



Stop Eating Your Leaders!

*Get Going, Do What Works, and Ignite the
Next Generation in Your Firm*

John D. Doehring, CMC



John Doehring is an accomplished speaker, author, and (certified) management consultant focused in the professional services markets of design, planning, environmental, and construction. Founder and Managing Principal of *J. Doehring & Co.*, John and his colleagues provide advice and counsel on matters of significance: business strategy and planning, leadership development and transition, and breakthrough operations transformation. The firm's clients range from large to small, broadly-diversified to niche-specialist, around-the-block to around-the-world. John's passion is helping leaders to plan for the future, growth their business, and make more money.

For the last dozen years, John has counseled AEC industry executives and organizations - first as a senior leader in a market leading management consulting firm, and later with *J. Doehring & Co.* He has completed nearly one hundred engagements in strategic business planning and leadership development and transition. John has also created and delivered dozens of engaging, experiential, and educational training programs for both open enrollment (pubic seminar) and private client venues – in subjects that include managing the growing firm; management and leadership skills for principals; business development and marketing success for seller-doer principals and project managers; the laws of effective business execution; pricing, fee, and negotiating success secrets; and many others. John has touched thousands of industry professionals this way, and he is an engaging and entertaining, well-known, and sought-after speaker for national, regional, and local audiences at conferences and seminars, industry trade association gatherings, and private client events (including ACEC, AIA, SMPS, SAME, NSPE, SEA, Zweig-White, and PSMJ).

Before launching his consulting career, John Doehring was Chief Marketing and Strategy Officer at *Geologic Services Corporation*, and later *GSC/Kleinfelder*, where he led that company's planning, growth, and organization improvement efforts. Prior to his involvement in the AEC industry, he co-created and founded the highly successful, private equity-financed venture *Windward Petroleum, Inc.*, a rapid-growth, acquisition-focused consolidation play in petroleum specialty products distribution. John began his career with *Exxon Company, USA* as a petroleum production and exploration geologist, regional environmental business unit manager, and specialty products sales manager and business consultant.

John is also a popular writer on business and organization improvement subjects for professional services firms and their leaders, and he's been featured in many newsletters, magazines, trade publications, and websites. John is the author of *Fast Future! Ten Uber-Trends Changing Everything in Business and Our World* (2015) and *The BackPocket Business Plan! Outrageously Simply Business Planning for Extraordinary Business Results* (2014). He is currently working on a new book on leadership: *Stop Eating Your Leaders! Get Going, Do What Works, and Ignite the Next Generation in Your Firm.*

John holds a BS in Geology and a BA in Biology from the *University of Texas at Austin*, and earned his MBA in Management and Marketing from *New York University's Stern School of Business*. John is an active member of the *National Speaker's Association* (the organization for professional speakers) and the *World Futures Society*, and is a Certified Management Consultant (CMC) with the *Institute of Management Consultants, USA*.

Born and raised in Texas, John lives today in Pepperell, Massachusetts with his wife Megan, and two of his five children.

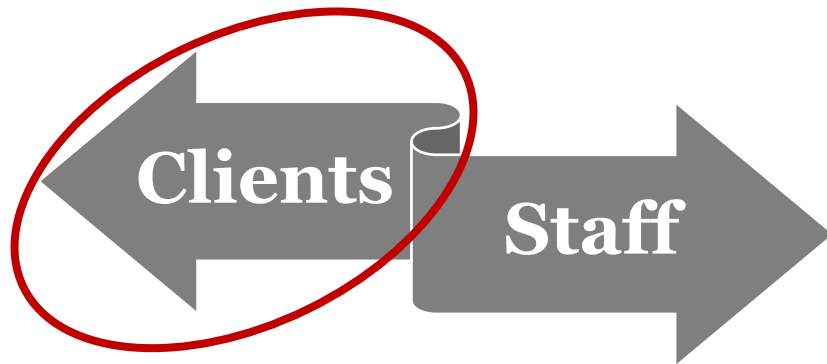
Workshop 1

What Leadership Means to Me



An Alternative Thesis

at issue:
focus on clients



to be all about the client ...
it can't be all about the client!



a different (differentiated) path ...



“We are ladies and gentlemen
serving ladies and gentlemen.”

Ritz-Carlton



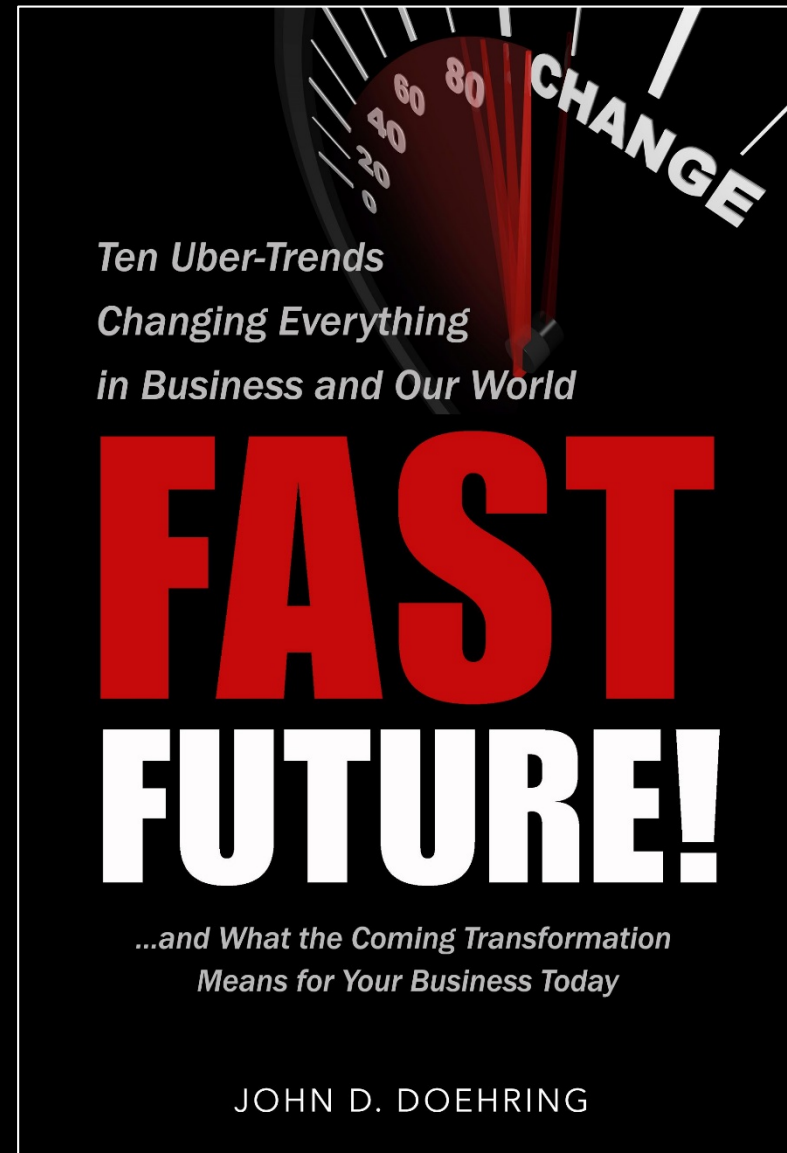
**Leadership ...
Why Now?**

There is nothing
permanent
except CHANGE.
Heraclitus

A dynamic, low-angle shot of a red sports car driving on a road. The car's side-view mirror is prominent in the upper left. The background shows a blurred road and sky, suggesting high speed. The text "the pace of change is accelerating." is overlaid in white serif font.

the pace of change is accelerating.

- Technology
- Information
- Globalization
- Markets-Channels
- Infrastructure
- Energy-Environment
- Diversity-Meritocracy
- Longevity-Health
- Community
- Change



Loading... Please Wait



you are moving too slow.



In the firm today ...

The background of the slide is a light gray color with a pattern of large, semi-transparent question marks. One question mark in the upper left is a bright yellow, while the others are a muted blue-gray. The text is overlaid on this pattern.

Two crucial questions ...

How do we get the work today?

Who will lead the thing tomorrow?



When are they going to
step up?

When are they going to
give us a chance?



“ but they’re just not ready ... ”





“this work (and this firm) ... is crushing my soul.”

not in our firm ...



Workshop 2


The State of Leadership in Our Firm Today (Plus/Minus)



Seven Part (SEYL) Framework



1. Vision

A human skull and some bones are lying on the sand in a desert landscape. The skull is the central focus, with its eye sockets, nasal cavity, and jaw visible. The background shows a vast, arid desert with some low hills under a clear sky. The overall tone is somber and reflective.

**“Where there is no vision,
the people perish ...”**

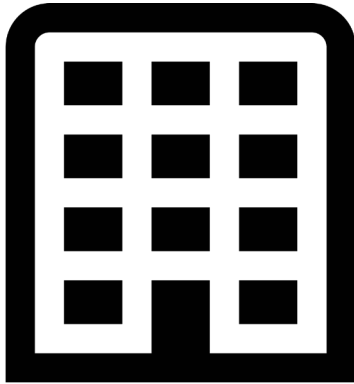
Proverbs 29:18

“nothing happens unless first a dream.”

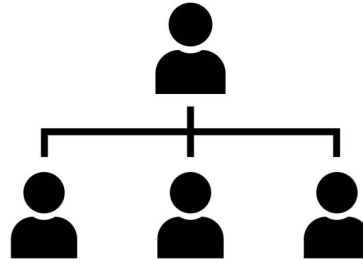


Carl Sandburg

clear vision at 3 levels



firm



leadership



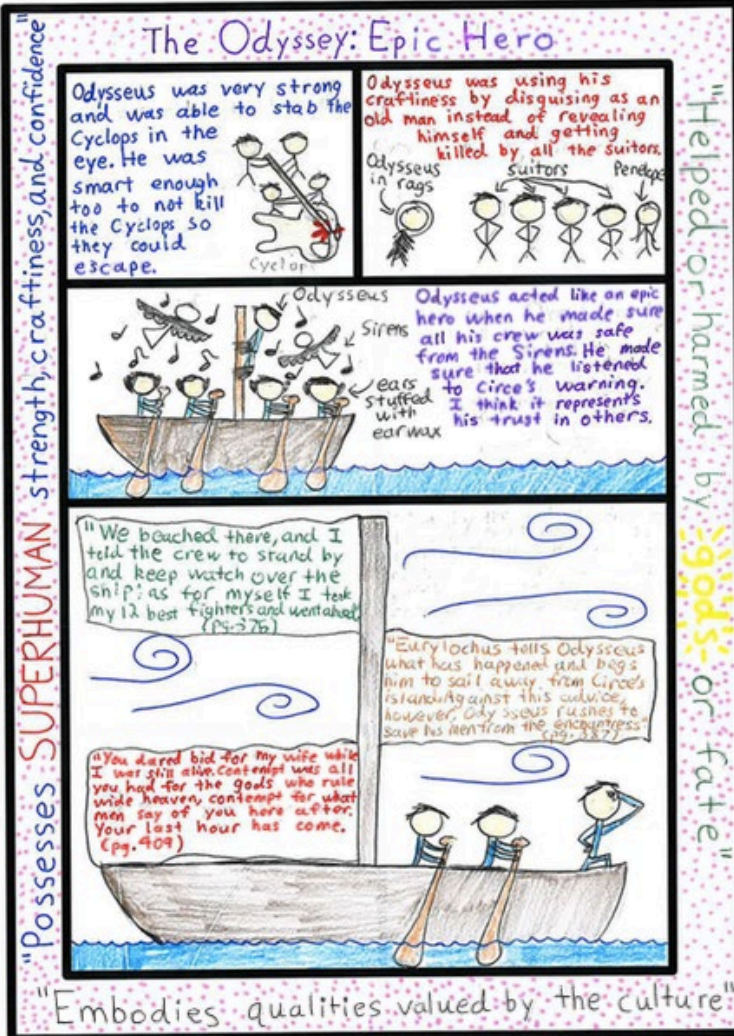
me

The background of the slide features a faded, grayscale image of several military officers in formal dress uniforms. They are wearing white peaked caps and dark jackets with red piping and numerous medals. The focus is on the officer in the foreground on the left, with others visible in the background.

In our firm, a leader is someone who ...

- Leader
- Principal
- Associate
- Project Manager
- Owner

... is this crystal clear?



what's on your one pager?



2. Assessment



what makes an assessment great?

Strategic Assessment

- ☐ candid, honest, real
- ☐ comprehensive, balanced
- ☐ data-driven, accurate
- ☐ multiple viewpoints
- ☐ focus on improvement
- ☐ actionable





do you need outside help?

assessment tools

materials review

f & o benchmarking

management team survey

employee engagement survey

client feedback survey

client concentration

strategic organization report



but is all this effort really necessary?

“we already know what’s wrong ...”



“we’re already doing these things ...”

**it's what you do with what you know
that counts most.**





3. Training



**skills of the extraordinary
professional**

why do we train (formally) in
only one of these areas?



Your definition of training?

Two-day Bootcamp	Ten-month Course	On-the-Job
immersion	metered series	work context
multiple subjects	specific subject	subject specific
in-person	online	in-person
knowledge focused	skill-focused	work-focused
cohort	solo	mentored
structured	structured or free-form	free-form
book-manual	lesson	project


the way we see it




Approach: classroom, online, self-study and reflection, group work, experiential team building, and action-learning through real firm challenges.




4. Mentoring



training




advice




inspire




MENTOR



direction



leadership



develop

great mentoring programs

- ✓ Organic
- ✓ Informal
- ✓ Structured
- ✓ Two-way
- ✓ Knowledge/skills
- ✓ Effort
- ✓ Results
- ✓ Growth

Workshop 3

(If I Was in Charge): What We'd Do in Training and Mentoring



5. Career Pathing

A black and white photograph of a long, straight railway track stretching into the distance. The tracks are made of wooden sleepers and metal rails, receding towards a horizon under a sky filled with large, dramatic clouds. The landscape on either side is flat and arid, with some low hills visible in the far distance. The overall mood is one of vastness and forward motion.

*is the objective of
the corporation to win or to last?*

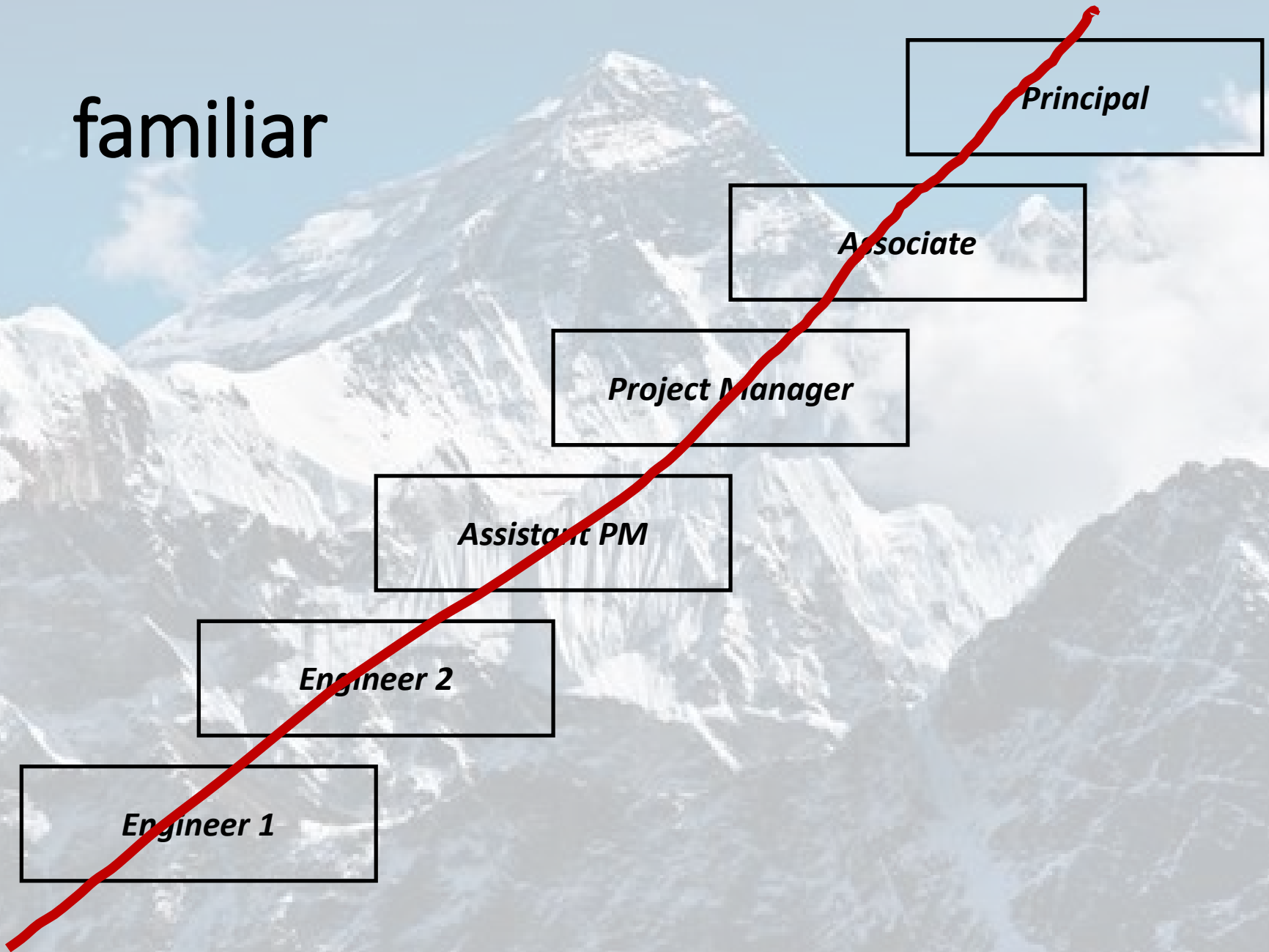


what skills do we need?



how do we get more people there?

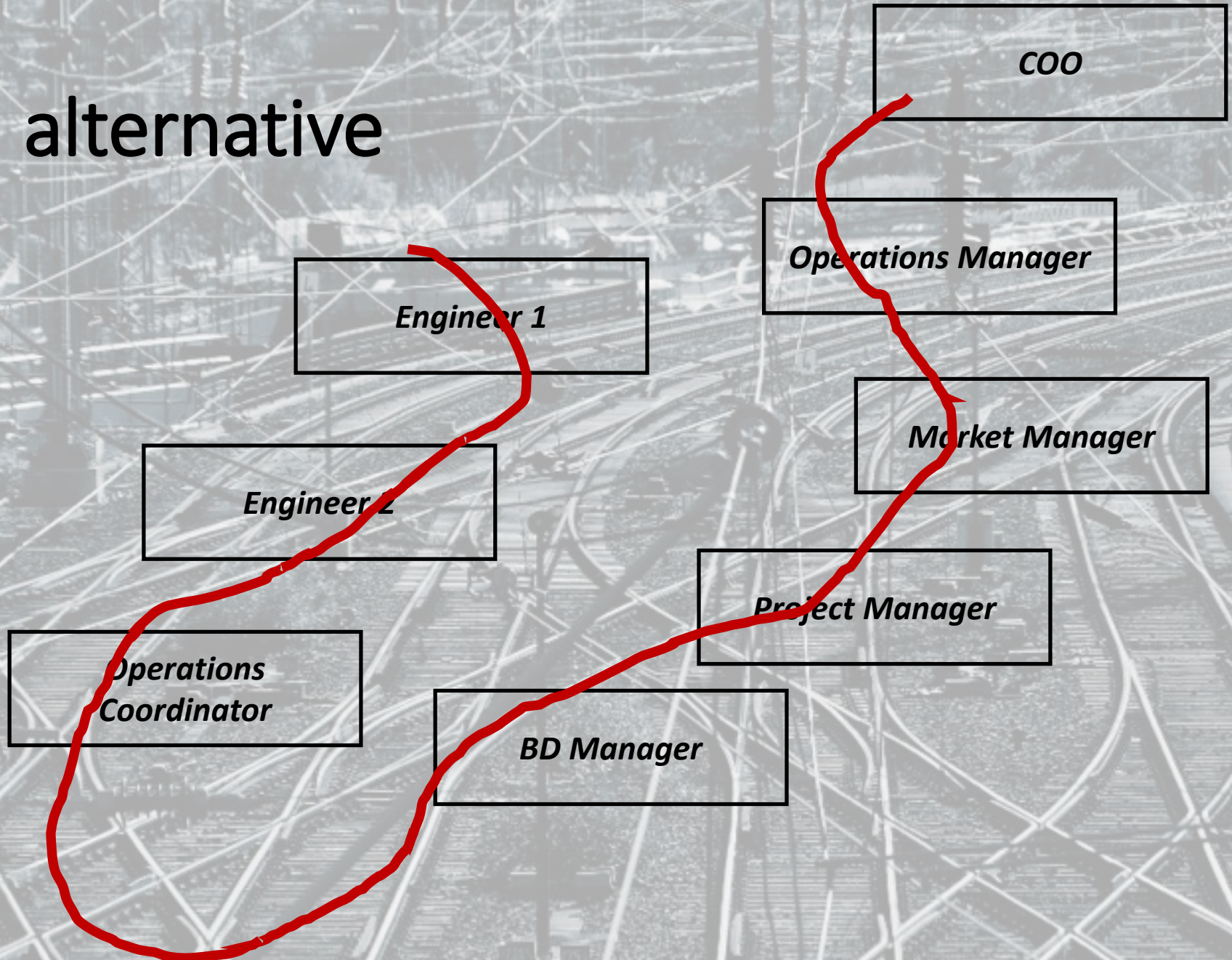
familiar

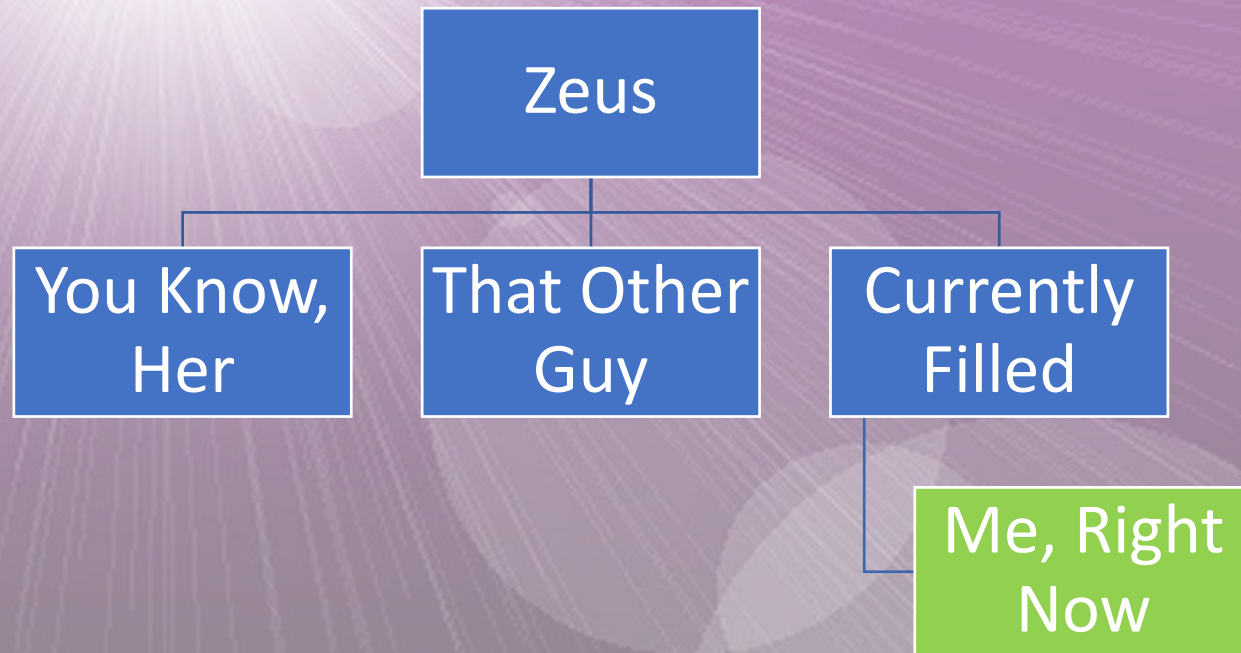




the advancement path ...

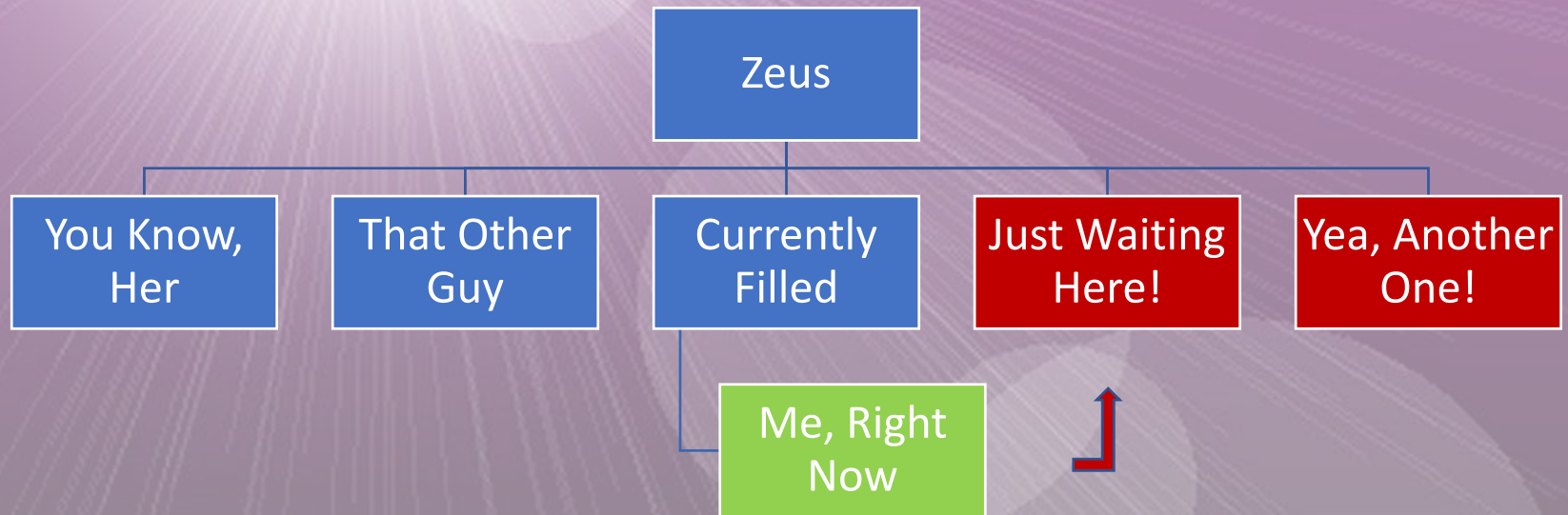
alternative





coach or player?







6. Action Agenda

**“Even the most grandiose strategies must
eventually degenerate into work.”**

Peter Drucker



implementation plan

“Execution is the single biggest issue facing business today.”

Bossidy and Charan

**"A good plan, violently executed now,
is better than a perfect plan next week."**

George Patton



leadership development program plan

Create a simple, actionable plan for the next 90 days ...

No.	Action Item	Lead	Due Date	Deliverable	Comment
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					

$$3 \times 4 = 12 - 2 = 10$$



great execution
is in the details ...



goals that work!

- ✓ clear
- ✓ doable
- ✓ date certain
- ✓ one lead
- ✓ outcome

better plan, better performance

Parameter	Not good	Little better	Better still
action	improve leadership in the firm.	design a new leadership development program.	design and begin a ten-part training program by April 1.
lead	executive group	Jeff Davidson & Mike Pruitt	Jeff Davidson
due date	ongoing	90 days	08/15/19
deliverable	more effective leaders	new leaders taking initiative with training	90% of identified leaders complete courses by July



7. Managing System



explore and find the right cadence ...

social operating system

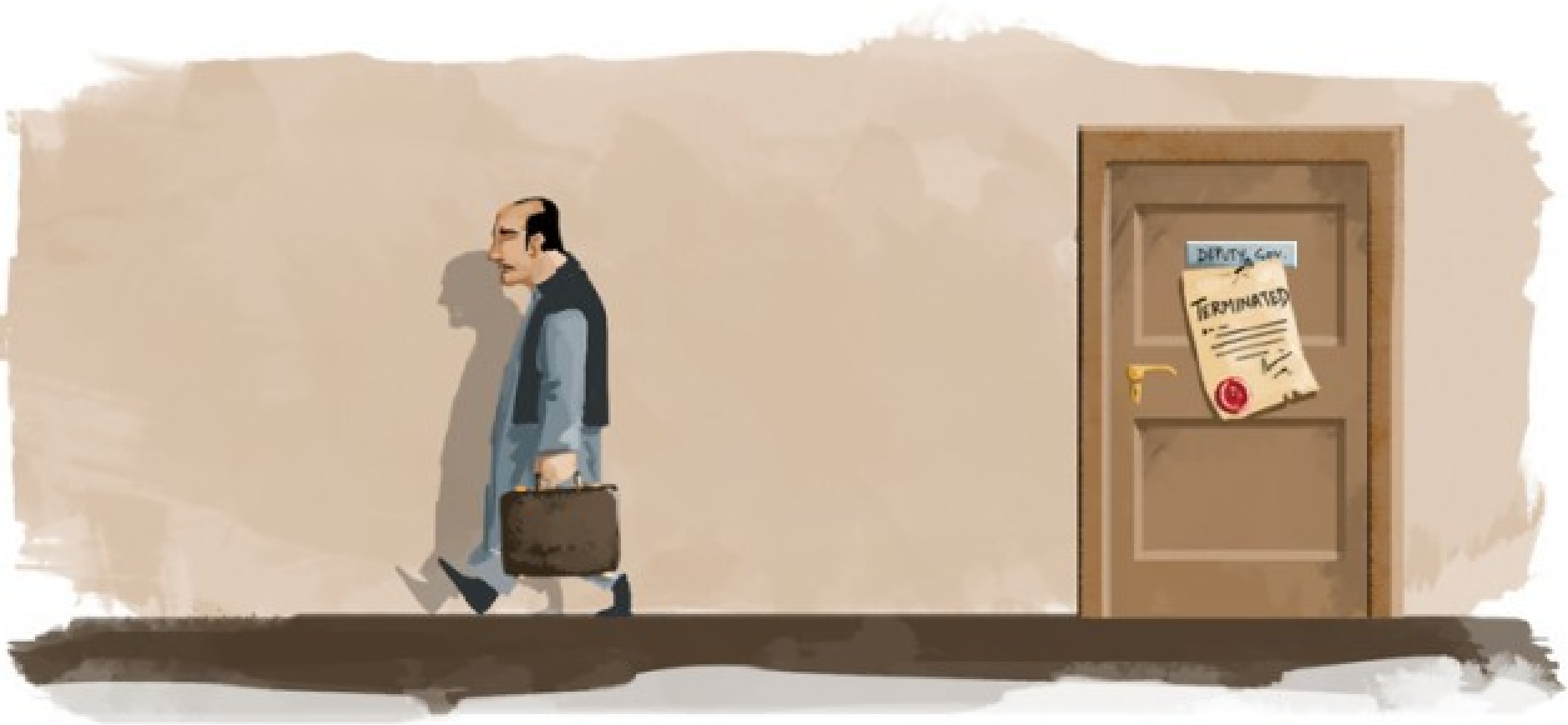
cadence	activity
annual	Update strategic plan, formal performance feedback
bi-annual	Leadership retreat for principals or owners
quarter	Check in on personal performance plans
month	Update and manage the business plan
week	Update projects and tactical workplans
day	Team huddle: ready, set, go!

after Bossidy and Charan

A man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a blue long-sleeved shirt, is leaning over a young child with curly brown hair. The child is wearing a light blue hoodie. They are both looking down at a book or a piece of paper on the floor. The background is a bright, slightly out-of-focus indoor space with wooden flooring and a white wall.

**there is no such thing
as too much communication ...**

accountability issues?



what about your firm is non-negotiable?



“the game of leadership is won
in a thousand hallway conversations”



What's Next?

“we’re already doing this ...”





**PLANNING TO MAKE A PLAN
IS NOT A PLAN**

Workshop 4

(I Am in Charge!): Our Plan for Action in the Next 100 Days

A photograph of a dirt road that splits into two paths in a forest. The road is covered in fallen leaves and the surrounding trees are green. The quote is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

**“When you come to a fork in
the road, take it.”**

Yogi Berra



“Not Failure, But Low Aim, Is Crime”

James Russell Lowell

- ☐ **strategic business planning**
- ☐ **leadership development**
- ☐ **business development system**
- ☐ **operations transformation**

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a different view ...

Thank You!



The background of the slide is a red architectural drawing, likely a floor plan, showing various rooms, corridors, and structural elements. The drawing is rendered in white lines on a red background.

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