C-TEN

CHRO Today Executive Network

Advice | Support | Best Practices

C-TEN Meeting

Collaborative Group Discussion

✅ Expert-Led Discussion

August 11, 2026

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM ET | Virtual

Upcoming Events



September 15
7:00–9:00 PM

Annual C-TEN Dinner

September 16
8:00 AM–12:00 PM

CHRO Fall Retreat

September 16
1:00 PM–4:00 PM

CHRO Forum South

Upcoming Events



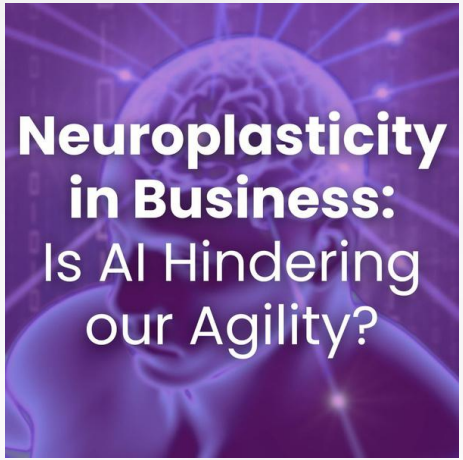
Have a colleague in the EMEA region?

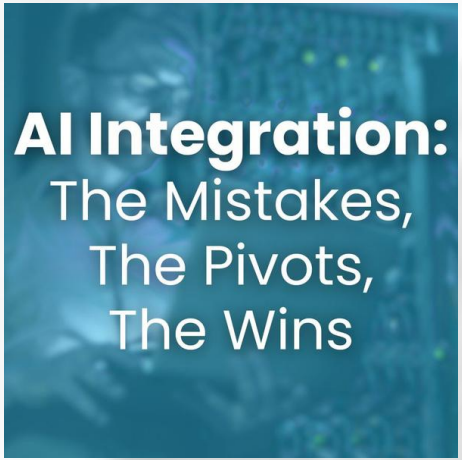
It's not too late to register for our EMEA Forum!

Association Webinars

Thank you for supporting *HRO Today* Association webinars!









Expert-Led Discussion



Dr. Cynthia Bentzen-Mercer

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

Dr. Cynthia Bentzen-Mercer is a Board-Certified Executive Coach, Human Capital Strategist, and bestselling author of Now, Near, Next and Human Capital Investment Strategy. With 30+ years of C-suite leadership experience, she created Stop Drifting™: The Discipline of Direction - a framework that equips high-achieving women to replace endurance with intention and consciously steer their work and lives toward what matters most.

HRO TODAY · C-TEN VIRTUAL SESSION

Reframing Human Capital as a Strategic Asset Class

A Human Capital Investment Strategy® Conversation for CHROs

Dr. Cynthia Bentzen-Mercer

PhD, MBA, BCC, SPHR | Executive Strategist | Bentzen Performance Partners

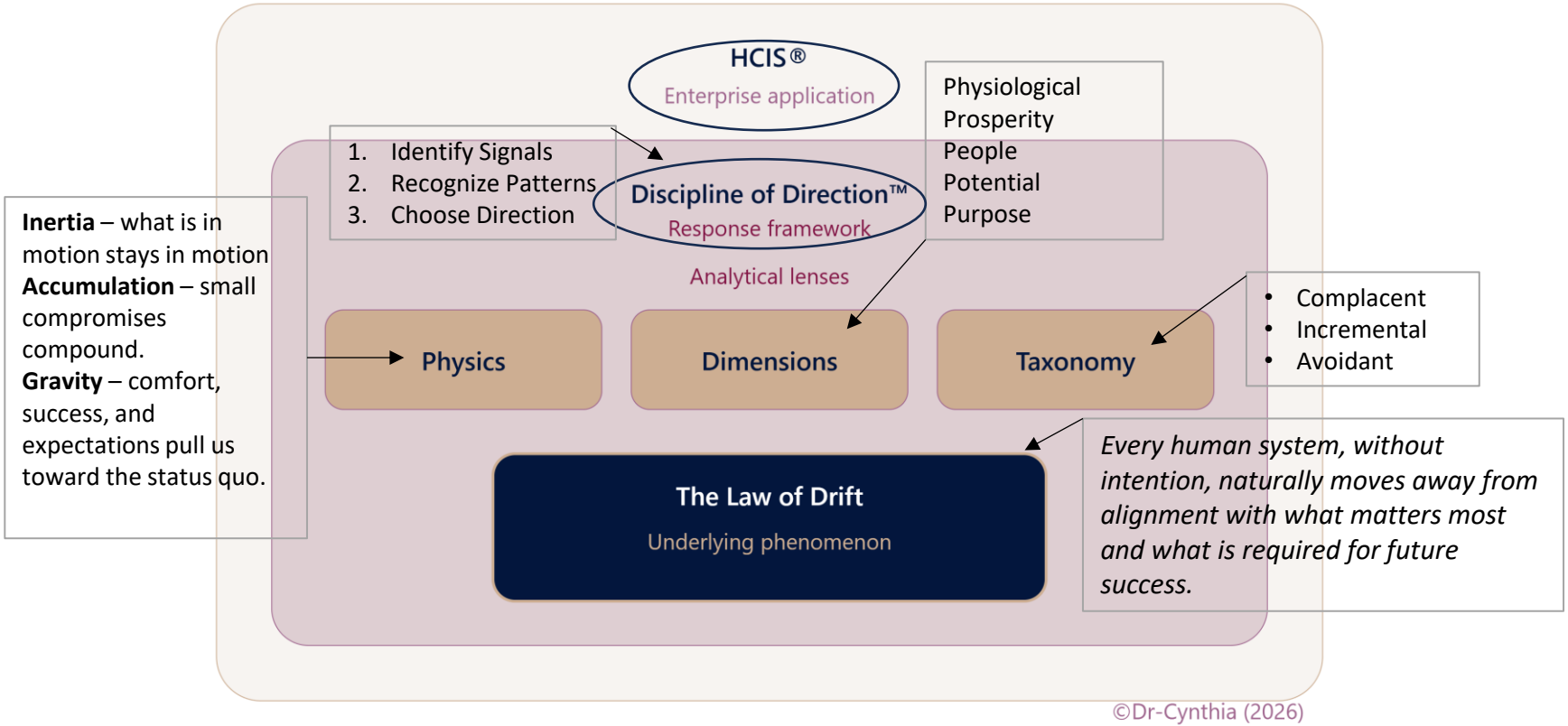
Author, Human Capital Investment Strategy · www.dr-cynthia.com

Organizations rarely wake up and discover their strategy stopped working.

More often, the organization has been drifting for months — sometimes years — while the financial indicators still looked reasonable.

- A critical role outgrows the person in it.
- A succession candidate stops developing.
- Leadership attention migrates toward operations.
- A capability the strategy requires never gets built.

None of these looks catastrophic in isolation. But they compound.


HCIS®
Enterprise application
1. Identify Signals
2. Recognize Patterns
3. Choose Direction
Discipline of Direction™
Response framework
Physiological
Prosperity
People
Potential
Purpose
Inertia – what is in motion stays in motion
Accumulation – small compromises compound.
Gravity – comfort, success, and expectations pull us toward the status quo.
Analytical lenses
Physics
Dimensions
Taxonomy
Complacent
Incremental
Avoidant
The Law of Drift
Underlying phenomenon
Every human system, without intention, naturally moves away from alignment with what matters most and what is required for future success.
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WHERE DRIFT SHOWS UP FIRST

The signals appear in the human system — long before they appear on the P&L.

Strategy

Plans assume capabilities the org hasn't actually built.

Leadership Capacity

Key leaders are stretched past what their roles require.

Succession

Bench strength looks fine on paper, thin in practice.

Talent Allocation

Investment follows tenure and title, not strategic priority.

Capability

Skills the strategy depends on are never deliberately built.

Culture & Decision-Making

Risk tolerance and speed quietly erode.

DRIFT IS INEVITABLE.

DIRECTION IS INTENTIONAL.

Every organization drifts. The ones that outperform simply catch it sooner.

CHAT PROMPT

“Think about a significant talent investment your organization made in the last three years — a high-potential hire, a leadership development program, an executive promotion.

Did it compound the way you expected?”

Type YES / PARTIALLY / NOT REALLY in the chat

We'll use your answers to frame what comes next.

If you completed the Organizational Readiness Assessment before this session:

Where does your organization have the greatest exposure between the strategy you're pursuing and the human capital required to execute it?

1. **Leadership & Strategic Commitment**
2. **Leadership Competency in Talent Assessment**
3. **Risk, Justice & Talent Optimization**
4. **Broadening Sourcing & Talent Strategy**
5. **Financial Alignment & ROI**
6. **Readiness for Change & Implementation**

THE SIX-STEP FRAMEWORK



You already do versions of all six. The question is whether you apply the same rigor you'd give to a capital expenditure.

01 — Establish Pro Forma

Where is the HCIS tied specifically to the organization's strategic plan?

02 — Assess Portfolio

Do we have an honest picture of what we actually have?

03 — Stratify Risk

Where are we most exposed if someone stalls or leaves?

04 — Rebalance Allocations

Are our investments going to the highest ROI potential?

05 — Expand Options

Are we sourcing talent from the right pools?

06 — Forecast & Adjust

How do we correct before we drift?

EXECUTIVE APPLICATION

Pick one strategic priority your organization is pursuing this year. Test it:

1. Do we have the talent this priority requires?
2. Do we know where our risk actually sits?
3. Are we investing disproportionately in the people and capabilities that matter most?
4. What signal would tell us six months from now that we're drifting?

DISCUSSION & CHALLENGE

Where might drift be occurring in your human capital investment strategy?

What are the signals?

What patterns should you be identifying?

What small step could begin to pivot you to greater alignment?

One question to take back to your executive team:

“Where are we assuming today's talent portfolio can execute tomorrow's strategy?”

Free Organizational Readiness Assessment & Drift Diagnostic

Share with your team

dr-cynthia.com/resources

Human Capital Investment Strategy

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Next C-TEN Meeting

Wednesday September 16

8:00 AM-12:00 PM

CHRO Fall Retreat

Atlanta, GA | Loudermilk Conference Center