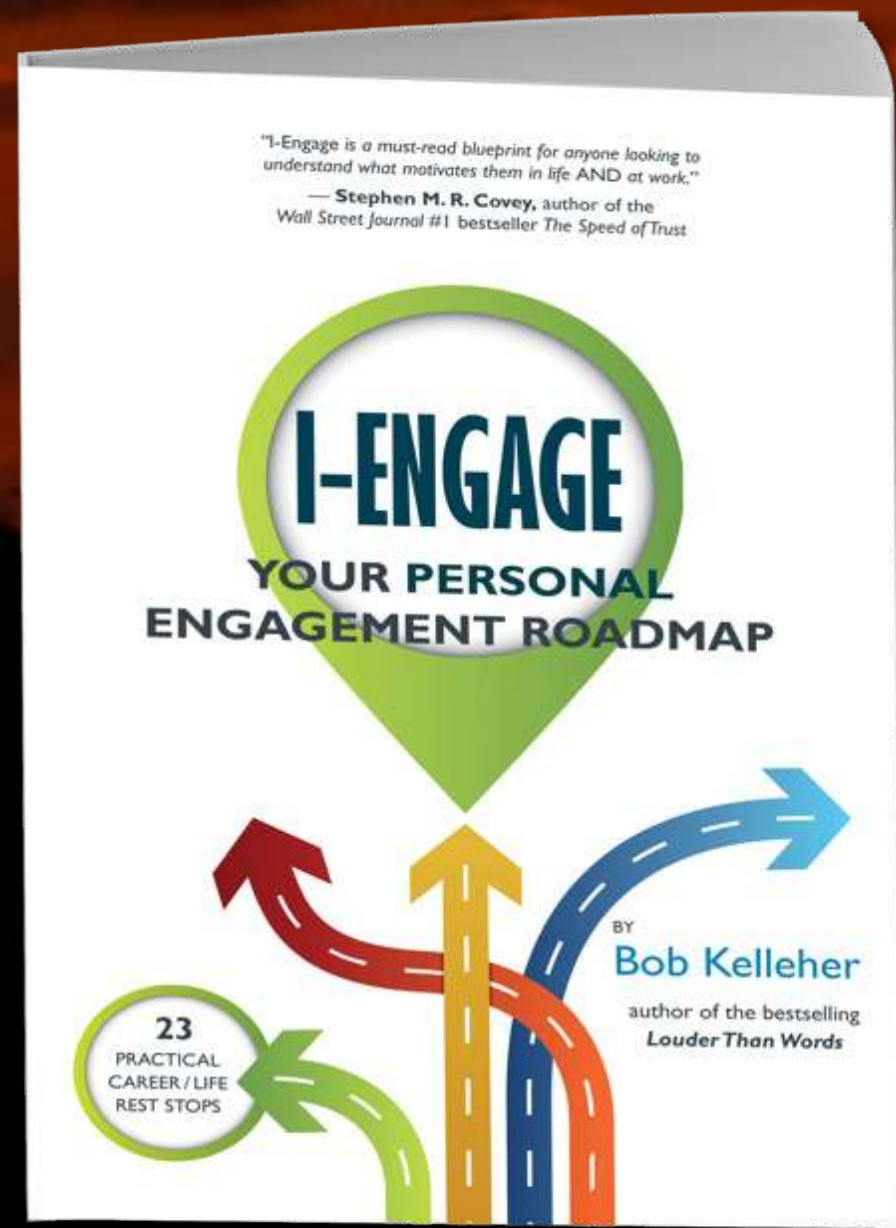
...and remember







# Thank You



Bob Kelleher

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[www.EmployeeEngagement.com](http://www.EmployeeEngagement.com)