


C-TEN 

CHRO Today Executive Network

Advice | Support | Best Practices

C-TEN Retreat

HRO Today Forum North America

May 6, 2026

8:30 AM - 12:30 PM ET | In-Person & Virtual

H(R)EVOLUTION

Transforming the HR Landscape Together

HRO TODAY
F O R U M
NORTH AMERICA

May 6 - 8, 2026
Philadelphia, PA

**Welcome C-TEN
Members!**

C-TEN MEETING AGENDA – MAY 6, 2026

- 8:30–8:45 AM** Networking Breakfast
- 8:45–9:45 AM** Guest Speaker: Michael J. Mannix, Co-Founder, Unparalleled Performance
- 9:45–10:15 AM** Group Discussion: *What’s your biggest challenge right now and how do you plan to address it?*
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- 12:00–12:30 PM** Lunch/Open Discussion



Steve Antonoff



Jean Casner
embecta



Dan Chappell
Seacoast Bank



Tricia Chester
ULAC



Robin Corrales
PandaDoc



Patrick Domholdt
CalPortland



Cindy Fiedelman
Digital Realty



Denise Haeggberg
MVW



Margie Harris



Jeff Krupp



Alex Kweskin
IRS



Cecilia McKenney
Quest Diagnostics



Terilyn Juarez Monroe
Guardant Health



Laura Muir
Polaris Transport



Kathleen Pai
N-able



Mark Paulek
Kyndryl



Carl Peers
OneBlood



Amy Plasha
Reworld



Rosemary Sheehan
Hartford Healthcare



**Susan Shields
Furchak**
ICSC



Mike Sorensen
Nightingale College



Melissa Sposato
Bright Horizons



Michael Stephens
Alston & Bird LLP



Jennifer F. Terry
The Bancorp



Melissa Tessendorf
Bright Horizons

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Guest Speaker



Michael J. Mannix

Co-Founder



Michael J. Mannix is the Co-Founder of Unparalleled Performance, bestselling author, and creator of the trademarked 5Ls – The Gift of a Balanced Life program. With 30+ years of business experience and 21+ years of corporate training, Mike is a sought-after keynote speaker and Adjunct Professor at NYU who helps individuals and organizations conquer stress, burnout, and find true work-life balance.



The **5Ls**
The Gift of a Balanced Life

Presenter

Mike Mannix

Who we are?

What we do?

Some Quick Statistics On Work-Related Stress



Ready to quit



Impacts Personal
Relationships

“The 5Ls wellness program and bestselling book has helped thousands of people, teams and organizations globally”

Top Stories
The 5LS - The Gift of a Balanced Life
How to Achieve True Work-Life Balance



CEOWORLD Magazine



The 5LS
The Gift Of a Balanced Life



What if someone gave you the Gift of a Balanced Life

What would it be worth to you ?

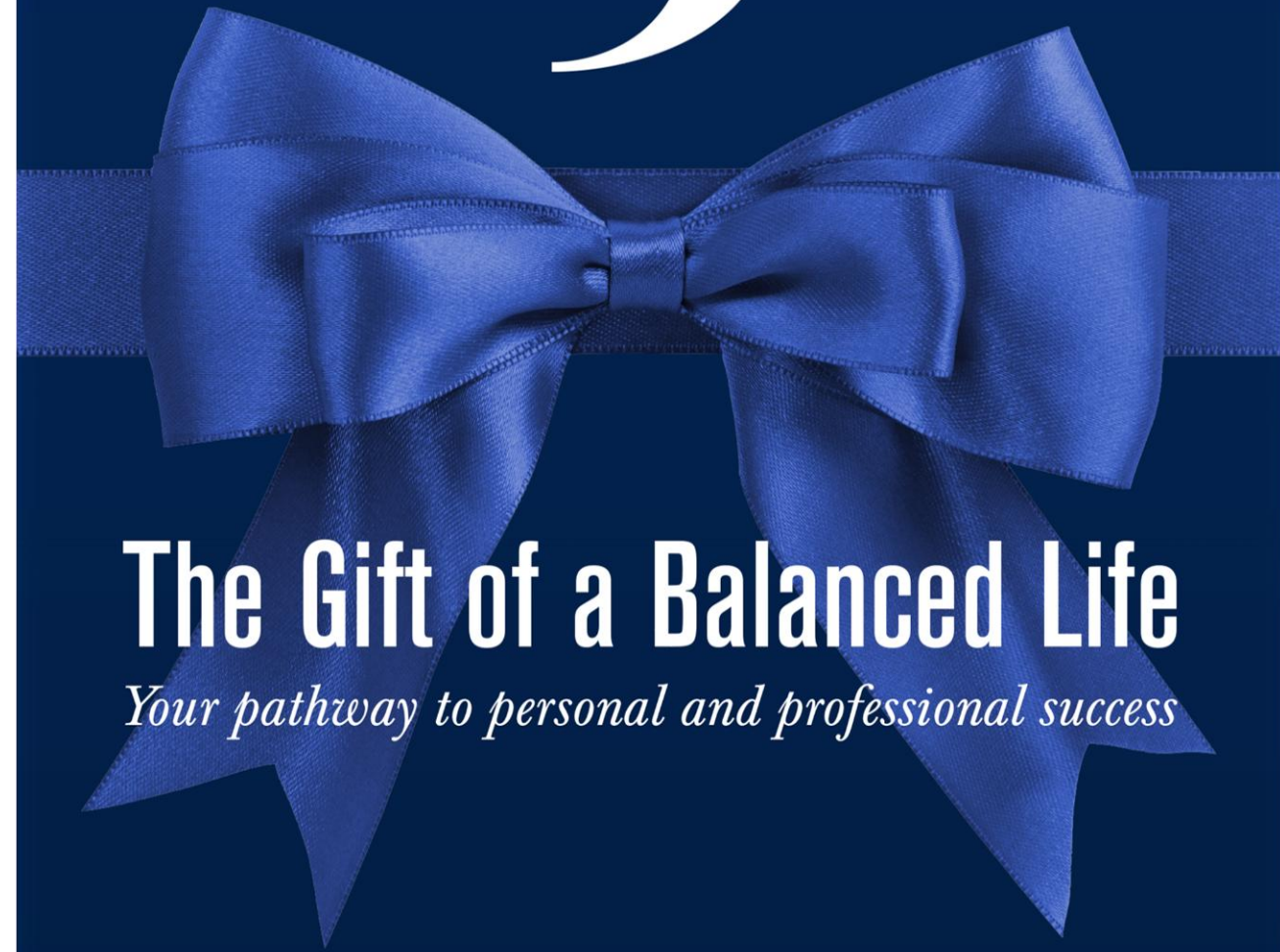
What is the 5Ls program?

How can it help me?



*"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom."
– Aristotle*

The 5 Ls



The Gift of a Balanced Life

Your pathway to personal and professional success

Sal LaGreca & Mike Mannix

IngramSpark®

#1 Best Seller

What color comes to mind?



BALANCE

Alone they have Purpose

Together they have Power

LEAVE

LOVE

LAUGHTER

5LS

LEISURE

LABOR

LOVE

Without it, all else fails. We have nothing

What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word love?

LOVE

➤ Self-Love

- ❑ Oxygen Mask Theory
- ❑ What do you do for you?

➤ Love in your life

- ❑ Healthy relationships bring balance
- ❑ Surround yourself with people that support you (positive energy & people)

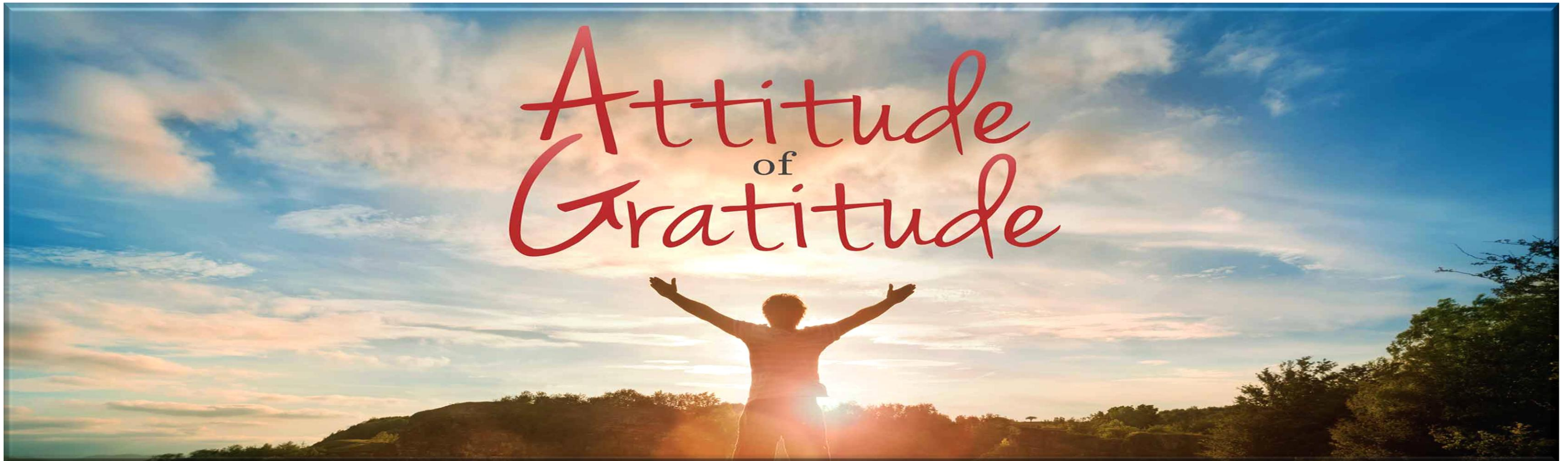
➤ Love of what you do

- ❑ Passion
- ❑ Love for your team



LOVE

Outlook is everything



LOVE

People don't follow titles
Effective Leaders are Servant Leaders



What are you doing to show you care?

LOVE

- ❑ Put your oxygen mask on every day. YOU FIRST
- ❑ Self Love is critical - do something for you every day
- ❑ Work on having the right support system in your life
 - Take time to let them know you care
- ❑ Show gratitude for something every day – **Attitude of Gratitude**
- ❑ Show your team that you care
 - Hold team meetings
 - Tell them you have their back
 - Recognition is key – **it is the little things that matter most**

LAUGHTER

Don't take yourself too seriously

LAUGHTER

Needed now more than ever

On average, a child laughs
300 times per day



LAUGHTER

On average, an adult laughs 17 times per day



LAUGHTER

- Learn to laugh at yourself
 - ❑ To be truly successful, you must be prepared to fail
 - ❑ Conquer the fear of failure
 - ❑ It's okay to be outside your comfort zone

Incredible health benefits

LAUGHTER

Reduces stress hormones

A good workout

Promotes creativity

Improves immune system

Cancer Prevention

Laughter has also been shown to fight against cancer by increasing the levels of IFN (Interferon-gamma) in the body. IFN stimulates the B-cells, T-cells, NK cells, and immunoglobulin, and it also works to regulate cell growth. These compounds are integral to a healthy immune system, but they are also the lines of defense against cancer and the abnormal growth of dangerous tumors in the body.

Pain reduction

Improves memory

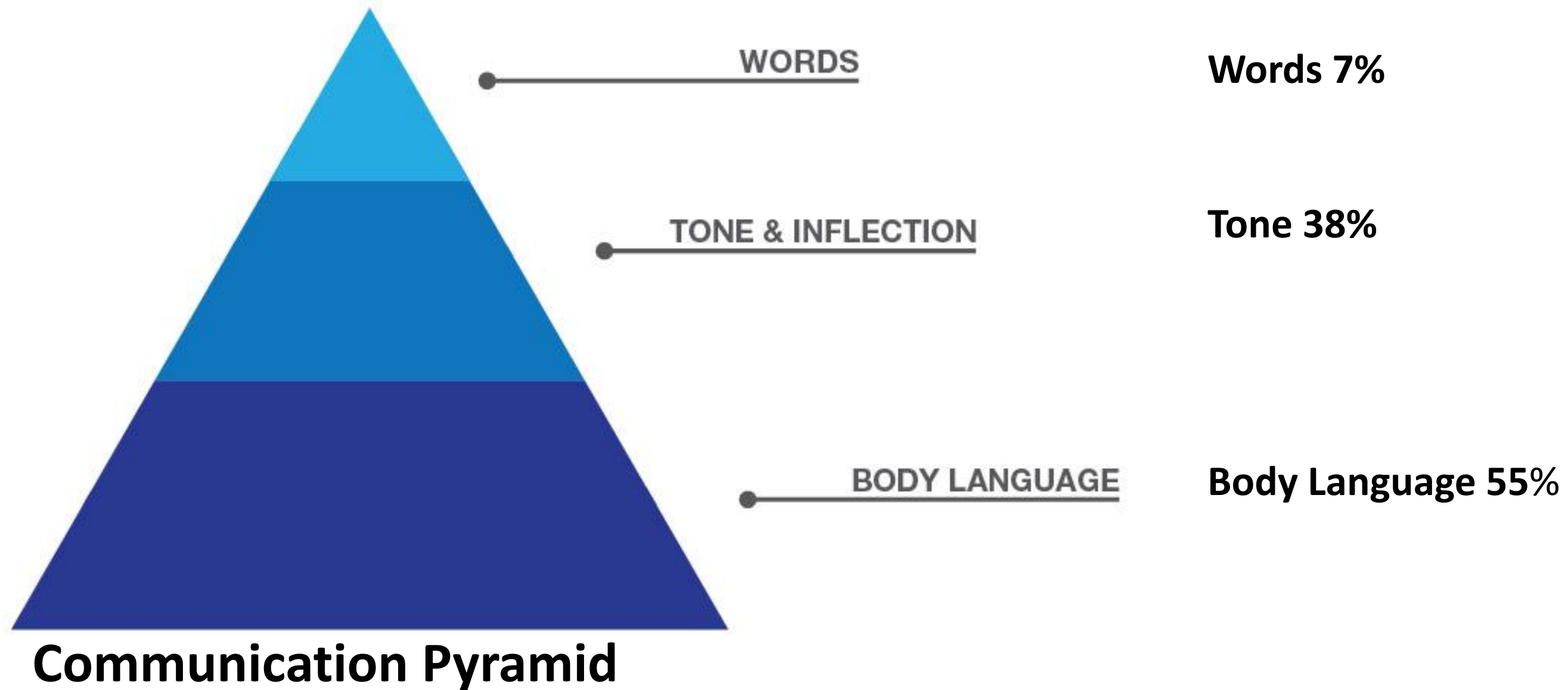
Mental and emotional health

Lowers blood pressure

*Mayo Clinic

LAUGHTER

Positive Communication is the Key



LAUGHTER

Set The Tone

- Positive Energy attracts Positive Energy
- You can't control what happens, but you can **control how you respond**
- **Be a "Duck on Water"**

Perception is reality

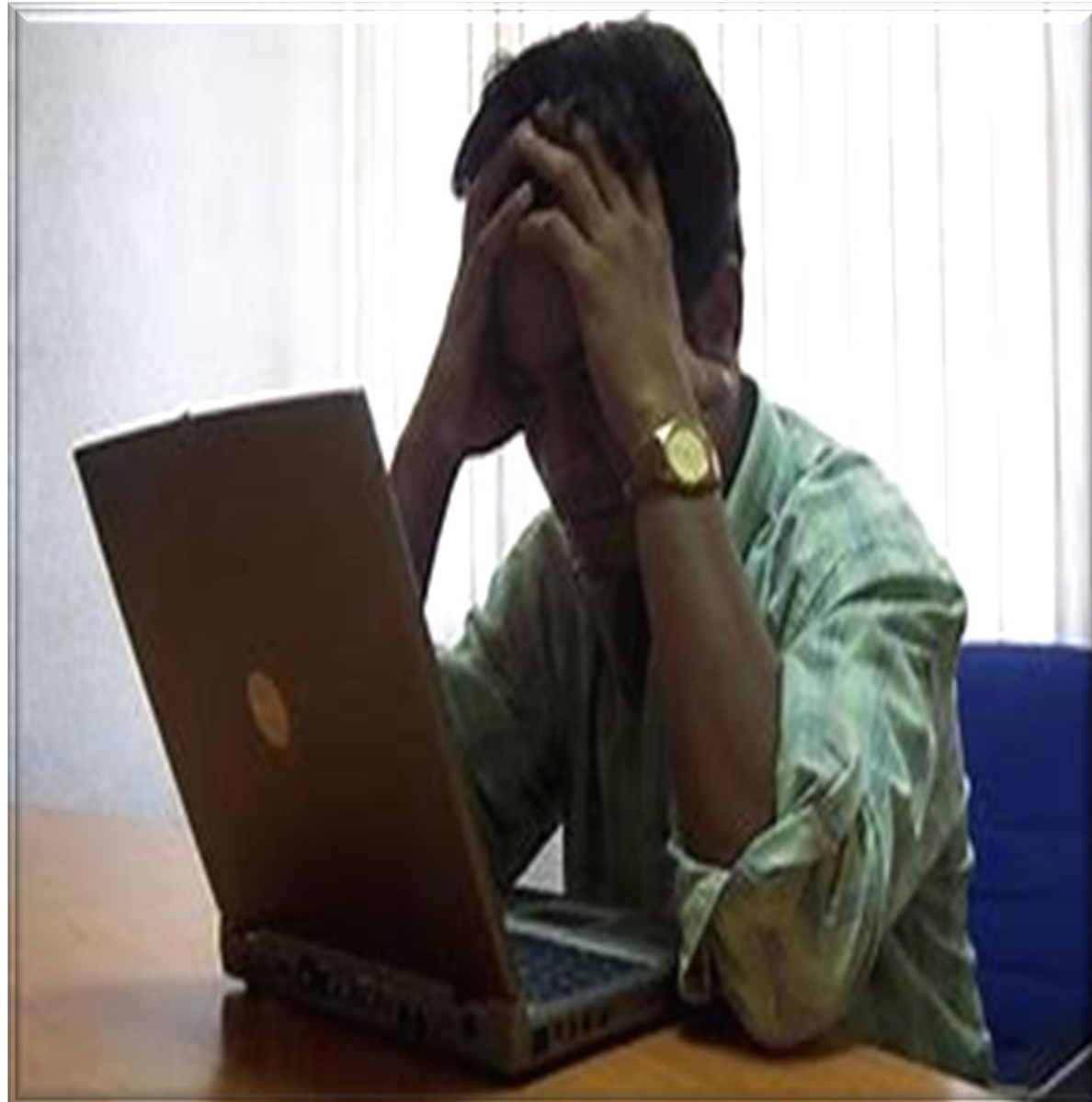
LAUGHTER

- ❑ Try laughing instead of stressing
- ❑ Use stress management tools
- ❑ Make sure your team is doing the same
- ❑ The leader sets the tone, **be a duck on water**
- ❑ Communicate with your team! Be succinct, direct, specific, be present
- ❑ Gather your extended team at least once a week, keep it light

LABOR

What picture comes to mind?

A



B



LABOR

We are built to work

We are wired to produce

LABOR

PASSION

PURPOSE

LABOR

What are you passionate about?

Do you have it in your life?

Are you developing it?

LABOR

ON YOU!

On what you're passionate about

On your relationships

LABOR

- ❑ You need to have something that gives you passion and purpose
 - Something that is only for you - Fuel
- ❑ Set your standards higher for you and your team – **DO NOT SETTLE**
- ❑ Work on your relationships – they are key to your success
- ❑ Consistently develop yourself – Learn something new
- ❑ Focus on team engagement - **Priority #1**
 - Do 1:1 standing meetings – daily – in person if possible
 - Set goals and deadlines
 - Developing your team is critical to their and your success
- ❑ Make sure you and your teams are working on their own life balance

LEISURE

How do you define Leisure?



LEISURE

- ✓ You need “**ME TIME**”
- ✓ Invest in you
- ✓ Recharge your batteries
- ✓ Return to your comfort zone
- ✓ Holiday vs. Vacation

The Japanese have a word ‘Karoshi’, loosely translated
OVERWORK DEATH



LEISURE



What is “**Me Time**”? Why is it Critical?

What are you doing for you?

LEISURE

“People who took fewer than 10 of their vacation days per year had a 34.6% likelihood of receiving a raise or bonus in a three-year period of time. People who took more than 10 of their vacation days had a 65.4% chance of receiving a raise or bonus.”

Harvard Business Review

LEISURE

- You need to look at LEISURE as an investment in you
- Schedule time during your day for '**ME TIME**' – Protect it!
- Set a morning routine – set the tone
- Mandate that your team does this as well
- Exercise is critical – gives you a clear mind
- Clear Minds = Better Decisions**

LEAVE

Positive or negative?

Why do we hold on to a not-so-positive situation or decision?

FEENAK

FEAR OF WHAT?



Familiar Misery

F.E.A.R.

has two meanings:

Forget Everything and Run

OR

Face Everything and Rise

The Choice is Yours

LEAVE

How do you make change?

Gap Analysis

What is it?

LEAVE

Action / Development Plan

Change Management Action Plan

	Action	Date		Action	Date		Action	Date
1			6			11		
2			7			12		
3			8			13		
4			9			14		
5			10			15		

SMART = Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timebound

Critical - Celebrate the Small Wins

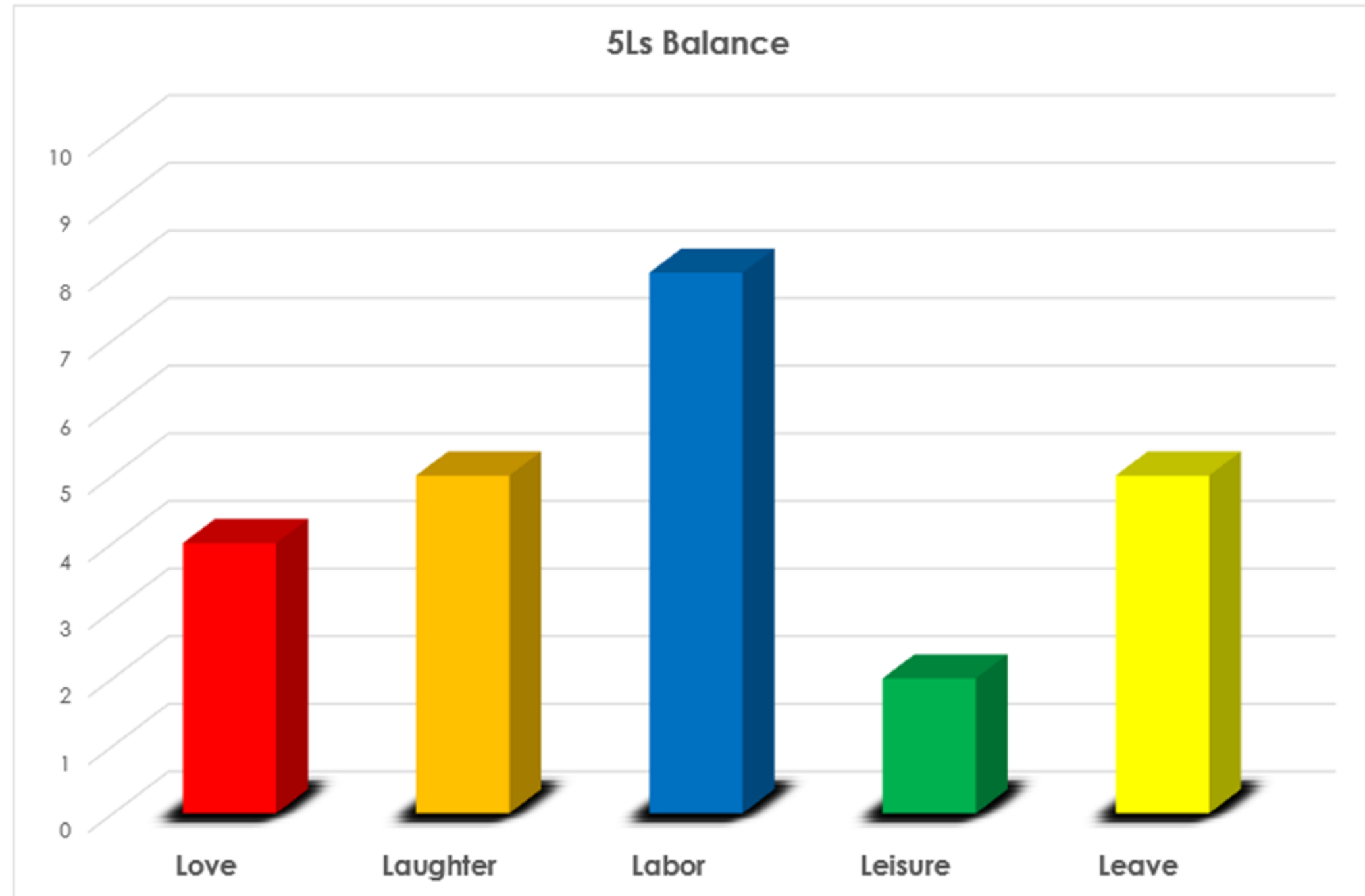
LEAVE

- ❑ You must embrace change and let go of fear
 - Realize you are preprogrammed to avoid change
 - You can fix that with Micro-Habits
- ❑ You can only control the controllable
- ❑ Create your Gap Analysis and an Action Plan for change
- ❑ Hold brainstorming sessions with your teams
 - Create an action plan
 - Your plan must be SMART
- ❑ Be prepared to pivot to 'leave a bad decision or situation'
- ❑ **REALIZE BRIGHTER DAYS ARE COMING**



Online Self-Assessment

Your 5Ls™ Look



Do not forget - your goal is to find balance in all 5Ls. Your Target for each "L" is to be between 7 - 10

Go To: www.unparalleledperformance.com



“Balance is a choice, and you have to choose it every day”



Candice Corby, Chief Executive Officer
Cobra Legal Solutions

The Gift of a Balanced life is now yours



Always bet on yourself to win

LIVE THE BALANCE

THANK YOU!!

The 52s



LEARN MORE



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Info@unparalleledperformance.com

@unparalleledPe2



@UnparalleledPerformance

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Group Discussion

Challenge & Approach:

What's your biggest challenge right now and how do you plan to address it?

Group Discussion

#1 Workforce Planning Still Isn't Strategic Enough

Despite all the talk about skills-based organizations and future workforce planning, many companies are still reacting vs. planning – especially with AI disruption, shifting labor markets, and evolving business models. **With so much uncertainty, are you truly planning your workforce – or just reacting to what's in front of you?**

#2 Hiring Is Up – But Retention Is the Real Problem

59% of CHROs plan to increase hiring in the first half of 2026 – the strongest confidence reading since tracking began. But retention remains a persistent weak spot, with nearly half expecting no change. Growth without retention is just a leaky bucket. **You're hiring more, but are you fixing the reasons people leave?**

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Group Discussion

AI Without Layoffs

A Discussion on Workforce Transition, Trust, and Organizational Design



Mike Sorensen

Chief Collaborator Experience Officer

Nightingale College



AI Without Layoffs

A Discussion on Workforce Transition,
Trust, and Organizational Design

What is AI Doing in Your Organization?

AI Can Become...

- Workforce Reduction
- Cost-cutting justification
- Headcount elimination

OR It Can Become...

- Workforce Reinvention
- Capability amplification
- Talent redeployment

Quick Pulse Check

Who is personally using AI weekly?

Who has deployed AI tools organization-wide?

Who defined workforce AI strategy?

Who has discussed AI-related workforce impacts at the executive level?

Who has publicly committed to avoiding AI-driven layoffs?

AI Effect on the Organization

What fears/ expectations do you or your employees have about AI?

What concerns / expectations do your leaders have?

How do you feel about AI and your companies philosophy around it?

The Hard Question

If AI makes your workforce 20% more productive — then what?

What is your organization's philosophy for using productivity gains?

Strategy & Workforce Questions

Strategy

- What work should never be fully automated?
- Where does human judgment become more valuable because of AI?
- How do we define the boundaries of AI decision-making?

Workforce

- How do we prevent AI from increasing burnout?
- What roles become more important in an AI-enabled organization?
- How do we support workers whose roles change significantly?

Leadership & Culture Questions

Leadership

- What signals are employees watching most closely?
- How do leaders unintentionally create fear around AI?
- What does a trustworthy AI rollout actually look like?

Culture

- How do we reward experimentation without punishing mistakes?
- What does organizational trust look like during AI transition?
- How do we build psychological safety into AI adoption?

The organizations that navigate AI transition with trust, intentionality, and humanity will not just survive — they will define what great leadership looks like in this era.

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Guest Speaker



Dr. Peter Cappelli

*Director,
Wharton Center for
Human Resources*

Dr. Peter Cappelli is the George W. Taylor Professor of Management at The Wharton School and Director of Wharton's Center for Human Resources. He is also a Research Associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research in Cambridge, MA, served as Senior Advisor to the Kingdom of Bahrain for Employment Policy from 2003–2005, was a Distinguished Scholar of the Ministry of Manpower for Singapore, and was Co-Director of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center on the Educational Quality of the Workforce from 1990–1998.

Why are there
so many layoffs
at public
companies –
especially tech
companies?

- In 2025 – it was “overhiring during the pandemic” targeting tech
- In 2026 – it was AI is cutting jobs
 - Except no evidence that it is doing so
- Then it was – AI WILL cut jobs
 - Except it would be dumb to cut capability before no evidence that i
- Now it is – we need the savings to fund AI:
“Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg has said the Facebook parent firm's planned layoffs are the consequence of increased capital spending for AI,”
 - Except no evidence that this is true, either

Cash on hand

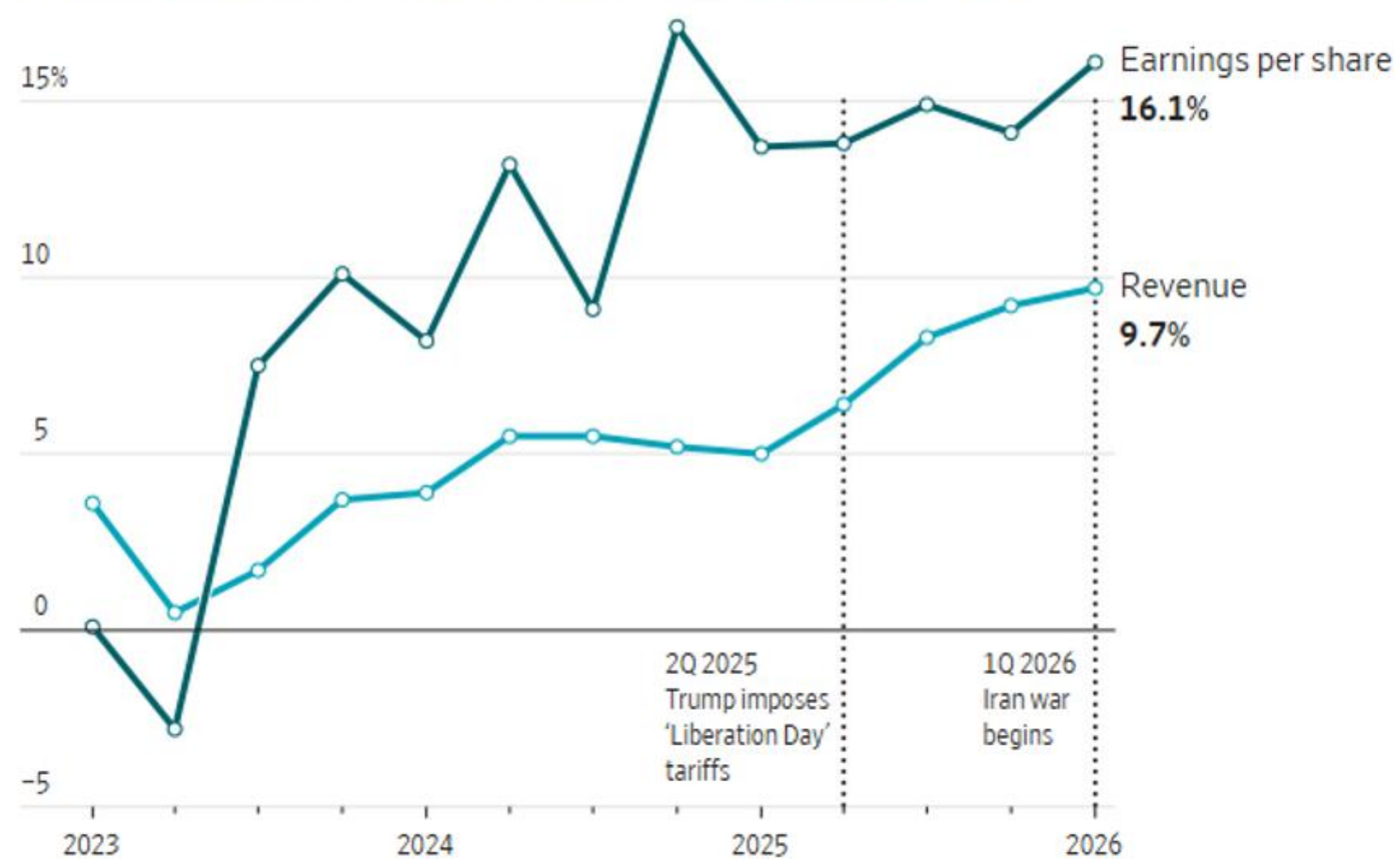
- Microsoft has \$90 Bill in cash and \$3.2 Trill market cap \$22 Bill in share buybacks end of 2025. Meta has \$82 bill and \$1.7 trill market cap
- Alphabet has \$126 billion and \$4.2 Trillion market cap: Amazon has \$123 bill and \$2.8 Trillion Market cap
- Investments in AI:
 - Alphabet \$175 billion investment in AI – funding it from cash flow: Cloud is up 48% this year:
 - Microsoft spending \$115 billion out of record-high profits:
 - Meta \$120 billion funding through record revenue growth

This week -

- “Earnings growth has been exceptional,” said Parag Thatte, an equity strategist for [Deutsche Bank](#). “We’re seeing the broadening of earnings growth beyond just tech and financial” firms.” WSJ.

Business is going well

Quarterly results for S&P 500 companies, change from a year earlier



Note: Through April 24; 1Q 2026 includes reported results for 139 companies and analyst estimates for the remainder.

Source: LSEG

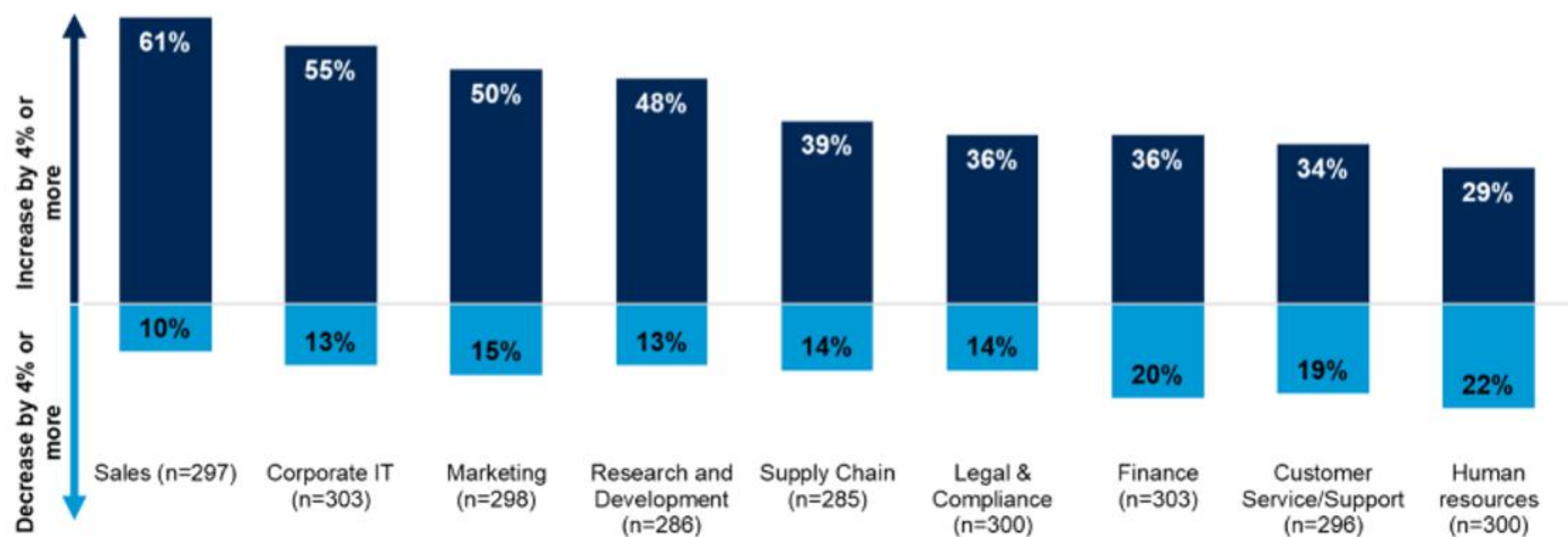
What savings would layoffs generate?

- Cutting 10,000 managers would save \$2 billion although upfront costs of doing so (severance, etc.) is \$1 billion –
- It is drop in the bucket compared to the other resources

It's not just cutting jobs, it's everything HR

Figure 1: Planned Changes to Functional Budgets in 2026

Percentage of respondents



n varies; CFOs and senior finance leaders

Q. How do you expect the budget of the following corporate functions to change in 2026 compared to your total expected 2025 spend?

Note: Percentages don't add up to 100 due to the exclusion of options 'I don't know' and 'Nominal Change'

Source: Gartner (February 2026)




Vacation time, parental leave, everything that is expensive is on the block

Deloitte, Zoom cutting PTO

The background consists of a dense, overlapping pile of colorful sticky notes. The colors include shades of blue, green, yellow, pink, and purple. Each sticky note has a large, bold, black question mark printed on it. The notes are scattered across the entire frame, creating a textured and busy visual field.

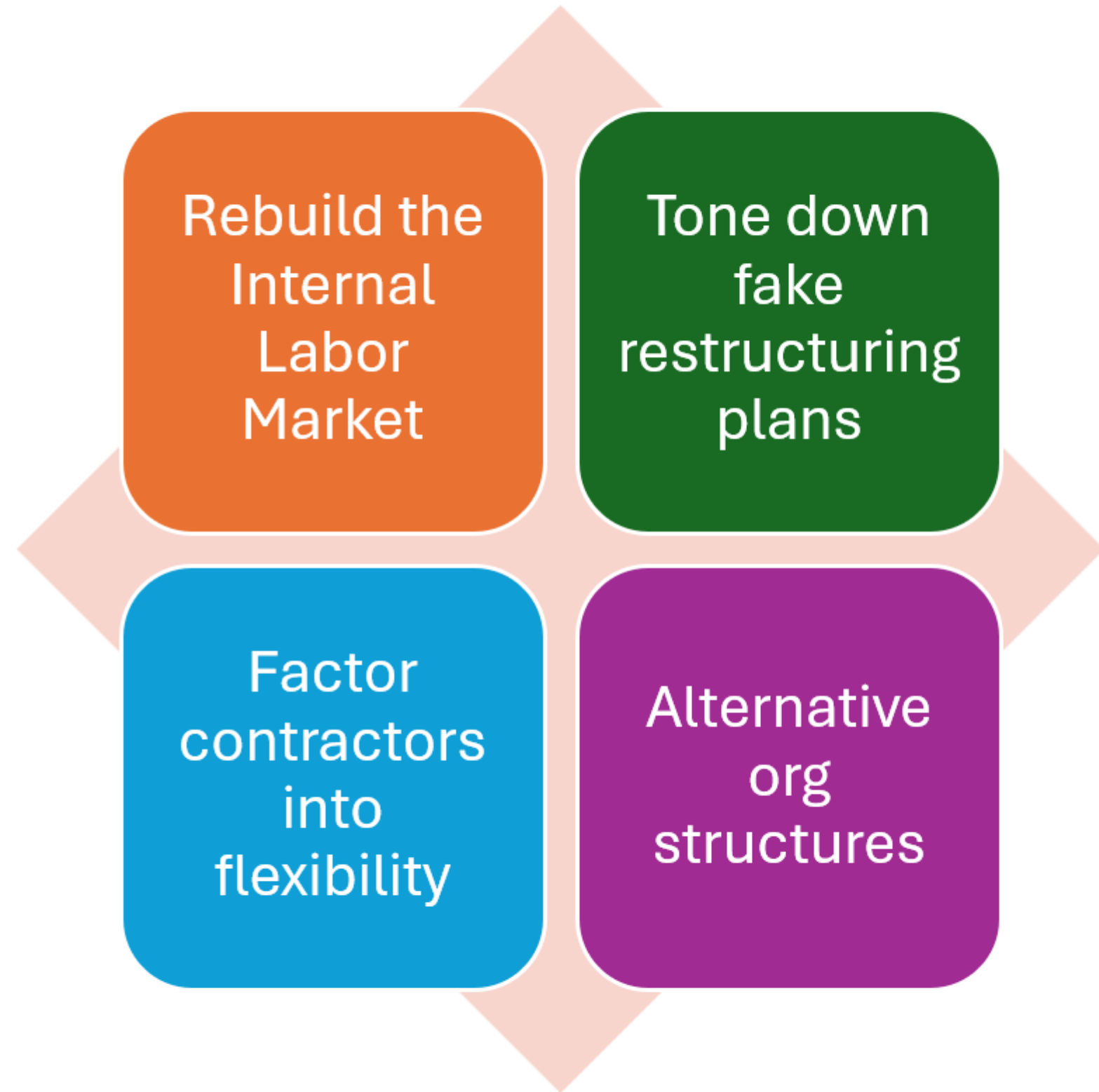
Why?



The Wheels May Never Completely Come Off – Just keep replacing burnt-out people

- How do we persuade top leaders to do something about it?
 - *E.g., How do we get people back in the office when CFOs cut office space, moved us to open offices and then hoteling, which people hate.*
- CEOs need to know the real costs of turnover: layoffs and hiring replacements doesn't look so smart if we think turnover costs = \$40k per person rather than \$4k
- Know the real costs of stress on illness and healthcare costs, then on productivity: Decision Fatigue
 - *Employees are becoming cynical about wellness programs: “chair yoga” to help you deal with the stress we’re creating*

What are the Options for HR?



But mainly, we have to educate the CEO's about the real costs of managing employees poorly.

CEOs do care about internal accounting



All costs matter to CEOs



Turnover costs



Costs of leaving vacancies open



Costs of outside hiring vs. promotion
from within



Benefits of better employees

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Next C-TEN Meeting

Thursday, June 11

4:00–5:00 PM ET / 1:00–2:00 PM PT

**Reframing Human Capital as a Strategic Asset Class
in an Era of Volatility**

Guest Speaker: Dr. Cynthia Bentzen–Mercer, PhD, MBA, SPHR, BCC