



# **HIRO**<sup>TODAY</sup> **RETENTION & RECOGNITION SUMMIT**

**October 7-9, 2025 | Las Vegas, NV**

# EVENT SPEAKERS



**Alex Allen**  
Senior Director  
– People & Communities  
Cisco



**Adam Arkells**  
VP Human Resources  
FlexiVan



**Sunil Asija**  
Director of Human Resources  
Oakland County,  
Michigan



**Derrick R. Barton**  
CEO  
Center for Talent Solutions



**Melody Bates**  
HR Director  
Plastic Molding Technology



**Lena Bradshaw**  
VP of HR  
Caltrol Inc.



**Tom Brown**  
CHRO  
Druva



**Tonia Cheong**  
Senior Director –  
Human Resources  
Fragomen



**Felipe G. Cofiño**  
Director of HR,  
Development &  
Culture  
PRB



**Marlinda Cole**  
VP Human Resources  
Desert De Oro Foods



**Janet Diodato**  
Human Resources  
Director  
Central Arizona  
Shelter Services



**Melody Cooper**  
Senior Learning  
& Development  
Manager  
PF Changs China  
Bistro



**Nicole DuBois**  
CHRO  
Graham Windham



**Jeremy Edmonds**  
Vice President of  
People & Culture,  
Snooze An AM Eatery



**Reema Elghossain**  
Emerging  
Talent, Inclusive  
programming Lead  
Netflix



**Michael Gomez**  
Vice President,  
Human Resources  
Tasty Restaurant  
Group



**Karl Johnson**  
Vice President of  
Human Resources  
Westgate Las Vegas  
Resort and Casino



**Devon  
Lewis-Buchanan**  
Senior Director,  
Diversity, Inclusion  
and Employee  
Experience  
Las Vegas Raiders



**Matthew McElrath**  
SVP & Chief Human  
Resources Officer  
Onvida Health



**Christine Miles**  
Founder and CEO  
EQuipt

# EVENT SPEAKERS



**Christine Mithiaru**  
Vice President Total  
Rewards and People  
Operations  
Energy Vault



**Jane O'Neal**  
Director of HR  
Arizona Liver Health



**Prudence Pitter**  
Global Head of  
HR – Automotive  
and Manufacturing  
and Business  
Development  
Amazon Web  
Services



**Gabriela  
Rosado-Varsic**  
Director Human  
Resources  
Southern Glazer's  
Wine, Spirits and  
Beer



**Anil Shah**  
Director,  
P&C Business  
Partnership  
Patagonia



**Porsha Sherwood**  
Global Portfolio  
Specialist – Inclusive  
Experiences and  
Technology  
Amazon



**Julie Skiba**  
Chief People Officer  
WHSmith North  
America



**Jody Steinhauer**  
Founder  
Kits for a Cause



**Tom Terry**  
Vice President  
Human Resources  
Hansen & Adkins  
Auto Transport



**Zach Westbrook,**  
Vice President, Total  
Rewards & People  
Operations  
Credit One Bank



**Ally Wharton**  
VP of People  
Operations  
CloudFit Software

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# TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2025

## PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP DAY AGENDA

### 8:00 AM Registration and Networking Breakfast

### 9:00 AM Solving the Talent Equation: How HR Leaders Equip Managers to Drive Engagement, Development, and Retention

#### Derrick R. Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions

Buckle up — this isn't just theory. This is a hands-on, interactive session packed with practical tools and proven talent practices that will directly increase engagement and retention — delivering solid ROI. Led by Derrick Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions, a global talent expert who has built the leadership capabilities of over 100,000 managers across 37 countries with guaranteed results. This workshop will outline exactly what your organization needs to do deliver sustainable talent results.

- Crack the Talent Code – Be able to define the true drivers behind why individuals choose to perform, engage, grow, and stay
- Discover the “Secret Sauce” within the Organization... Managers – Learn the essential Manager Talent Actions that create talent success
- Hands-On with Proven Tools – Equip yourself with actionable talent practices and tools to take action on the real drivers causing Individuals to perform, develop, and stay
- Outline the Bottom-Line Impact – Learn how to calculate the ROI of engagement and retention to create a compelling business case for investing in your people

### 12:00 PM Lunch

### 1:00 PM Unlock the Power of Listening: The Listening Path to Employee Engagement and Retention

#### Christine Miles, Founder and CEO, Equipt

Did you know that effective listening can increase employee satisfaction by 30% and organizations that prioritize listening retain 88% of their employees, compared to only 33% retention for those with lower listening scores? Yet, despite spending over half our communication time listening, less than 2% of people worldwide receive formal training in this critical skill. The costs of poor listening are too often invisible, yet the impact on organizations is widespread and systemic, leading to employee disengagement and higher turnover.

In this highly interactive and gamified workshop, Christine Miles will be your Listening Guide, along the Listening Path®, a journey, where you will gain the tools needed to listen to understand others and yourself.

With Christine's background in Psychology and the author of the award-winning book *What Is Costing You Not to Listen?* She helps organizations successfully apply the human skills needed to drive results, elevate relationships and build cultures of understanding. Get ready for a new and exciting approach—an approach that can change your organization and the world!

Workshop participants will:

1. Experience why even good listeners fail.
  - How active listening falls short
  - Identify the enemies of listening and the different listening personas
2. Learn and practice the 5 Foundational Listening Path tools to transform how you listen to understand.
  - Make the connection between listening, storytelling, and EQ
3. Listen to yourself to tap into your passion and purpose
  - Have a fun, interactive and gamified experience along with practical application to current challenges.

### 4:00 PM End of Workshop Day



# WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2025 | DAY 1 AGENDA

## **8:00 AM** Registration and Networking Breakfast

## **8:50 AM** Chairman's Welcome

**Derrick R. Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions**

## **9:00 AM** The Great Detachment: The New Rules of Retention & Recognition to Rebuild Employee Engagement and Loyalty

**Matthew McElrath, SVP & Chief Human Resources Officer, Onvida Health**

Employee engagement in the U.S. is at its lowest point in over a decade, leading to higher turnover and lower productivity. In this session, HR leaders will explore data-driven strategies to reconnect employees to their organizations, foster a sense of belonging, and create an engaging workplace culture that retains top talent.

- Understanding the key drivers behind declining engagement and actionable recommendations for the next 12-24 months
- Leveraging recognition programs to re-engage a disconnected workforce
- Practical tips on overcoming burnout, disengagement, and turnover to rekindle employee loyalty and purpose
- Innovative strategies for fostering a culture of appreciation and loyalty
- How are leading organizations using technology to enhance recognition programs?

## **9:30 AM** RESERVED: MADISON GLOBAL

## **10:00 AM** The Human Capital Performance Cycle that Drives Employee Engagement

**Michael Gomez, Vice President, Human Resources, Tasty Restaurant Group**

The Human Capital Performance Cycle focuses on key processes and tools that enhance employee engagement through clear performance expectations, feedback, and growth opportunities. Here our speaker will discuss how by integrating regular assessments, development initiatives, and talent forecasting, organizations can create a culture that motivates and inspires employees to achieve their full potential.

- An insight into the performance appraisal process and how employees provide input, leading to a final supervisor assessment, influencing merit and bonus payouts
- Overview of the Management Health Pulse Survey: an annual 8-minute survey that gauges employee engagement and management health
- The role of Succession Planning that focuses on organizational and individual growth, fostering career progression discussions
- Automated Performance Planning: Includes accountabilities, KPIs, and evaluation standards tied to merit-based rewards, fostering a high-performance culture

## **10:30 AM** Morning Coffee & Networking

## **11:00 AM** RESERVED: SPONSOR

## **11:30 AM Panel: AI, Automation, and Job Security: Managing Workforce Anxiety in a Tech-Driven World**

**Tom Brown, CHRO, Druva**

**Nicole DuBois, CHRO, Graham Windham**

**Zach Westbrook, Vice President, Total Rewards & People Operations, Credit One Bank**

As AI reshapes the workplace, employees are increasingly worried about job security. HR leaders must navigate this shift by upskilling employees, maintaining transparency, and reinforcing the value of human work. This session will provide insights on balancing AI adoption with workforce confidence.

Key Takeaways:

- How to address employee fears about automation
- Strategies for upskilling and career pathing in the age of AI
- The use of AI in performance Management
- Creating a culture of continuous learning and adaptability
- Insights into what employees truly value in the digital era

## **12:00 PM Panel Discussion: The RTO Debate: Building a Workplace Model for Growth – Why It Matters in Today's Economy**

**Marlinda Cole, VP Human Resources, Desert De Oro Foods**

**Adam Arkells, VP Human Resources, FlexiVan**

**Christine Mithiaru, Vice President Total Rewards and People Operations, Energy Vault**

With rising operational costs, talent shortages, and economic uncertainty, businesses need an RTO model that enhances productivity, cost efficiency, and employee retention while driving long-term growth. The net result is faster project execution and better customer experiences. From an efficiency-perspective, there are reduced real estate and operational expenses. Furthermore, stronger market positioning, leading to an enhanced employer brand and talent attraction.

- The reality of flexible work models – how hybrid work reduces turnover by 25% and boosts productivity by 4.6% (Gartner, Stanford)
- The role of AI-driven collaboration tools in increasing efficiency by 20–30% while cutting IT costs
- Redefining the office experience – creating purpose-driven workspaces that improve engagement by 40% and productivity by 15–20%
- Creative approaches towards employee wellbeing investments – how wellness programs yield a \$4 return for every \$1 spent, reducing absenteeism
- Building an inclusive and engaging culture – companies with strong DEI initiatives see 35% higher financial performance (McKinsey)

## **12:30 PM Lunch & Networking**

## RETENTION TRACK

### 2:00 PM Building a Culture of Commitment

#### **Tonia Cheong, Senior Director, Human Resources, Fragomen**

Retaining Gen Z employees is a growing challenge, with job-hopping at an all-time high—73% have changed jobs in the past two years, and over a third are willing to leave without a backup plan. This generation expects more than just a paycheck; they seek meaning, alignment with their values, and workplaces that provide both stability and purpose. To foster long-term engagement, business leaders must evolve their approach, moving beyond traditional incentives to create a culture of shared purpose that resonates with Gen Z's motivations.

- Aligning organizational goals with meaningful impact, showing employees how their work contributes to a greater mission
- Creating an environment where Gen Z feels secure—both financially and emotionally—by emphasizing mental health support, work-life balance, and transparent career growth
- Encouraging collaboration, mentorship, and inclusive workplace cultures where employees feel valued and connected
- Providing opportunities for continuous learning, career mobility, and flexible work arrangements to support evolving aspirations

### 2:00 PM Building a High-Performance Culture by Embedding Accountability Across All Levels of Leadership

#### **Melody Cooper, Senior Learning & Development Manager, PF Changs China Bistro**

A strong organizational culture rooted in accountability drives performance, fosters trust, and supports long-term success. By embedding accountability into every layer of leadership, companies can create a consistent, empowered workforce that takes ownership of outcomes. This session explores practical strategies for instilling accountability across management levels to shape a high-performing, resilient culture.

- Ensuring leaders at all levels understand what accountability looks like in practice and consistently model those behaviors
- Incorporating accountability-focused learning into leadership programs to align skills with organizational values
- Reinforcing accountability by recognizing responsible behaviors and providing constructive feedback where needed
- Linking individual and team accountability to measurable outcomes to encourage ownership and transparency

## RECOGNITION TRACK

### 2:00 PM Reimagining Employee Appreciation

#### **Gabriela Rosado-Varsic, Director Human Resources, Southern Glazer's Wine, Spirits and Beer**

Delve into the return on investment (ROI) of employee recognition programs by examining how appreciation directly influences business outcomes such as productivity, profitability, and customer satisfaction.

- Quantifying the financial benefits of recognition programs.
- Understanding the link between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction
- Exploring how competency-based recognition enhances career growth
- Best practices for using recognition to drive upskilling initiatives
- Building a business case for investing in recognition initiatives.

### 2:00 PM Creating Inclusive and Meaningful Programs that Embrace Recognition Across a Diverse Cultural Infrastructure

#### **Reema Elghossain, Emerging Talent, Inclusive programming Lead, Netflix**

As workplaces become increasingly global, recognition programs must be culturally relevant and inclusive. But how can we design programs that resonate across diverse workforces with different priorities and goals?

- Understanding the impact of cultural differences on recognition preferences
- Techniques to customize recognition strategies for diverse teams
- An insight into best practices for fostering an inclusive culture of appreciation with practical examples
- Tools to assess and enhance inclusivity in your recognition program

**2:30 PM**  
**TECH DEMOS**

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**3:00 PM Afternoon Coffee & Networking**

**3:30 PM**  
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**4:00 PM Think Tank: The Manager's Role in Retention: Coaching for Engagement**

**4:00 PM Think Tank: Towards Tech-Enhanced Recognition: Leveraging Digital Tools for Greater Engagement**

**4:30 PM Case Study: Reigniting Workplace Loyalty: Strategies for Meaningful Employee Engagement**

**4:30 PM The Role of Psychological Safety to Create a Workplace Where Employees Thrive**

**Janet Diodato, Human Resources Director, Central Arizona Shelter Services**

Employee disengagement is at an all-time high, making it crucial for organizations to reconnect with their workforce in meaningful ways. By fostering loyalty, purpose-driven leadership, and a culture of recognition, businesses can boost retention and drive long-term success.

- Identifying the root causes of employee disengagement and how to address them
- Building strong workplace connections through purpose-driven leadership
- Designing flexible work policies that balance business needs and employee satisfaction
- Creating a culture of recognition and celebration to enhance morale
- Implementing leadership development programs that drive engagement and commitment

**Sunil Asija, Director of Human Resources, Oakland County, Michigan**

Psychological safety—the ability for employees to express ideas, voice concerns, and take risks without fear of punishment—is a critical factor in retention. This session explores how HR leaders can foster an environment where employees feel valued, heard, and secure.

- How psychological safety influences engagement, innovation, and long-term retention
- Proven ways to cultivate a culture of trust, open communication, and collaboration
- The importance of leadership in reinforcing psychological safety and employee well-being
- Actionable steps to assess and improve psychological safety within your organization

**5:00 PM Chairman's Close and Networking Drinks Reception**

**Derrick R. Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions**



# THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2025 | DAY 1 AGENDA

## **8:00 AM** Registration and Breakfast

## **8:50 AM** Chairman's Welcome

**Derrick R. Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions**

## **9:00 AM** Lead Boldly, Grow Fearlessly: People Strategies That Supercharge Business Success

**Prudence Pitter, Global Head of HR – Automotive and Manufacturing and Business Development, Amazon Web Services**

Empowering employees to take ownership of recognition and retention fosters a culture of engagement and accountability. But how can we actually make employees active participants in retention and recognition efforts? How does peer-to-peer recognition enhance employee connection and engagement?

- Connecting Performance to Impact: aligning key metrics with business goals for measurable success
- Leveraging organization-specific learning paths to develop talent and drive results
- Establishing two-way feedback that evolves with business cycles

## **9:30 AM** Panel Discussion: The Role of DEI in Retention & Recognition: Strategies for an Inclusive Workforce

**Reema Elghossain, Emerging Talent, Inclusive programming Lead, Netflix**

**Lena Bradshaw, VP of HR, Caltrol Inc.**

**Devon Lewis-Buchanan, Senior Director, Diversity, Inclusion and Employee Experience, Las Vegas Raiders**

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are critical to fostering a workplace where employees feel valued, respected, and motivated to stay. This panel explores how HR leaders can integrate DEI into retention and recognition programs.

- How inclusive recognition programs ensure all employees feel seen and valued
- Strategies for retaining diverse talent through equitable career advancement opportunities
- The impact of unconscious bias in recognition and retention and how to mitigate it
- How to create an authentic culture of belonging that drives long-term engagement

## **10:00 AM** RESERVED for SPONSOR

## **10:30 AM** Morning Coffee & Networking

## **11:00 AM Using Proximity to Increase Employee Engagement**

### **Alex Allen, Senior Director – People & Communities, Cisco**

Grounded in Cisco's purpose, Alex launched the Proximity Initiative, which encourages senior leaders to engage with individuals whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own. This initiative helps leaders gain valuable insights, enhance leadership acumen, boost employee engagement, and shape how Cisco collaborates in the future.

In November 2024, Great Places to Work analyzed the initiative's impact, finding that:

- 80% of employee participants reported leaders were approachable and easy to talk to.
- Employees who had four or more proximity meetings were 10.4 times more likely to feel a sense of belonging and believed the program positively influenced inclusive leader behaviors.
- Employees who experience belonging were 3 times more likely to enjoy coming to work and 5 times more likely to want to stay with the company long-term.

Join Alex Allen as he shares how the Proximity Initiative can be adapted for your organization and drive meaningful outcomes. In this session, you will learn:

- The role of proximity in enhancing alignment and amplifying your business strategy
- Strategies to leverage the power of inclusive teams to bridge the trust gap and increase team engagement
- The impact of proximity on leadership's ability to fortify relationships, enhancing employee satisfaction and retention
- How proximity improves communication, fostering transparency and enabling direct feedback

## **11:30 AM RESERVED for SPONSOR**

## **12:00 PM The Framework for Connection**

### **Jeremy Edmonds, Vice President of People & Culture, Snooze, An AM Eatery**

In this transformative keynote, The Framework for Connection, we will explore the essential elements that create genuine, authentic connection in both personal and professional relationships. Audiences are treated to fun and inspiring storytelling that helps them understand the framework for building genuine connection. Connection is not a passive experience; it's a dynamic process that begins when we lead with curiosity, engage in difficult conversations, and cultivate empathy and vulnerability. Through these actions, we build trust that deepens relationships and creates lasting bonds.

Discover how judgment, shame, blame, and anger can hinder your ability to connect with others and creates barriers for meaningful interaction. Learn how to break free from these barriers and instead cultivate a mindset that fosters openness and trust.

The heart of this keynote reveals the one powerful skill that enables you to lean into connection—and move away from disconnection. By mastering this skill, you will be empowered to build stronger, more authentic relationships in all areas of your life.

- Understand why mastering the art of connection is the most effective way to build relationships, lead teams, and impact the bottom line of your organization
- Learn how shame, blame, anger and judgment are the barriers that prevent you from fostering genuine connection
- Walk away with 5 actionable steps to building authentic and meaningful connection
- Be given the secret to quickly and easily identifying the one barrier to fostering connection and learn the key skill to overcoming it

## **12:00 PM Lunch & Networking**

## RETENTION TRACK

### **1:30 PM Building a Culture of Commitment: Upskilling and Leadership Development for Retention**

**Felipe G. Cofiño, Director of HR, Development & Culture, PRB**

The average U.S. employee tenure in 2025 is approximately 3.7 years, with younger professionals (ages 25–34) averaging just 2.8 years in a role. These shortened cycles reflect a shift in values: the modern workforce, especially Millennials and Gen Z, are not simply looking for a job; they are seeking growth, learning, and alignment with a company that invests in their future.

This session explores how organizations can reverse turnover trends by building a Culture of Commitment through strategic upskilling, proper supervisory development, and meaningful leadership pipelines. Employers must now clearly differentiate why they are special, and offering a clear, tailored path for employee growth is one of the most powerful signals of that investment.

Participants will walk away with actionable strategies to:

- Design supervisory training that actually works—developing emotionally intelligent, feedback-ready, and emotionally intelligent & conscious leaders
- Leverage AI tools to scale personalized learning, identify skill gaps, and build adaptive learning paths
- Embrace asynchronous learning for flexibility and inclusivity across time zones and hybrid teams
- Implement micro-training models that build competency in real time, without overwhelming bandwidth
- Create robust individualized training plans aligned with organizational goals and employee aspirations
- Build and maintain succession planning strategies to support internal mobility and retain institutional knowledge
- Understand how intergenerational differences affect learning preferences and engagement—and how to bridge the gap

## RECOGNITION TRACK

### **1:30 PM Unifying a Decentralized Workforce: Strategies for Aligning Employees with a Common Vision for Growth & Reward**

**Tom Terry, Vice President Human Resources, Hansen & Adkins Auto Transport**

In a decentralized organization, employees often work across different regions, business units, or functions, creating challenges in maintaining alignment with a shared strategic vision. Without a unified approach, teams may become siloed, affecting collaboration, motivation, and overall company growth. This session explores practical strategies to engage employees in a decentralized structure, ensuring they remain connected to organizational goals while feeling valued and rewarded.

- Using enterprise social networks (e.g., Facebook, Microsoft Teams, HCM) to foster open communication and cross-functional engagement
- Hosting interactive town halls with live Q&As to ensure leadership remains accessible and employees feel heard.
- Developing a leadership playbook that outlines and aligns Vision, Mission, and Core Values as a foundation with flexibility on execution
- Implementing peer-driven leadership councils where employees across locations & functions share best practices and align on strategic decisions
- Using data-driven performance benchmarks aligned to business strategy, to ensure local teams maintain accountability while fostering innovation at their level
- Creating a reward framework that ties incentives to key business outcomes (e.g., customer KPIs, operational efficiency, operating ratios)
- Implementing competitive pay & benefits programs to attract and retain the right workforce

**2:00 PM Culture isn't Just a Buzzword. Investing in a Purposeful Employee Engagement Program Promotes a high-performing culture and cuts down on retention/recruiting needs**

**Porsha Sherwood, Global Portfolio Specialist – Inclusive Experiences and Technology, Amazon**  
**Jody Steinhauer, Founder, Kits for a Cause**

In today's increasingly competitive market, fostering a high-performing, engaged workforce is a key to success. Join us for a deep dive into how Amazon Global capitalized on a turnkey, fun 'kit-packing' program – while making local impact on a global basis – to align culture with strategy and drive performance, retention and recruiting efforts.

- Master the development and execution of easy yet meaningful employee experience by:
- Partnering with an expert like Kits For A Cause to help identify the greatest needs in the charitable / non-profit sector and ensure a flawless event
- Ensuring ad hoc activities turn into annual programs to showcase senior management commitment to a 'caring' culture
- Incorporating feedback and/or post-event surveys, shared with the team(s), to continuously build on actionable learnings year-over-year

**2:00 PM Breaking Down Silos: Leveraging Recognition Programs for Enterprise-Wide Collaboration and Success**

**Anil Shah, Director, P&C Business Partnership, Patagonia**

Collaboration across teams, regions, and functions is critical to enterprise success. However, organizational silos often hinder knowledge sharing and engagement. Here, our speaker will discuss how recognition programs can be strategically designed to foster cross-functional collaboration, increase international awareness, and drive measurable impact. Attendees will gain insights into key performance indicators (KPIs) that can help assess and refine recognition initiatives for sustained success.

- How recognition programs can break down silos and improve cross-functional teamwork
- Strategies for enhancing cross-regional and international collaboration through recognition
- Essential KPIs to measure the effectiveness of recognition programs
- Best practices for assessing and improving program implementation
- The long-term business impact of recognition-driven collaboration



## **2:30 PM SMB Focus: Panel Discussion: Building a Culture of Commitment in Small- to Medium-size Businesses – Upskilling and Leadership Development for Retention**

**Ally Wharton, VP of People Operations, CloudFit Software**

**Jane O'Neal, Director of HR, Arizona Liver Health**

**Jeremy Edmonds, Vice President of People & Culture, Snooze, An AM Eatery**

For small businesses, employee turnover can have an outsized impact, making a culture of commitment essential for long-term success. With fewer resources than larger corporations, small companies must be strategic in upskilling employees and developing leadership internally to boost retention and foster a loyal workforce.

This panel discussion will explore practical, cost-effective strategies for SMB owners, HR VPs, and directors to create a work environment that encourages growth, engagement, and long-term commitment. Our panel of experts will share insights from real-world experiences in growing teams, promoting from within, and aligning employee development with business goals.

Identifying cost-effective ways to develop employee skills that align with business needs

- Creating clear career pathways and leadership pipelines for small teams
- Integrating growth, feedback, and recognition into daily operations to foster employee loyalty
- How small businesses have successfully increased engagement and reduced turnover through targeted leadership development

## **2:30 PM Recognition Beyond the Reward: Cultivating a Culture of Appreciation**

**Melody Bates, HR Director, Plastic Molding Technology**

This presentation will focus on border states and the differences between blue-collar and corporate employees. Recognition is often associated with monetary rewards or formal awards, but true appreciation extends beyond these traditional methods. How can we foster a workplace culture where recognition is part of the daily interactions, regardless of job function or location?

In border states like Texas, Arizona, and California, where the workforce is diverse and dynamic, the approach to recognition must adapt to the different expectations and preferences of blue-collar versus corporate employees. While blue-collar employees may appreciate hands-on, immediate, and tangible recognition, corporate employees may respond better to more structured recognition programs. Understanding and navigating these differences is key to creating an environment where all employees feel valued and motivated to stay with the organization.

- How recognition needs vary between blue-collar and corporate employees, and how cultural factors in border states influence these needs
- Practical and actionable strategies for creating personalized recognition programs that resonate with both blue-collar and corporate employees
- How to embed recognition into the everyday culture of their organizations, making it a natural and consistent practice that drives employee engagement and retention.
- Addressing the unique challenges of recognition in border states, such as language barriers, seasonal workers, and the importance of aligning recognition with local traditions
- How recognition can strengthen employee loyalty, improve retention, and build a stronger organizational culture

### **3:00 PM Closing Keynote: Data-Driven Hiring: Leveraging Analytics and AI for Smarter Talent Decisions**

**Julie Skiba, Chief People Officer, WHSmith North America**

**Karl Johnson, Vice President of Human Resources, Westgate Las Vegas Resort and Casino**

The way we engage, retain, and recognize employees is evolving, and organizations that adapt will thrive. This closing keynote brings together insights from the summit, providing a forward-looking strategy for HR leaders to future-proof their retention and recognition efforts. You will walk away with a comprehensive action plan to drive retention and recognition success in your organization

- Top trends that are shaping the future of employee experience in 2025 and beyond
- Learn how retention and recognition must evolve in response to technological advancements and workforce expectations
- The critical role of leadership in embedding a culture of appreciation and loyalty
- Real-world examples of organizations leading the way in employee engagement

### **3:30 PM Chairman's Closing Remarks and End of Conference**

**Derrick R. Barton, CEO, Center for Talent Solutions**

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