INTERNET MARKETING ASSOCIATION

IMPACT 5050

2024 IMPACT REPORT

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ABOUT THE IMA & IMPACT CONFERENCES

The **Internet Marketing Association (IMA)** is a leading organization that connects professionals and experts in business marketing, offering a comprehensive platform for sharing knowledge, best practices, and industry innovations. Celebrating its 20th anniversary, IMA has grown into a global network of professionals across diverse sectors, from technology and finance to education and health.

The **IMPACT Conferences**, hosted annually by IMA, are transformative events that blend business innovation with personal development. These conferences gather thought leaders, entrepreneurs, and marketing professionals to explore cutting-edge strategies and technologies shaping the future of industries. Through keynote speeches, workshops, and networking sessions, IMPACT offers attendees invaluable insights into leadership and industry trends, plus personal and business growth.

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Hosted from September 12–15th, **IMPACT 5050** was an exhilarating adventure into the ever-changing world of leadership and the heavy responsibilities that come with **leading change** in a world that can't stand for complacency. It wasn't just a business conference or a growth seminar—it was about rediscovering the human spirit behind leadership, the courage it takes to stand up for your values, and the guts to make tough decisions in uncertain times. All set against the stunning backdrop of the vibrant rainforests of Nayarit.

From **Bita Safari's** awe-inspiring **story of resilience** as a penniless immigrant chasing a better future, to **Larry Armstrong's** inspiring **framework for transforming culture & business** together, each thought leader shared not only their expertise but also deeply personal reflections on what it means to lead in the 21st century. It was a place where abstract concepts like leadership, ethics, and innovation all became real through lived experiences and visionary thinking.

Themes of both innovation and **transformation** permeated every discussion—whether it was **Joshua Dominic's** vision of **reimagined travel** through Dreamstar Lines, or **Tom Peck's** insights on how Sysco is **merging logistics with cutting-edge digital evolution** to boost efficiency in foodservice. But what really made these talks stand out was their **focus on the personal journeys** that shaped these visions—showing that leadership isn't just about leading others, but first understanding yourself, your limits, and your convictions.

IMPACT 5050 pushed our attendees beyond just listening, but ***living***. It encouraged each and every one of them to **look inward**, **challenge their own assumptions**, and commit to leading not just with **strategy** but **with integrity**. We hope you can join us next year for **IMPACT 25** – and be part of our next big story in thought leadership.

Warmest regards,

Sinan Kanatsiz
Chairman
The Internet Marketing Association (IMA)
Host, IMPACT 5050

IMPACT 5050 OVERVIEW

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

EVENING

Dinner at Jetty Beach

Skies parted to kick off IMPACT 5050 with the dinner on Jetty Beach. Engaging conversations sparked new connections among attendees as they mingled by the sea. The night — brimming with excitement — culminated in a breathtaking fireworks display, marking a vibrant start to the conference.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

MORNING

Sunrise Beach Walk

Our guests were treated to an early morning beach walk to prepare their minds for the packed day to follow.

AFTERNOON

The IMPACT 5050 Conference

Set amidst the vibrant rainforests of Nayarit, thought leaders like Bita Safari and Larry Armstrong shared personal stories and visionary insights on innovation, ethics, and leadership. The event challenged our attendees to look inward, embrace change, and lead with integrity.

EVENING

Celebration at Carao

As the sun set on a day filled with innovative insights and moving thought leadership, a jubilant dinner was held on the Carao pool deck, filled with entertainment from skillful fire dancers, a live rock band, and stand-up provided by the incomparable Kevin Fink of Jones Day.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

MORNING

- **Horseback Riding** – *The morning horseback ride was the perfect opportunity to explore winding rainforest trails and bask in the allure of the expansive and exotic Mandarina resort.*
- **Ziplining** – *In for the thrill of a lifetime, the rainforest zipline was an experience unlike any other, zipping through the lush rainforests of the resort while catching breathtaking views.*
- **Beach Snorkeling** – *For attendees looking to stay closer to earth, many dipped their toes into the sapphire-blue shores to explore the vibrant sea life and colorful coral reefs.*
- **Golfing** – *With a gorgeous view of the Nayarit peninsula, IMPACT attendees challenged each other to a lively round of tournament course golf at the Mandarina.*

EVENING

Canalan Beach Farewell Dinner

At the Canalan Beach Club dinner, attendees enjoyed a breathtaking sunset while reflecting on the visionary insights and personal stories shared during the conference. The serene ocean view and heartfelt conversations made the evening a memorable close to a transformative IMPACT event.

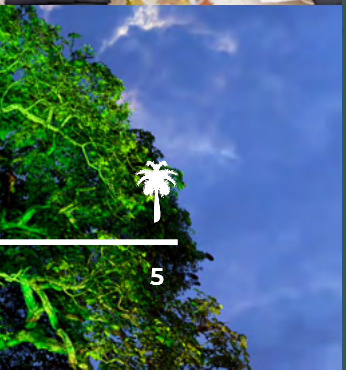
IMPACT 5050 OVERVIEW

NIGHT 1:
JETTY BEACH

The first night of IMPACT 5050 kicked off in style at the One&Only Mandarina's breathtaking Jetty Beach, setting the perfect tone for a weekend focused on growth, leadership, and transformation. As the sun began to set, guests were welcomed by the soft, intricate melodies of live Spanish guitar, creating an intimate yet energizing atmosphere. Sinan Kanatsiz, founder of the Internet Marketing Association, set the event in motion with an inspiring speech that highlighted the excitement just yet to come, as well as the importance of resilience, leadership, and the collective mission of the conference. His words echoed through the evening, laying the groundwork for the entire event.

The main course of the evening – a vibrant display of coastal culinary excellence, was served under the stars as the clouds cleared to reveal a stunning Nayarit sunset. As the conversations flowed, the anticipation in the air was palpable. Guests were not just indulging in good food and company, but in the very spirit of connection, innovation, and transformation that defined the purpose of IMPACT 5050. As plates were being cleared off the table, our chairman took to the stage once more to clue his distinguished guests on one last surprise in store. Just when it seemed the night had reached its peak, chairman Sinan gave the signal and a stunning row of fireworks suddenly illuminated the sky, launched from the jetty. The explosions of color were both a celebration and a promise of unforgettable nights ahead — a brilliant metaphor for the breakthroughs and insights the conference would bring over the coming days.

The magic that cascaded over the jetty that evening was more than just an opening night – it was a testament to the fusion of personal reflection and business ambition that defines the IMPACT 5050 experience, and offered attendees not only moments of awe and inspiration but also a shared sense of purpose as they began their journey through the event.



DAY 2:

CONFERENCE & CELEBRATION

The second day of IMPACT 5050 opened with a tranquil morning beach walk, setting a reflective tone for the day. Attendees then gathered at the beautiful Salon Papelillo in the One&Only Mandarina resort, where IMA Chairman Sinan Kanatsiz formally introduced the event. His speech highlighted the unveiling of the IMA Galaxy, a mobile platform that had been six years in the making. Designed to revolutionize networking for elite business leaders, the app serves as a collaborative space for professionals across various industries. Sinan urged attendees to download the app to foster connections that would outlast the breathtaking setting of Nayarit. Reflecting on IMA's 20-year journey, Sinan recounted how the association's global reach has grown through conferences held in multiple countries, enabling a deep understanding of different cultures, industries, and economic landscapes. He emphasized how last year's IMPACT 23 placed artificial intelligence at the forefront, featuring insights from industry leaders like Palantir and Keith Strier. This year's event was poised to continue that forward-thinking legacy with actionable insights.

Sinan drew attention to the "50-yard line" metaphor, reminding attendees that many are at pivotal moments in their careers. He positioned the IMPACT 5050 conference as a platform designed to equip leaders with the tools, strategies, and networks needed to push forward. He also previewed the IMPACT Awards, which would recognize excellence across industries, celebrating innovation and leadership that drives transformative growth. Finally, Sinan introduced IMPACT 25, which will be held next year in Washington DC at the historic Hay-Adams Hotel.

The evening was marked by a special celebration dinner, where IMPACT attendees were treated to a nighttime show by fire dancers as well as a live band performing on the Carao pool deck. The long communal tables and dinner served family-style both made for a familial atmosphere, sparking deep and insightful conversations among attendees. The night was capped off with a birthday celebration of IMA Chairman Sinan Kanatsiz, turning 50 years young.

DAY 3:

RESORT ACTIVITIES & FAREWELL NIGHT

The third and final day of IMPACT 5050 was a perfect culmination of adventure, connection, and reflection. The morning began with resort activities, offering something for everyone. Some attendees chose the excitement of ziplining through the lush rainforest, while others opted for a relaxing day by the beach, enjoying the serene waters and warm sun. For those seeking a deeper connection with nature, horseback riding provided a unique way to experience the breathtaking landscape of Mandarina.

After a day of adventure, there was a palpable sense of anticipation as everyone came together for an evening filled with celebration. The reception at the stunning Villa 1 penthouse set the stage for an unforgettable night. With its sweeping ocean views and elegant ambiance, the penthouse provided a perfect backdrop for reflecting on the insights and memories gathered over the past days. Attendees mingled, exchanged stories, and deepened their connections, relishing the shared experience of being part of such a transformative event.

As the evening progressed, conversations naturally shifted to the incredible growth and learning that had taken place over the course of IMPACT 5050. Many shared how they had gained new perspectives on personal growth, leadership, and the future of tech innovation, while others reflected on the meaningful relationships built during their time together. It was a moment of collective reflection, where the impact of the event became clear—leaving everyone inspired and motivated to bring these insights back into their lives.

The evening continued with a spectacular sunset dinner at the Canalan Beach Club. As the sky turned vibrant shades of pink and orange, guests were treated to a gourmet meal by the water's edge. The atmosphere was filled with gratitude and reflection as attendees shared their thoughts on the journey IMPACT 5050 had taken them on. The final evening was a beautiful, serene close to the event, leaving everyone with a renewed sense of purpose and inspiration to carry forward into their lives and careers.

KEY CONFERENCE TAKEAWAYS

1. Leadership is about recognizing critical career junctures (the “50-yard line”) and providing tools, strategies, and connections to push forward with clarity and innovation. (**Kanatsiz**)
2. Transformation begins from within. Kamin’s “inside-out” approach emphasized leveraging personal strengths and the VIA framework for holistic personal and professional growth. (**K. Samuel**)
3. Values-driven leadership, formed through personal hardship, is critical for long-lasting impact in both business and life. (**Safari**)
4. Purpose is the foundation of effective leadership—embedding purpose into culture drives engagement, innovation, and organizational alignment. (**Wilson**)
5. High performance requires people-first leadership, where empowered teams drive sustainable success. Emotional intelligence and data-driven decisions are key. (**Lemaignen**)
6. AI-driven storytelling can transform culture and education. Tools like UCI’s Narrative AI empower the next generation of storytellers to scale their creativity. (**Arkilic**)
7. Leadership is about instilling hope and aligning teams around a vision that promotes individual and organizational success. (**Hyung Lee**)
8. Understanding local market trends and simplifying complex real estate concepts for investors leads to stronger community ties and business growth. (**Keene**)
9. Layered leadership—balancing creativity and strategy—fosters innovation and resilience, allowing teams to adapt to business challenges. (**Armstrong**)
10. The tokenization of real-world assets has the potential to democratize capital raising and open up new investment opportunities. (**Beach**)
11. Integrating values with financial decision-making ensures leadership effectiveness, focusing on integrity and sustainable long-term success. (**Myers**)
12. Purpose-driven initiatives, such as the #ChefOnTour program, allow individuals to connect with communities and create lasting impacts beyond their immediate field. (**Webb**)
13. In a world increasingly dominated by AI-driven communication, maintaining authenticity is key. While AI can save time, it often lacks the personal touch that fosters trust and meaningful relationships. (**Cho**)
14. Immersive web experiences are key to expanding consumer engagement, without relying on VR headsets. AI-driven tools like their Perception platform can revolutionize digital engagement. (**Fries**)
15. Quantum computing is poised to revolutionize industries by enabling faster processing of complex data, with applications ranging from healthcare to finance. (**Srivivagan**)
16. The capital markets are poised for revival as interest rates drop, with IPOs likely to pick up for private companies that have been waiting for the right conditions to go public. (**Norton**)
17. A fully integrated team–such as 4C Group’s across architecture, interior design, and construction to streamline the luxury home development process–ensures precise and cost-effective results. Collaboration between disciplines is key to excellence. (**Gasparik**)
18. Cybersecurity and system resilience are paramount in today’s digital world. Organizations must prioritize robust IT infrastructure to safeguard their operations and build trust with clients. (**Movassaghi**)
19. Sustainability and innovation can coexist in transportation. By embracing green technologies, like hydrogen-powered trains, the future of travel can be both efficient and environmentally responsible. (**Dominic**)
20. Meaningful culture change can happen in as little as six months, provided that leaders set the right tone and prioritize both business results and organizational culture from the outset. (**M. Samuel**)
21. Effective leadership is grounded in adaptability and empathy. By leading with understanding and flexibility, leaders can successfully guide teams through uncertainty and rapid change. (**Collins**)
22. Leveraging technology and AI to streamline logistics and operations isn’t just a competitive advantage—it’s essential for future growth. Automation in distribution and routing can drive significant gains in efficiency and customer satisfaction. (**Peck**)

TRANSFORM YOURSELF

By **Kamin Samuel**

Kamin Samuel is a pioneering consultant known for her expertise in transforming professionals' wealth mindsets and performance. As the first African American female helicopter pilot in the U.S. Navy, Kamin has broken barriers and continues to inspire others through Kamin Samuel Consulting, her very own coaching and consulting practice.

Kamin Samuel's keynote on *Transforming Yourself* introduced attendees to a holistic framework focused on **internal transformation** and **growth**. The first part of her talk emphasized the concept of **working "inside out"**—meaning that change begins within ourselves before it manifests in our external environment. She encouraged attendees to view their personal and professional lives through the lens of **positive psychology,** particularly using the Values in Action (VIA) assessment. This assessment, based on the work of Martin Seligman, a pioneer in positive psychology, highlights personal strengths and is a tool Kamin deeply values because of its practical application in understanding oneself. With over 33 million users, this particular assessment offers participants insight into their **innate strengths** and how to leverage them.

Kamin then drew attention to how **focusing on strengths, rather than weaknesses,** can create breakthroughs in personal and business development. She uses **the A-to-B model,** while encouraging participants to consider what transformation they wanted to achieve going forward and how to strive for more than just incremental improvement, going beyond small gains to **truly transformational results**. This concept aligns with her philosophy that small shifts may not lead to significant growth. She encouraged conference participants to think about what they want to create, urging them to consider if their goals are **simple enhancements** or **fundamental breakthroughs** that change their perspective entirely.

Kamin also introduced a consciousness model that visualizes the layers of life, from personal relationships to work and hobbies, all the way to a higher power or source of creativity and joy. By **rising above the "silos"** of individual areas of life, she suggested that participants can view their lives holistically, discovering connections and deeper meaning. This broader perspective is critical for personal transformation, as it helps people understand that their **goals and actions are interconnected**.

Kamin tied these frameworks back to personal responsibility and the importance of living consciously through one's strengths. She drew upon her personal experiences, including her background in the **U.S. Navy** as the **first African American female helicopter pilot**, to underscore the importance of strength and perseverance in both personal and professional contexts. Her focus on gratitude, honesty, and kindness as essential strengths suggests that the path to transformation is not just about achieving external success but also about aligning with one's core values and living from a place of authenticity. Kamin prompted IMPACT 5050 participants to reflect on their own strengths and how they can leverage these qualities to create breakthroughs. By aligning with personal values and rising above individual life silos, individuals can experience a holistic transformation that will impact both their professional achievements and personal fulfillment.

Further into Kamin Samuel's keynote, she delved deeper into the importance of **consciously applying personal strengths to overcome challenges** and **create breakthroughs.** She encouraged the participants to think critically about their top strengths and explore how they could be applied in various contexts—whether in their professional roles or personal lives. Kamin highlighted the concept of "**flow**", a state where individuals are fully immersed and performing at their peak, and suggested that operating from one's strengths often leads to this state of optimal performance.

She introduced an exercise asking participants to reflect on their VIA results, particularly focusing on how their top strengths showed up in their daily lives. For some, strengths like gratitude or kindness might be prominent, while for others, bravery or leadership might take center stage. Kamin emphasized that none of the strengths identified in the assessment should be viewed as weaknesses, even those that appeared lower on the list. Rather, they were simply "lesser-used" strengths that could be drawn upon when needed. She provided personal examples, such as how bravery was a key strength during her time in the military but had since shifted lower in her list as she adapted to new roles and environments.

Kamin shared her personal experience of using multiple strengths together to navigate difficult times. For example, when her father passed away, she relied on a combination of gratitude, learning, and bravery to get through the challenging period. This bundling of strengths, as she called it, allowed her to tap into her most essential qualities in times of stress or uncertainty. She encouraged the participants to think of their own strengths as tools they could bundle together to face complex situations.

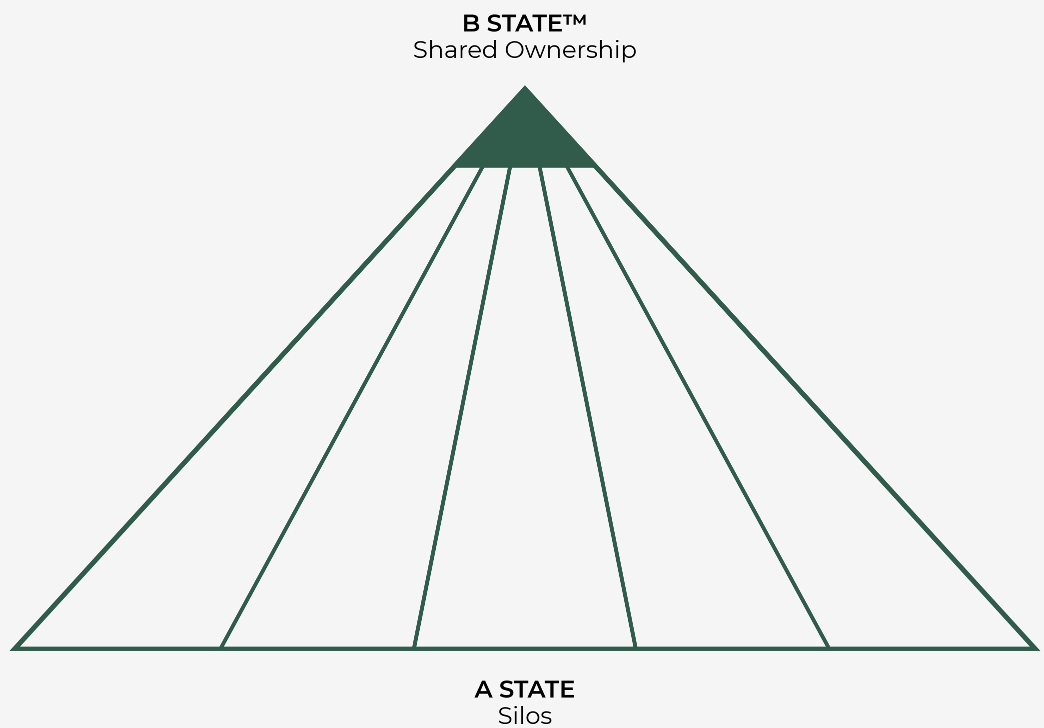
Kamin referenced Mark Samuel's **Consciousness Model** and explored how various levels of life—personal, professional, and spiritual—interact. By leveraging one's strengths in each area, individuals could build deeper connections and create more meaningful outcomes. She pointed out that those in leadership positions often had high scores in traits such as leadership, fairness, and honesty, and encouraged them to use these qualities to not only improve their business but to help lift others as well.

Kamin discussed the importance of self-awareness and adaptability, encouraging attendees to reflect on how their top strengths might evolve over time, just as hers had. She referenced her military career again, noting how strengths like bravery and perseverance had been critical during that phase of her life, but had since shifted as her focus turned to coaching and helping others. She pointed out that recognizing when to draw upon certain strengths and when to let others take the lead was a key part of personal development. This concept of adaptability, she suggested, was especially important for those in leadership roles, where circumstances and challenges constantly shift.

A central theme in this concluding portion of her talk was integration—the idea that all aspects of life, from work to personal relationships to spirituality, are interconnected. She urged participants to consider how their strengths could be applied holistically across different areas

KAMIN'S CONSCIOUSNESS MODEL

Kamin's consciousness model emphasizes the integration of self-awareness, presence, and intention in leadership and decision-making. It suggests that consciousness in leadership is not just about strategy but involves an ongoing reflection on how personal and organizational choices align with broader human and societal needs. Leaders should consider the ethical, emotional, and long-term impacts of their decisions.



of their lives. For example, someone with a top strength of kindness might focus on integrating that trait into their leadership style, making sure it shows up in business decisions, family dynamics, and even personal self-care. By weaving strengths through all areas of life, Samuel argued, individuals could live more authentically and experience greater satisfaction and balance.

Kamin also shared insights on how to handle lesser-used strengths. These, she explained, were not weaknesses but simply traits that were not as actively engaged in the current phase of life. However, when faced with particular challenges or new opportunities, these lesser-used strengths could be called upon and paired with core strengths. For example, if bravery was a lesser-used strength for someone, it could be consciously activated when facing a major life decision or difficult task. Kamin's focus was on the idea that strengths are dynamic and can be used flexibly, depending on the situation.

To close the session, Kamin brought the focus back to practical application. She asked participants to think about how they could immediately begin using their strengths more consciously. Whether it was through leading a team, managing a personal challenge, or simply interacting with others, she urged them to take tangible steps toward living from a place of strength. Samuel shared a personal anecdote about her work with clients, noting how she encourages them to use their top strengths as "superpowers" in everyday situations. She emphasized that transformation doesn't happen overnight, but by consistently applying strengths, individuals could begin to create meaningful changes in their lives.

As a final note, Kamin encouraged everyone to continue engaging with the Values in Action framework beyond the conference. She began by discussing how strengths can be used not just for personal growth but also as a tool to uplift others, particularly in leadership and team settings. Kamin also emphasized that true transformation happens when individuals use their strengths consciously and purposefully, helping not only themselves but also their families, teams, and communities. She invited them to retake the assessment periodically to track how their strengths evolve and to stay mindful of how they could better integrate those strengths into their personal and professional lives. Her speech left participants with a clear understanding of the power of self-awareness, the importance of leveraging strengths, and the potential for transformation that comes from aligning with one's core values.

This final part wrapped up the session with actionable takeaways, reinforcing the message that personal transformation is an ongoing process that requires conscious effort and reflection. By using their strengths mindfully, participants were empowered to lead with purpose and authenticity in all areas of their lives.

Kamin Samuel at the Jetty Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night One

CLEAN LEADERSHIP THAT SHINES

By **Bita Safari**

Bita Safari is the Founder and CEO of GiGO Clean Technology, a company committed to developing sustainable cleaning solutions. Her leadership in the green technology space has positioned GiGO Clean as a leader in the industry, driving positive change through sustainable business practices.

Founder of GiGO Clean Technology, Bita Safari, began her touching keynote by sharing a deeply personal story about her immigration experience, which shaped her current leadership philosophy. Raised in Iran during the Islamic Revolution and the eight-year Iran-Iraq war, she described the immense challenges she faced growing up. Safari recounted her journey to the U.S. in the early 1990s, focusing on a life-changing moment in Turkey when she applied for a visa to the United States with no money, no assets, and little support. Despite facing doubt and discouragement from others, she remained determined to pursue her dream.

Bita recalled standing in line at 3:00 a.m., surrounded by people with stacks of documents proving their financial stability, while she had nothing but her conviction. When called to the window, she candidly explained her situation to the visa officer, stating her aspirations to study at Sharif University of Technology, help people, build schools, and contribute to society. This moment of honesty and vulnerability led the visa officer to grant her entry into the United States.

"I WANTED TO GO TO THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE I WANTED TO HELP PEOPLE, BUILD SCHOOLS, DELIVER BOOKS, AND WEAR WHITE INSTEAD OF THE DARK COLORS THAT WOMEN IN IRAN WERE FORCED TO WEAR." – Bita Safari

Safari emphasized that this pivotal experience taught her the power of staying true to oneself and the importance of speaking from the heart. These lessons have become the foundation of her leadership style, rooted in integrity, hard work, and a commitment to serving others. She highlighted that, as leaders, setting the right values and staying committed to them is what drives success and allows businesses to thrive.

Safari's leadership philosophy is profoundly marked by years of resilience, honesty, and service to others. The values she shared with the visa officer—helping people, delivering opportunities, and making a positive impact—are the same values that guided her in her later life goal of founding GiGO Clean Technology. Throughout the highs and lows of her own story, she illustrated how personal experiences, no matter how challenging, can shape the way leaders approach their businesses and inspire those around them to grow.

Bita Safari would go on to expand on how the experience of securing her visa shaped her approach to leadership and business. She highlighted the key lesson she learned from that encounter: the importance of values-driven leadership. Safari shared that, when she started GiGO Clean Technology, the values she committed to 27 years earlier became the foundation of her business. These values were not just about achieving personal success, but about making a broader impact—helping employees, customers, and the environment thrive together.

Bita emphasized that integrity and authenticity were central to her leadership style. She explained that in both life and business, it is crucial to stand by your promises and lead with honesty. Safari recounted how she had promised the visa officer to live up to her potential and contribute to society—a promise she has carried forward in all aspects of her life. She drew a parallel between that moment and the core mission of GiGO Clean Technology, which focuses on environmental preservation and improving lives through innovative solutions. This connection reinforced her belief that strong leadership is about staying true to one's values, no matter the obstacles.

Moreover, Safari delved into the concept of values alignment within organizations. She stressed that when leaders set clear and meaningful values, they provide direction not only for themselves but for their entire team. According to Safari, leaders who are **transparent** about their values and **guide their decisions based on those values** are more likely to foster a positive, purpose-driven work environment. This approach, she noted, creates a **ripple effect**, inspiring employees to align with the company's mission and work towards common goals.

"GREAT LEADERS SHINE WHEN THEY SET CORRECT VALUES, LEAD THEIR COMPANIES WITH INTEGRITY, AND STAY TRUE TO THEMSELVES." – Bita Safari

Safari also touched upon the broader idea of **legacy**. She reminded the audience that leadership is not just about short-term gains or immediate success. Instead, it is about **building something that endures** and **positively affects future generations.** For Safari, her journey from a young woman seeking opportunity to a successful entrepreneur has been about creating a lasting impact through the values of honesty, perseverance, and service to others. She encouraged the audience to think about their own leadership journeys in terms of the legacy they want to leave behind, both in their personal lives and in their businesses.

Safari, in the heart of the moment, demonstrated how a values-based approach to leadership, forged through personal hardship, can drive both personal fulfillment and business success. She urged the audience to reflect on their own values and to ensure that they are leading with integrity, making decisions that align with their mission, and ultimately creating a legacy of positive impact.

Bita Safari turned her focus to the broader implications of values-driven leadership and how it can create a positive impact not only within organizations but also across industries and communities. Safari emphasized the need for leaders to create environments where values are central to decision-making and problem-solving. She noted that businesses, particularly in today's rapidly changing world, require leaders who not only focus on profits but also on sustainability, ethics, and the well-being of their teams and customers.

3 TAKEAWAYS FROM BITA'S CLEAN LEADERSHIP STYLE

1

RESILIENCE

Resilient leadership is built through perseverance in the face of adversity.

2

TRANSPARENCY

Be clear and open about your values with your team, while guiding and making decisions rooted in your principles.

3

LEGACY

All leaders must consider how their actions today shape the future impact of their work and communities

Bita revisited the core mission of her company, GiGO Clean Technology, as an example of how staying true to foundational values can lead to both innovation and success. Her company's focus on environmental sustainability and helping people live healthier lives is directly aligned with the values she committed to long ago. She illustrated that, when businesses prioritize doing the right thing—whether that's preserving the environment or improving the lives of their customers—they not only build trust with stakeholders but also create a lasting legacy.

Safari encouraged leaders to view their roles as stewards of positive change, whether they are leading a small team or a global enterprise. She spoke about how authentic leadership goes beyond day-to-day operations and requires a broader vision for making the world a better place. For her, this meant taking on the responsibility of mentoring and empowering future leaders, helping them to develop their own values-based leadership styles. She underscored the importance of leading by example, suggesting that employees are more likely to embody the company's values if they see those values reflected in the actions and decisions of their leaders.

Finally, Safari touched on the theme of resilience. She reminded the audience that, as leaders, they will undoubtedly face challenges and setbacks, much like she did in her journey to the United States and in founding GiGO Clean Technology. However, staying grounded in one's values during difficult times is what makes a true leader stand out. She argued that it is during moments of hardship that values become most crucial, as they provide the framework for making difficult decisions with integrity and courage.

"I NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO THANK OR EVEN SHAKE THE HAND OF THAT MAN WHO BELIEVED IN ME, BUT HIS HIGH STANDARDS HELPED SHAPE WHO I AM TODAY." – **Bita Safari**

Before thanking the audience, Bita Safari synthesized the key elements of her leadership philosophy, leaving the audience with a clear call to action: to lead with integrity, to remain resilient in the face of challenges, and to prioritize values in every decision they make. Through this approach, she demonstrated how leaders can create lasting and meaningful impact both within their organizations and beyond. In closing, Safari urged attendees to reflect on their personal journeys and to think about the legacy they wish to leave behind. She emphasized that success is not just about financial gains or professional achievements, but about creating positive, meaningful change in the world. Her parting message was one of empowerment, reminding leaders that by staying true to their values and committing to a higher purpose, they have the power to transform not only their businesses but also the lives of those they serve.

HIGH PERFORMANCE. DELIVERED.

By **Olivier Lemaignen**

Olivier Lemaignen is the founder of HPO Coach, where he applies his extensive experience in high-performance organizational coaching to help companies achieve peak operational efficiency and growth.

As the founder of HPO Coach, **Olivier Lemaignen** focused on the essential components of creating high-performance organizations and teams, starting with a humorous anecdote about his French roots and uncommon name to set the tone. He introduced his leadership philosophy by referencing lessons learned from his father, particularly the importance of surrounding oneself with people who are better at certain things—what Lemaignen called "**hiring giants**." This philosophy became a central theme in his talk, where he emphasized the critical role of **collaborative, high-performing teams** in driving organizational success.

Olivier framed high performance as not just about metrics and results but about cultivating an environment where **employees are empowered** and inspired to **bring their best ideas forward**. He noted that companies often focus solely on numbers and profits, but in his experience, it is the employees who drive sustainable success. He shared that when employees feel valued and are given the right resources and opportunities, they naturally deliver exceptional results, creating a cycle of engagement and innovation that benefits both the organization and its customers.

He spoke about the equation for success in high-performing companies, which involves prioritizing employees as much as customers. Olivier stressed that without a motivated and committed workforce, no amount of customer focus or competitive innovation would lead to long-term success. He discussed how emotional intelligence plays a key role in this process, citing research that showed companies with leaders and employees high in emotional intelligence outperformed their peers. He pointed out that employees with high emotional intelligence are more adaptable, work better in teams, and are often the driving force behind breakthrough innovations.

Lemaignen also touched on the concept of leadership courage, particularly in making difficult decisions that align with the company's broader goals. He framed leadership as an exercise in balancing the needs and ambitions of individuals with the collective success of the team and the organization. This form of leadership requires self-awareness and a willingness to put the success of the group above personal achievement, something he learned over his 22 years as a corporate leader.

In terms of hiring and building teams, Olivier emphasized the need to identify and nurture high-potential employees—those who not only have technical skills but also embody the values of the organization. He drew a clear line between traditional hierarchical leadership models and those that prioritize empowerment and support. In the latter, leaders act as enablers, helping employees do their best work and encouraging them to push boundaries, rather than simply enforcing rules from the top down.

Olivier had established a clear message for his audience: high performance isn't just about pushing for results but about fostering an environment where collaboration, emotional intelligence, and leadership courage intersect to produce sustainable success. His anecdotes and personal reflections added depth to the discussion, making it clear that his approach was grounded in both personal experience and research-based insights. He laid the foundation for understanding how high-performance organizations can be built from the inside out, with an emphasis on people-first leadership.

Olivier would proceed to dive deeper into practical strategies for implementing this approach. He moved from philosophical insights about leadership to more actionable strategies for building and maintaining high-performing organizations. Central to this section was the notion that high performance requires a systematic approach—leaders must intentionally create structures and cultures that support continuous improvement, innovation, and collaboration.

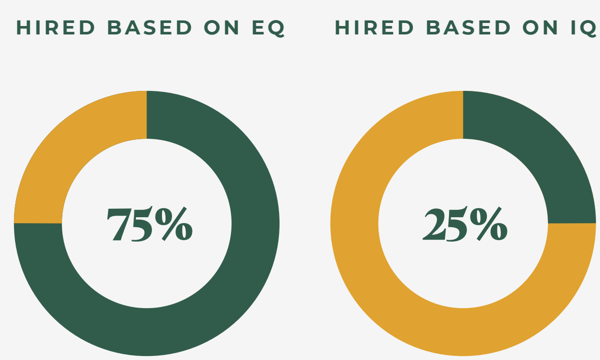
Olivier emphasized that data-driven decision-making is at the heart of any high-performing organization. He explained that metrics and results are essential, but they need to be connected to the right kind of actions. Rather than focusing solely on what the data shows, leaders must understand why certain metrics are important and use them as a tool to inspire action and change. He challenged the audience to not just track numbers but to ask, "What is this data telling us?" and "How can we turn this information into results?"

This approach, he noted, involves creating a feedback-rich environment where transparency and accountability drive improvement. Leaders must engage with data regularly and empower employees to understand how their contributions impact the company's broader objectives. Olivier mentioned that an effective leader doesn't just deliver orders but creates systems where team members feel comfortable sharing ideas, experimenting, and learning from both successes and failures.

Lemaignen also discussed the importance of trust in a high-performance culture. He argued that employees perform best when they are trusted and given the freedom to take ownership of their work. This trust, however, must be built on a foundation of clear expectations

WHAT TYPES OF EMPLOYEES ARE HR DEPARTMENTS HIRING TODAY?

According to **Olivier Lemaignen**, *"75% of senior leaders are more likely to hire individuals with* ***high emotional intelligence****, because it drives success. No one likes working with people who don't treat others well."*
The other twenty-five percent are hired by HR and employers based on IQ performance scores.



and accountability. Leaders, he said, need to provide their teams with both autonomy and the tools necessary to succeed. Autonomy, in this context, doesn't mean a lack of guidance but rather a leadership style that encourages employees to take initiative while aligning their efforts with the company's larger goals.

He provided specific strategies for creating such a culture, highlighting the importance of collaboration across departments and hierarchies. Lemaignen called this a shift from traditional leadership models, where information flows from the top down, to a distributed leadership approach where ideas and feedback flow freely throughout the organization. In this model, leaders act as facilitators rather than gatekeepers, ensuring that their teams have the resources, support, and space to innovate and excel.

A significant portion of his speech was dedicated to emotional intelligence (EQ) and how it influences high-performance teams. Olivier argued that while technical skills and intelligence are critical, they are not the most significant predictors of success in a team-oriented environment. Instead, he pointed out that empathy, self-awareness, and social skills—the core elements of emotional intelligence—are what enable individuals and teams to thrive. Leaders who cultivate emotional intelligence are better equipped to understand their team members' needs, foster strong relationships, and navigate conflicts productively.

Lemaignen backed up his points with the latest research, noting that 75% of high-performing leaders score high on emotional intelligence. This, he said, is why organizations that prioritize EQ tend to outperform their competitors. He encouraged leaders to assess their own emotional intelligence and to build teams that value empathy, collaboration, and open communication.

In wrapping up this section, Olivier reinforced the idea that high-performance cultures don't happen by accident. They require intentional effort, clear communication, and a focus on both people and data. He concluded by advising leaders to constantly seek feedback and be willing to adjust their strategies as needed, emphasizing that agility and adaptability are crucial for maintaining long-term success.

He also spoke about adaptability in leadership, encouraging leaders to remain flexible and open to change. In today's fast-paced business environment, he argued, sticking too rigidly to a single strategy can be a downfall. High-performing organizations are those that can pivot quickly and efficiently in response to new challenges, market shifts, or technological advances. Olivier emphasized the need for leaders to create a culture of experimentation where employees feel safe to try new approaches, take calculated risks, and learn from failures. He framed this adaptability as a key driver of long-term success.

Another crucial point in this section was the need for leaders to invest in their people. Olivier highlighted that high-performance teams are built on a foundation of continuous development and learning. He encouraged leaders to actively seek out opportunities to help their employees grow—whether through training programs, mentorship, or simply providing them with new challenges. He shared a personal anecdote about how his own career growth was supported by mentors who encouraged him to take on projects that pushed him outside his comfort zone. As a result, he developed not only technical skills but also a deeper understanding of leadership and team dynamics.

Olivier also emphasized the importance of creating a sense of purpose within the organization. He argued that high-performing teams are often motivated by more than just financial incentives or performance targets; they are driven by a shared vision and purpose. Leaders who can clearly articulate the "why" behind the company's goals and create alignment around that vision are more likely to inspire their teams to go above and beyond. He encouraged the audience to take the time to communicate their company's mission and values clearly, ensuring that every team member understands how their work contributes to the organization's broader objectives.

In his concluding remarks, Olivier left the audience with several practical tips for fostering a high-performance culture:

1. **FOCUS ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ): Leaders should prioritize building emotional intelligence in themselves and their teams, as it is a key predictor of long-term success.**
2. **ENCOURAGE FEEDBACK AND OPEN COMMUNICATION: Create a culture where feedback flows freely in all directions—up, down, and across teams. This helps foster innovation and ensures that issues are addressed early.**
3. **ALIGN METRICS WITH PURPOSE: While it's important to measure performance through data, leaders must ensure that those metrics align with the company's overall mission and purpose.**
4. **INVEST IN PEOPLE: Continuous development is key to maintaining a high-performance team. Leaders should focus on providing opportunities for growth and learning at every level of the organization.**
5. **CREATE A CULTURE OF TRUST: Trust is the foundation of a high-performance culture. Employees need to feel empowered to take ownership of their work, knowing that their leaders trust and support them.**

Olivier lastly stressed that high-performance leadership is not about being the smartest person in the room or micromanaging every detail. Instead, it's about creating an environment where people can excel, supporting them with the right resources, and giving them the freedom to innovate and grow. He concluded by encouraging leaders to see themselves as enablers of potential, helping their teams and organizations reach new heights by leveraging the strengths and talents of every individual.

Before departing, Olivier provided the audience with a comprehensive toolkit for building and sustaining high-performing teams, reinforcing the importance of emotional intelligence, adaptability, and a clear sense of purpose in modern leadership.

THE NEUROSCIENCE BEHIND LEADERSHIP

By **Jin Hyung Lee**

Jin Hyung Lee is the Founder of LVIS, where she leverages her pioneering research in neuroscience to develop innovative solutions for brain health. Her groundbreaking research has been instrumental in advancing knowledge of brain science and its applications in leadership and organizational behavior.

Jin Hyung Lee introduced herself at IMPACT 5050 while opening up on her journey from South Korea and arriving at Stanford University for her PhD. At Stanford, she became the founder of her breakthrough neuroscience startup LVIS and began by explaining her transition from electrical engineering into neuroscience. Jin spoke from personal strife and experience, sharing a compelling story about her grandmother's stroke, which left her disabled for 12 years. This life-altering event pushed Jin to shift her focus from electrical circuits to brain health, as she sought to understand the brain's complex functioning and address disorders such as stroke, Alzheimer's disease, and autism.

Drawing from her background in electrical engineering, Jin made an insightful analogy between the human brain and electrical circuits. Just as broken circuits can be repaired in electronics, she reasoned that brain disorders might be treatable if we better understand the brain's circuitry. This realization marked the beginning of her ambitious goal to apply her engineering skills to solve problems related to brain healthcare.

As Jin discussed the neuroscience of leadership, she referenced a memorable quote from Harry Potter, which resonated with her as she reflected on the concept of choices versus abilities. "It is not our abilities that show what we truly are, it is our choices." In leadership, she argued, it is not one's innate abilities but the choices they make that define who they are and how effective they can be. This idea, she suggested, aligns closely with how the brain operates in decision-making, where speed and a strong value system play a critical role in navigating complex choices. These choices would often manifest in the hiring of employees at LVIS or selecting candidates for certain tasks across her research teams.

Jin emphasized that leaders, like brains, need to function efficiently and make decisions quickly, especially in challenging situations. For her, a solid foundation in values such as excellence, integrity, positivity, and growth was essential not only in making decisions but also in selecting the right people to join her teams. By having a clear value system, leaders can approach problem-solving with greater clarity and purpose, much like how understanding brain function helps researchers address neurological disorders. Jin intertwined her personal story with her scientific mission, illustrating how her life experiences shaped her leadership style and her dedication to improving brain healthcare. She highlighted the importance of resilience, citing her own career decisions as examples of how to persevere in the face of obstacles.

With years of experience and a new innovation to share with her audience, Jin had set the stage for a deeper discussion on how neuroscience can inform leadership. Her focus on the brain's circuitry, decision-making, and the importance of values laid the groundwork for exploring how leaders can apply these principles to their own work and teams, fostering innovation and overcoming challenges.

Jin Hyung Lee then shifted focus from her personal journey to more technical insights, exploring the challenges and potential solutions in the field of brain healthcare. Jin highlighted the rapidly growing concerns around neurological disorders, including Alzheimer's disease, autism, and epilepsy, which have become increasingly prevalent. She noted that brain disorders are now the leading cause of disability worldwide, with the cost of care reaching over a trillion dollars annually in the U.S. alone. Despite advancements in technology and medical research, there has been little progress in actually curing these disorders, and the numbers continue to rise exponentially.

Jin's discussion underscored a key issue in modern brain healthcare: the limitations of current diagnostic and treatment methods. She explained that most evaluations of brain function are still analog and subjective, relying on basic tests and patient-reported symptoms rather than precise, data-driven tools. This has resulted in significant delays in diagnosis, suboptimal treatment plans, and high costs, especially as neurological disorders become more complex and widespread.

To address these challenges, Jin introduced the LVIS system—a revolutionary technology developed by her company to provide real-time, data-driven assessments of brain function. By using cutting-edge imaging and analysis techniques, LVIS creates a "digital twin" of the brain, allowing for more accurate diagnoses and personalized treatment plans. This system, which took over 15 years of research and development, combines neuroscience and engineering to offer a scalable solution for diagnosing and treating neurological disorders. Jin explained how this technology could reduce patient wait times and improve outcomes by offering faster, more precise insights into brain health.

"SPEED IS CRITICAL IN DECISION-MAKING, BUT WHAT REALLY ENABLES QUICK DECISIONS IS A STRONG VALUE SYSTEM ROOTED IN EXCELLENCE, INTEGRITY, AND POSITIVITY." – **Jin Hyung Lee**

Jin emphasized that one of the key innovations of the LVIS system is its ability to automate much of the diagnostic process, reducing the need for large teams of specialists and making advanced brain healthcare accessible in resource-limited settings. She shared how this solution is being deployed in major hospitals in South Korea, where it has significantly reduced patient wait times and streamlined the diagnostic process. Jin's vision is for LVIS to eventually be available worldwide, providing healthcare providers with the tools they need to tackle the growing burden of neurological disorders more efficiently.

Another important theme was the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration. Jin noted that solving complex problems like brain health requires expertise from multiple fields. She described her work at the intersection of neuroscience, electrical engineering, and clinical research, highlighting the importance of breaking down traditional academic and professional silos to achieve breakthroughs in healthcare. By working across these disciplines, Jin and her team were able to develop a solution that addresses the technical, medical, and practical challenges of diagnosing and treating brain disorders.

Jin reiterated that technology alone cannot solve the problem; it also requires a fundamental shift in how we approach brain healthcare. She advocated for a more integrated and scalable system, where technology like LVIS can be used to enhance the capabilities of healthcare providers and make brain health monitoring accessible to all. By reimagining the entire system—from diagnostics to treatment—Jin believes that the future of brain healthcare will be more efficient, equitable, and effective. She painted a vivid picture of the challenges facing brain healthcare and the groundbreaking potential of the LVIS system to revolutionize how neurological disorders are diagnosed and treated. Jin also emphasized the need for interdisciplinary collaboration and a holistic approach to healthcare, reinforcing her belief that technology can play a transformative role in solving some of the world's most pressing health issues.

"THE CURRENT HEALTHCARE SYSTEM IS FAILING TO ADDRESS THE GROWING RATES OF BRAIN DISORDERS LIKE ALZHEIMER'S AND AUTISM, BUT WITH ADVANCES IN BRAIN CIRCUIT MAPPING, WE CAN TRANSFORM DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT" – **Jin Hyung Lee**

Jin, having just shared the heart of her life's work and motivations, took a moment to touch upon the practical applications of her research and the future of brain healthcare. With the challenges and technological advancements in the earlier parts of her speech now having taken root, she turned to the real-world impact of the LVIS system and her company's mission to make brain healthcare more accessible and effective worldwide. She stressed the significance of scalability in solving global healthcare problems. Jin explained that one of the greatest challenges facing the healthcare system is the sheer volume of patients and the shortage of trained specialists capable of diagnosing and treating complex neurological disorders. The LVIS system, she argued, is designed to address this by automating diagnostic processes, allowing doctors to assess patients more efficiently. With artificial intelligence (AI) and advanced imaging technology at its core, LVIS reduces the need for manual, time-consuming tests, and helps medical professionals make more accurate diagnoses in real time.

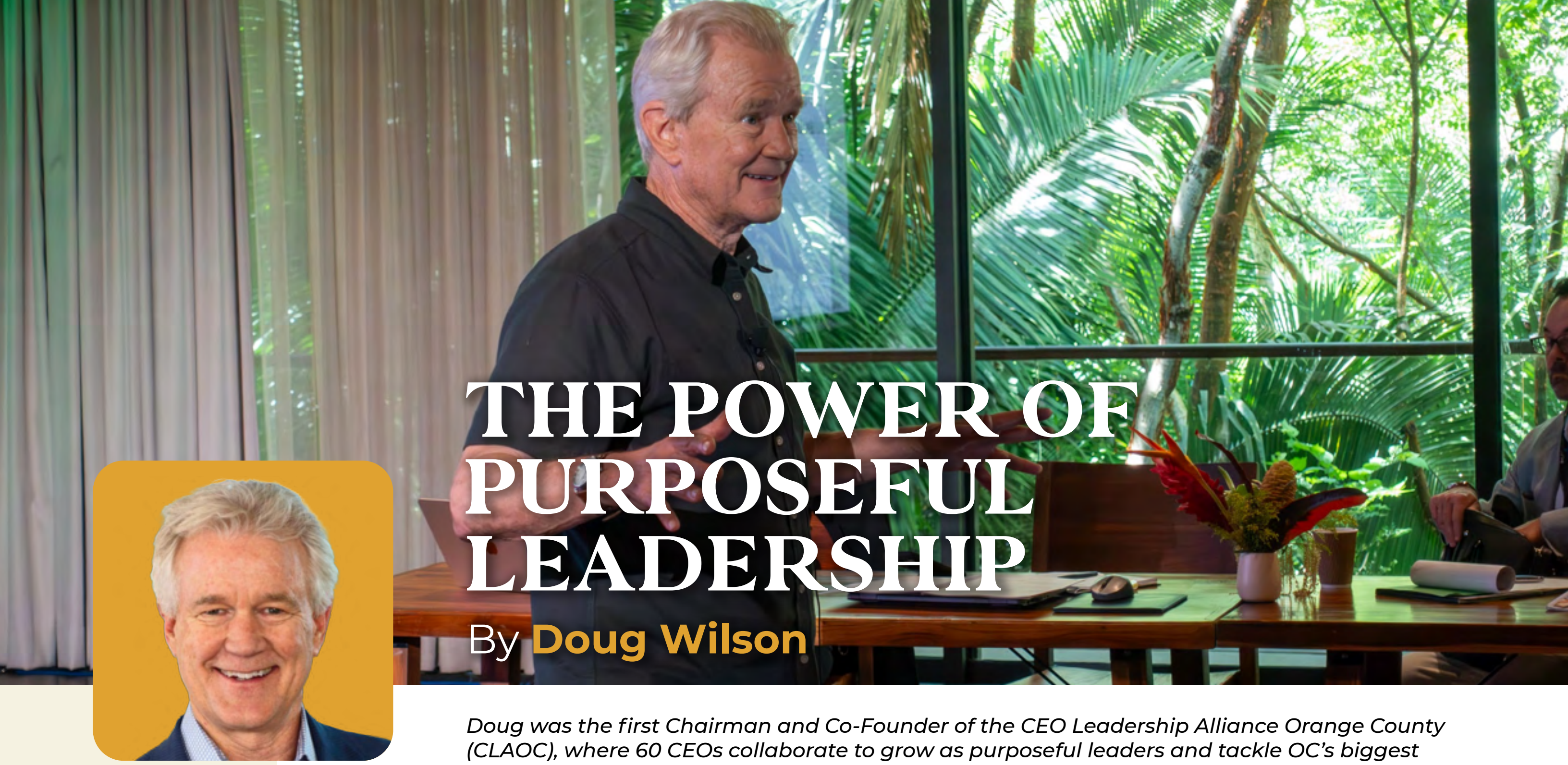
Kamin Samuel
with **Jin Hyung Lee**
IMPACT 5050
Night Two

Lee's vision for the future of brain healthcare was expansive. She imagined a world where brain health monitoring becomes as routine as checking your blood pressure or heart rate, allowing individuals to take control of their own neurological well-being. She explained how the LVIS technology could evolve to include consumer-facing products, such as wearable devices that continuously monitor brain health and provide actionable insights to users. This would allow people to detect potential issues early and make lifestyle adjustments to improve brain function—whether that means exercising, reducing stress, or altering their diet.

In her closing remarks, Jin Hyung Lee reflected on the broader implications of neuroscience for leadership and problem-solving. Just as the brain relies on multiple systems working in harmony to function properly, leaders, too, must integrate various approaches and disciplines to achieve success. She reminded the audience that solving big problems—whether in healthcare or in business—requires resilience, adaptability, and the courage to take risks. By focusing on long-term solutions rather than short-term fixes, leaders can create meaningful change in their organizations and communities. Lee not only highlighted the cutting-edge technology behind LVIS but also provided a forward-thinking vision for the future of brain healthcare. She challenged leaders to think holistically, integrate emerging technologies into their strategies, and always keep their core values at the center of their decision-making. Through this innovative and multidisciplinary approach, Lee believes that we can tackle some of the most pressing challenges in healthcare and beyond.

Jin Hyung Lee at the Jetty Beach Dinner Celebration
IMPACT 5050
Night One

"THERE IS NO ROYAL ROAD TO PROBLEM-SOLVING; I ALWAYS CHOOSE THE PATH OF GREATEST RESISTANCE BECAUSE IT LEADS TO THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION." – **Jin Hyung Lee**



THE POWER OF PURPOSEFUL LEADERSHIP

By **Doug Wilson**

Doug was the first Chairman and Co-Founder of the CEO Leadership Alliance Orange County (CLAOC), where 60 CEOs collaborate to grow as purposeful leaders and tackle OC's biggest challenges. His career has been dedicated to coaching CEOs to bring out the best in themselves and others.

At the forefront of **Doug Wilson**'s keynote, "The Power of Purposeful Leadership – BS or Truth," Doug introduced the concept of purpose-driven leadership by prompting the audience to reflect on their company's purpose. He began with an interactive exercise, asking attendees to share their company's purpose with a partner in ten words or less. This activity set the tone for his speech, emphasizing the importance of being able to clearly and concisely articulate the "reason for being" of an organization. Doug observed that few people could fully express their organization's purpose in such a short phrase, highlighting that defining and understanding purpose is one of the hardest tasks for a leader.

Wilson introduced the key idea that purpose must be integrated throughout the company's strategy and operations to be effective. Without this alignment, a purpose statement is merely a slogan with no tangible connection to performance or outcomes. He referenced the actionable insights of Peter Drucker, stating that achieving clarity on an organization's purpose requires "real work" and deep introspection. Wilson underscored that this clarity is essential for driving strategy and making decisions that align with the company's long-term goals.

Doug's exploration of purpose went beyond profit maximization. He defined purpose as something deeper—an organizational north star that not only motivates employees but also serves as a compass for leadership and decision-making. He reinforced this idea with real-world examples of companies he had worked with, such as Edwards Lifesciences and Chipotle. Edwards Lifesciences, for instance, embodied the purpose of "helping patients as our life's work, and life is now." This purpose was not just a statement but was embedded throughout the company's strategy and operations, particularly in its revolutionary approach to heart valve replacement surgery, which Doug would later describe in more detail.

The Chipotle example offered a glimpse of how purpose could extend beyond the company's products and into its workforce. Chipotle's purpose of "cultivating a better world" by focusing on sustainable agriculture and natural food was key to attracting passionate employees who aligned with the company's mission. Doug explained that purpose-driven cultures not only retain customers but also attract high-performing employees who are motivated by the organization's mission.

Wilson also highlighted how Aetna transformed its approach to health insurance with the purpose of “building better communities through healthier lives.” This purpose helped reframe the company’s role from merely managing health plans to actively promoting better health and wellness for its clients. However, Doug cautioned that when leadership loses sight of its purpose, as Aetna did after a major acquisition, the results can be detrimental to performance. Purpose, he argued, is not static; it must be continuously revisited and reinforced throughout an organization’s life cycle to ensure long-term success.

Wilson then laid the groundwork for exploring the four key elements of leadership: foresight, motivating, visioning, and partnering, all centered around a moral foundation. He connected these elements to purposeful leadership, making it clear that purpose is the foundation upon which leadership must build its strategy. Leaders must ensure that their purpose aligns with their business decisions and is understood by every level of the organization. This clarity of purpose becomes the lever that drives performance, trust, and engagement.

A deeper discussion unfolded on the role of purpose in organizational alignment, with the promise of illustrating how leaders can use purpose as a tool to foster collaboration, motivation, and strategic foresight. Wilson also drew upon the importance of purpose in defining the culture and strategy of an organization and how it could be a powerful driver of success if leaders were willing to put in the work to define and reinforce it.

Halfway through the keynote, Doug Wilson shifted focus to the practical integration of purpose into leadership and the potential consequences when a clear purpose is not upheld. Doug emphasized that having a purpose statement is not enough—purpose must be deeply embedded into the culture, strategy, and decision-making of the organization. Without this integration, he argued, purpose is merely a slogan that lacks real impact. Wilson noted that 85% of Fortune 500 companies are working on purpose statements, but the real challenge lies in making those statements relevant and actionable throughout the organization.

To illustrate this point, Doug provided an example from his own experience at Edwards Lifesciences, where the company’s purpose—”helping patients as our life’s work”—was not just a marketing phrase but a guiding principle embedded throughout the company. This clear purpose helped align employees around a common mission, driving innovation and commitment. Doug highlighted a particularly moving company tradition known as Patient Day,

Doug Wilson
with **Larry Armstrong**
IMPACT 5050
Night Three

where patients who had received Edwards heart valves would walk through a line of employees, meeting the individual who had sewn their heart valve. This tradition not only connected employees to the impact of their work but also reinforced the company's purpose in a tangible and emotional way.

The key takeaway from this notion was that purpose is not static—it must be continuously revisited, reinforced, and aligned with the organization's changing needs and market conditions. He emphasized that leadership is the lever that aligns the organization around its purpose and drives it forward. However, leaders must not only have a clear purpose—they must also have the foresight, motivation, and vision to adjust that purpose where necessary as market conditions change. Doug reiterated that purpose must be actively integrated into every aspect of the organization. This includes not only communicating the purpose but also aligning strategies, decisions, and measurements with it. When purpose is fully integrated, it becomes a powerful tool for driving performance, engagement, and innovation. However, when leaders fail to keep purpose at the forefront, the organization risks losing its way and underperforming.

"LEADERSHIP REQUIRES TAKING PURPOSE, AND BRINGING IT INTO THE EMOTIONAL CORE OF WHAT YOUR ORGANIZATION IS ABOUT. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE FOR ALL OF YOUR STAKEHOLDERS" – Doug Wilson

Doug Wilson then delved deeper into the four key elements of leadership – foresight, motivation, visioning, and partnering, all rooted in a strong moral foundation. He emphasized that these elements are not just abstract ideas but concrete pillars that leaders must cultivate and apply to align their organizations with their purpose. He used Bill Gates as an example of a leader who exhibited exceptional foresight, recognizing early on that software, not hardware, would dominate the future of technology. This foresight allowed Microsoft to become a global leader, with the purpose of putting "a PC on every desk." However, Doug explained that while Gates had the vision to lead Microsoft into a new era, Steve Ballmer, who succeeded Gates as CEO, lacked the same level of foresight. Under Ballmer, Microsoft failed to adapt to cloud computing and the rise of mobile technology, both of which became essential drivers of innovation and growth in the tech industry.

Doug described Ballmer's tenure as a cautionary tale of leadership that lacked the flexibility to evolve purpose in response to changing market dynamics. Despite Ballmer's strengths as a motivator and cheerleader for the company, his inability to recognize and act on technological shifts resulted in missed opportunities for Microsoft. He highlighted that, under Ballmer, Microsoft's average return on investment (ROI) was a mere 3%, a significant underperformance considering the company's dominant position in the 1990s.

The turning point for Microsoft, Doug noted, came with the appointment of Satya Nadella as CEO in 2014. He praised Nadella for revamping Microsoft's purpose to "empower every individual and every organization on the planet to achieve more." This new purpose statement was a bold shift that reflected Microsoft's commitment to cloud computing, artificial intelligence, and cross-disciplinary collaboration, areas that had been neglected under Ballmer's leadership. Nadella's focus on learning, humility, and collaboration fostered a culture of innovation that allowed Microsoft to reclaim its position as one of the most valuable companies in the world.

Doug used this transformation at Microsoft to underscore the importance of foresight in leadership. He explained that effective leaders must not only define a clear purpose but also have the foresight to anticipate market trends, embrace new technologies, and pivot when necessary. Foresight, according to Doug, is about being able to look ahead and see the potential challenges and opportunities that lie on the horizon, while ensuring that the organization's purpose remains relevant and aligned with the future.

Beyond foresight, Doug explored the other three elements of leadership—motivation, visioning, and partnering—and how they contribute to organizational success. Motivation is about inspiring employees to align their personal goals with the organization's purpose, creating a sense of ownership and engagement. He stressed that purpose-driven leaders are able to motivate their teams by connecting their day-to-day work with the larger mission of the company. He cited Larry Fink of BlackRock as an example of a leader who excels at motivating employees through a clear, purpose-driven strategy. BlackRock's focus on sustainable investing has not only driven financial success but also attracted employees who are passionate about making a positive impact on the world.

Visioning is closely tied to foresight but goes a step further by articulating a long-term vision for the organization. Doug emphasized that leaders must have the ability to craft and communicate a compelling vision that excites and inspires stakeholders. This vision should be a natural extension of the organization's purpose, providing a roadmap for the future. He highlighted that leaders like Satya Nadella and Brian Niccol of Chipotle were able to transform their companies by developing visionary strategies that aligned with their purpose and drove sustained growth.

Finally, Wilson explained that no leader can succeed in isolation; collaboration and partnerships are essential for driving innovation and achieving long-term success. He cited the example of Mike Mussallem, the CEO of Edwards Lifesciences, who built partnerships across the healthcare industry to revolutionize heart valve replacement surgery. Mussallem's ability to collaborate with other healthcare leaders and surgeons allowed Edwards Lifesciences to develop life-saving technologies that transformed the field of cardiovascular care. The company's purpose—"helping patients as our life's work"—was embodied as an example in their annual Patient Day, where patients who had received life-saving heart valves walked down a line of cheering employees. This tradition not only reinforced Edwards' purpose but also demonstrated the company's moral commitment to improving lives, beyond just selling a product.

Wilson delved into the concept of moral foundation by illustrating how purpose must be guided by a strong ethical framework that leaders and organizations adhere to, even when facing challenges. He discussed how, in his role as Chairman of the CEO Leadership Alliance of Orange County (CLAOC), the organization's purpose—to build a thriving Orange County for all—was not just about economic growth but also about ensuring that no one is left behind. This emphasis on inclusivity and shared prosperity highlighted the moral dimension of leadership, where decisions are made not only for profit but also with a sense of responsibility toward the wider community. He highlighted the need for leaders to embed moral principles into their companies' decision-making processes. He explained that a clear and purpose-driven moral compass enables leaders to navigate difficult choices, particularly when there are trade-offs between short-term gains and long-term sustainability. By grounding their purpose in moral integrity, leaders can inspire greater trust, loyalty, and commitment from their employees, customers, and stakeholders. This trust, he argued, is a vital component of building a high-performance culture.

Doug also returned to the importance of mentorship and giving back, a theme he had touched on earlier in his speech. He stressed that great leaders mentor others and help them develop their own sense of purpose. He shared a personal story of how a mentor had shaped his own leadership journey, helping him realign his priorities and stay true to his values during difficult times. Doug encouraged the audience to think about their own leadership legacy and how they could mentor the next generation of leaders to carry forward their purpose-driven vision.

In addition to mentorship, Doug emphasized the role of storytelling in leadership. He explained that storytelling is one of the most powerful ways to communicate purpose and create emotional connections with employees and stakeholders. Through stories, leaders can convey the deeper meaning behind their organization's work and inspire others to align their efforts with the company's mission. Doug shared that some of the most successful leaders he had worked with were master storytellers who used narratives to build a sense of shared purpose and drive collective action.

As Doug wrapped up his keynote, he left the audience with a series of actionable takeaways for integrating purpose into their own leadership:

1. **CLARIFY YOUR PURPOSE: Ensure that your organization's purpose is clearly defined, understood by all, and aligned with your business strategy.**
2. **REINFORCE PURPOSE REGULARLY: Talk about your purpose often and use it to guide decision-making, especially during times of uncertainty or change.**
3. **ALIGN PURPOSE WITH VALUES: Ensure that your purpose is rooted in a strong moral foundation that reflects the values of your leadership and your organization.**
4. **MEASURE PURPOSE-DRIVEN PERFORMANCE: Develop metrics to assess how well your organization is living up to its purpose, and use these insights to drive continuous improvement.**
5. **MENTOR OTHERS: Help others discover their own sense of purpose and guide them in their leadership development.**
6. **TELL STORIES THAT INSPIRE: Use storytelling to communicate the deeper meaning behind your organization's work and to motivate your team.**

THE ORANGE COUNTY REAL ESTATE FORECAST

By **Grant Keene**

Grant Keene leads WJK Development Co. as President, where he focuses on innovative development projects and strategic growth in the real estate industry. Keene's visionary approach has consistently delivered successful and sustainable developments.

At the introduction of Grant Keene's keynote on The OC Real Estate Forecast, Keene opened with a light introduction about his personal background, sharing details about his family life and his roots in South Orange County. This personal touch, including a mention of his five children and wife Vanessa, set a relatable tone and demonstrated his connection to the local community. Grant noted his excitement about the activities planned for the conference, further emphasizing his approachable demeanor before transitioning into the professional aspects of his talk.

Keene then moved into discussing his tenure in the real estate industry, where he has been in business for over a decade, primarily focusing on multi-family units and large-scale projects. He noted the scale of his company's current developments, including 90 million in ongoing projects and a new development of 22 townhomes. This quickly established his credibility in the room as someone with deep experience in the Southern California real estate market. By outlining his extensive involvement in real estate, Keene set the stage for a more technical deep dive into market trends and development strategies.

Grant dove into an analysis of the real estate market trends, focusing on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted demand and pricing, particularly in Orange County, California. Keene noted that, while many in the industry feared that rising interest rates would dampen the real estate market, the opposite has occurred. The post-COVID real estate landscape has seen a persistent increase in demand, driving prices upward despite higher borrowing costs.

Keene attributed this resilience in the market to basic supply-and-demand economics. In areas like Orange County, there is a significant barrier to entry for new developments, including limited available land and strict zoning regulations. These barriers have kept housing supply low, even as demand remains strong. Keene highlighted that homeowners with low-interest mortgages are reluctant to sell their homes and take on new, higher-rate loans, further constraining the supply of homes on the market. This reluctance to sell, coupled with limited new construction, has resulted in price stability or even continued price growth in many parts of Southern California.

Next, Keene laid out the steps involved in the real estate development process:

1. **IDENTIFYING THE PRODUCT OR PROJECT:** Keene stressed the importance of finding where there is a need in the market, whether it be new housing or specific types of units like townhomes.
2. **FINDING THE PROJECT LOCATION:** Relationships with brokers and landowners are key in identifying viable sites for development.
3. **CONSULTING WITH ARCHITECTS:** After securing land, developers work with architects to conduct feasibility studies to determine the best use of the land and the number of units that can be developed.
4. **UNDERWRITING THE PROJECT:** This involves assessing the financial viability of the project based on architectural findings.
5. **SECURING CAPITAL:** Keene spoke about building relationships with high-net-worth families, private equity funds, and banks to obtain financing.
6. **CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT:** While Keene's company manages the overall project, they contract out the actual construction work to third parties.
7. **DISPOSITION AND SALE OF THE UNITS:** Once built, the units are sold or leased, completing the real estate development cycle.

In sharing this process, Grant provided a comprehensive overview of what goes into real estate development beyond what is typically understood by those outside the industry. He also highlighted the importance of relationships and market understanding in identifying and successfully executing large-scale projects, setting the foundation for the detailed analysis of market trends that would follow.

Keene's market analysis also drew attention to the year-over-year sales data, which shows that sales have continued to increase despite economic headwinds. He discussed how the median sales prices for homes, which had dropped significantly during the 2007–2008 recession, have now recovered to all-time highs, with a 175% increase since the pre-recession period. This data underscored the robust recovery of the housing market in Southern California, driven by both high demand and the limited supply of available homes.

He also discussed the decline in permit starts for new housing developments, particularly in the multifamily housing sector. This decline is a direct result of the rising costs of construction, which have made it more difficult for developers to obtain financing. As labor and material costs have soared in recent years, developers have faced greater challenges in launching new projects. However, Keene shared that he is beginning to see a shift: subcontractors who were previously in high demand are now returning to developers, offering more competitive pricing as the market cools slightly. This shift, he argued, could eventually lead to a drop in construction costs, which would be a net positive for developers like himself.

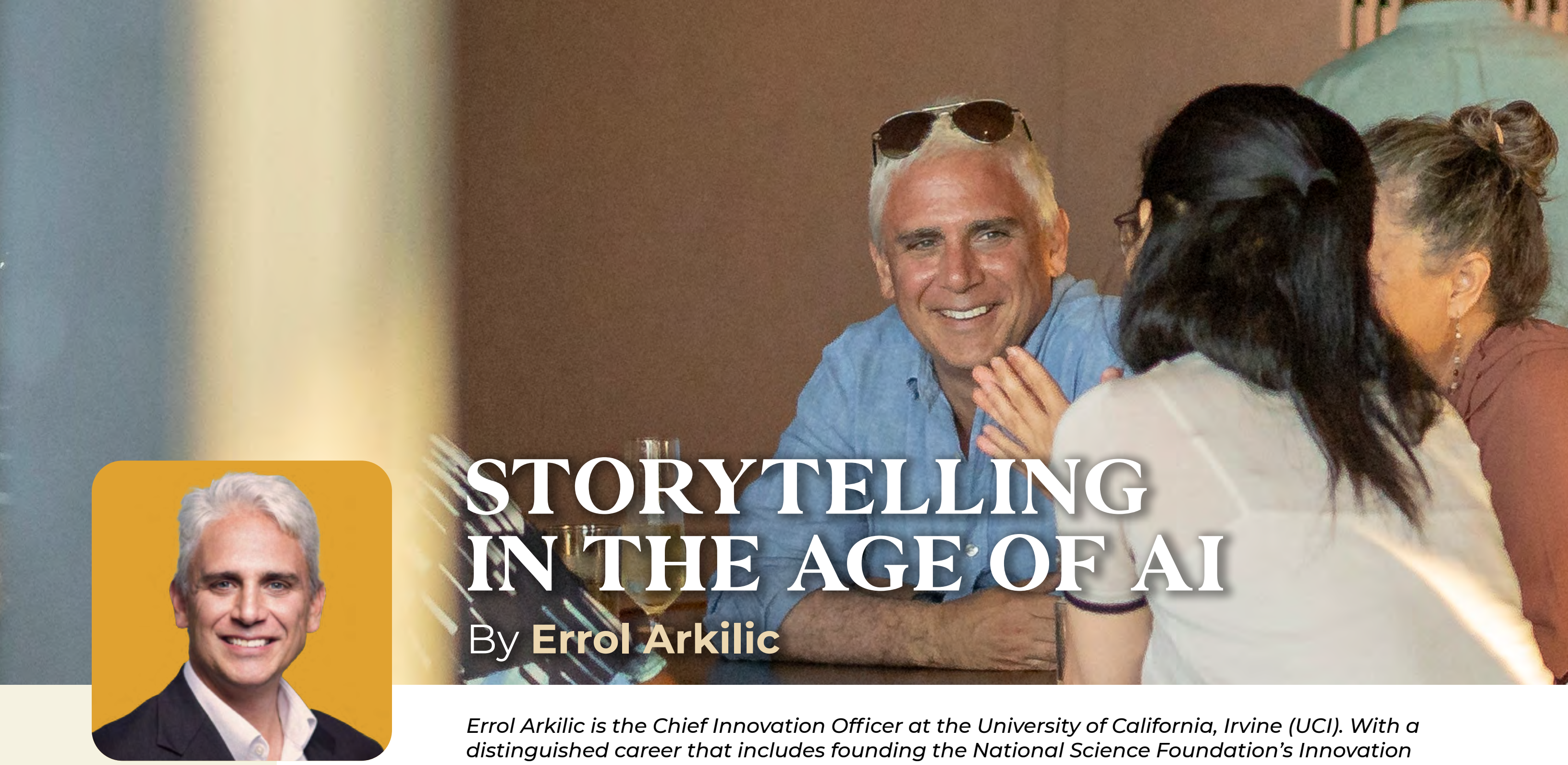
Keene pointed out that these barriers to entry make the Orange County market an attractive place for developers who are able to overcome them, as the demand for housing in the area far outpaces the supply. The constrained supply, combined with strong demand, has led to consistent price increases over time. Keene shared his own experience, noting that the steady price appreciation in the region has often "saved" his projects when market conditions have otherwise been challenging. He emphasized the importance of pricing strategically, ensuring that projects are profitable, even when faced with the complexities and costs of building in Orange County.

As part of his forecast, Keene touched on the ongoing shift in the construction market, particularly in relation to subcontractors. For several years, builders like Keene were forced to compete for subcontractors, driving labor costs up and making it difficult to stay within budget. However, Keene noted that, as the market begins to cool, subcontractors are now returning to developers, offering more competitive pricing in an effort to secure work. This shift, he explained, will likely result in lower construction costs over the next few years, which will benefit developers and help mitigate some of the challenges caused by rising interest rates and material costs.

In his final takeaways for the audience, Keene's forecast for the real estate market in Orange County remained optimistic. He reiterated that, despite the obstacles posed by financing difficulties and rising costs, the long-term fundamentals of the market remain strong due to the limited supply of available land, the demand for housing, and the resilience of the local economy. For developers who are able to navigate these challenges, there are significant opportunities for growth and profitability. Keene encouraged the audience to consider Orange County's unique market dynamics when making investment decisions and to stay informed about emerging trends in the real estate industry.

Grant Keene, with his array of actionable insights and decades of unique professional experience in Southern California real estate, left the audience with a clear understanding of how market conditions in Orange County differ from other regions and why high barriers to entry can be an advantage for developers who are prepared to take on the complexities of building in such a competitive environment. His message was one of cautious optimism, grounded in data and real-world experience, providing valuable insights for anyone involved in real estate investment and development.

Grant Keene at Canalan Beach Club Dinner IMPACT 5050 Night Three



STORYTELLING IN THE AGE OF AI

By **Errol Arkilic**

Errol Arkilic is the Chief Innovation Officer at the University of California, Irvine (UCI). With a distinguished career that includes founding the National Science Foundation's Innovation Corps, Errol is a leading figure in innovation and entrepreneurship.

Errol Arkilic is the Chief Innovation Officer at the University of California, Irvine. To kick off his talk on the role of research institutions in the age of AI, Errol began by emphasizing the power of storytelling as a tool that shapes society, cultures, and work environments. He explained how stories have long been the glue that holds communities together, fostering shared values and a common identity. According to Errol, storytelling is not just about entertainment or passing down traditions—it is a crucial means of building unity in a world that is increasingly divided. He introduced the concept that the ability to tell stories on a massive scale is becoming a strategic necessity in today's information-driven world.

At the heart of Errol's keynote was *NarrA.I.tive*, a cutting-edge technology developed by UCI, designed to use generative AI and large language models (LLMs) to tell stories at scale. This platform aims to redefine the storytelling experience, making it more interactive, immersive, and accessible. Errol discussed how The Story Studio@UCI has become a hybrid hub that focuses on emerging technologies, blending AI and extended reality (XR) to create new dimensions for storytelling. In this space, UCI is exploring how the future of narratives could integrate AI in ways that resonate deeply with human emotion, memory, and culture.

Errol made a bold statement about the war on information and stories, emphasizing that if we don't innovate and develop technologies to shape our own stories, other cultures, including adversarial ones, could dominate the narrative space. This, he warned, could alter the legacy of communities and reshape cultural heritage in ways that might no longer reflect the values of those communities. By developing tools like *NarrA.I.tive*, Errol believes that UCI can contribute to empowering storytellers and communities to take control of their own narratives, ensuring that their stories remain relevant and authentic in the digital age.

Errol took a moment to touch upon the three key deliverables that will help advance UCI's storytelling initiative: tools, people, and stories. First, he elaborated on the tools being developed to help people tell their stories, highlighting that AI companions can serve as co-creators, collaborators, and assistants in storytelling, making it possible to scale up the creative process without losing the personal touch. These AI tools, he argued, are not replacements for human creativity but enhancers that allow storytellers to tap into deeper emotional experiences and diverse perspectives.

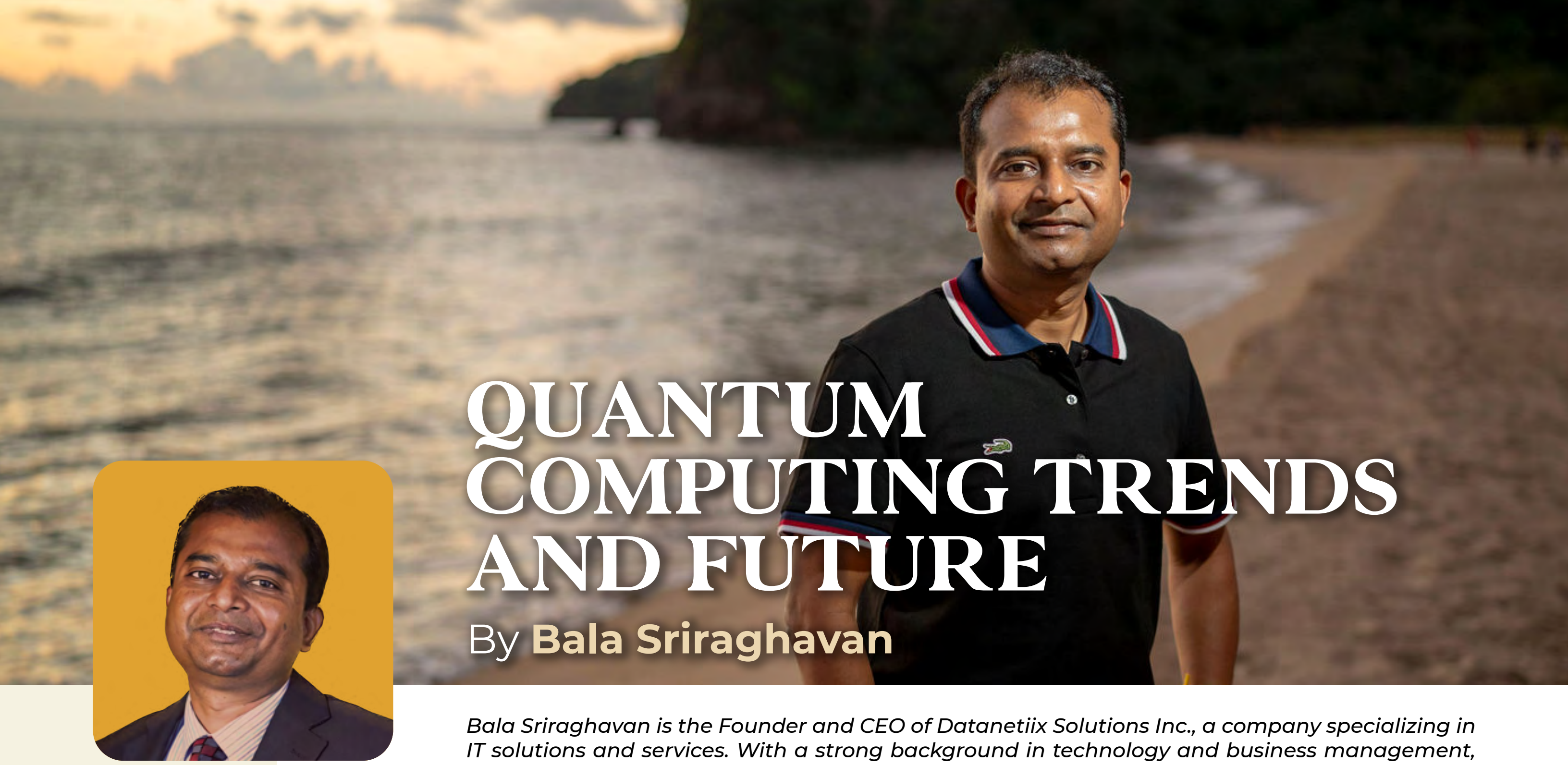
Errol turned his focus on the irreplaceable value of people, underscoring the importance of educating the next generation of storytellers and empowering them to embrace new technologies. He announced UCI's upcoming Narrative AI Minor, which will allow students to explore the transformative power of AIs, GPTs, LLMs, and XR technologies. The program's goal is to equip students with the skills needed to tackle some of the world's most pressing challenges using AI-driven storytelling. By giving students access to these technologies, UCI aims to shape the future of storytelling by creating a pipeline of innovative AI storytellers who can drive cultural and social impact.

Errol lastly introduced several storytelling projects. He described VirtualVenue, a groundbreaking project that aims to combine AI and XR to redefine the boundaries of live performance and education. This project is a collaboration with a large theatrical company, and its goal is to use immersive technology to create emotional connections between performers and audiences. He also announced the *NarrA.I.tive AI Story Festival*, set to launch in 2025, which will bring together a network of diverse creators to showcase their work at the intersection of human creativity and AI. The festival will offer workshops, panels, and hands-on experiences to foster collaboration and innovation.

As he began to wrap up his keynote, Errol highlighted the potential of AI storytelling to address global challenges and reshape the future of entertainment, education, and culture. One of the projects that exemplifies this vision is *Earth 3.0*, an episodic television show created through a combination of AI and human collaboration. *Earth 3.0* aims to tell stories that promote positive change, reflecting the values and goals of UCI's storytelling mission. The project showcases how AI tools can help humans create compelling narratives that address complex social, environmental, and technological issues.

Errol's unique talk on the role of research institutions in the age of AI reached a beautiful fever pitch as he envisioned a world where humanity and technology converge to bring people and stories together for the betterment of society. He reinforced the idea that *NarrA.I.tive* is not just a platform for entertainment but a tool for cultural preservation, education, and empowerment. By creating stories that connect people and highlight shared values, UCI is striving to use AI-driven storytelling to promote unity, resilience, and understanding in an increasingly fractured world. Errol left the audience with a message of hope, urging them to embrace the future of AI-powered storytelling and to use it as a means of fostering human connection in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

Errol Arkilic at Carao Dinner
IMPACT 5050
Night Two



QUANTUM COMPUTING TRENDS AND FUTURE

By **Bala Sriraghavan**

Bala Sriraghavan is the Founder and CEO of Datanetiix Solutions Inc., a company specializing in IT solutions and services. With a strong background in technology and business management, Bala has led Datanetiix to become a key player in the IT industry

Bala Sriraghavan's keynote on Quantum Computing Trends and Future began with Bala reflecting on his personal journey, from studying computer engineering in India to his eventual immigration to the US in 1983. He expressed with the audience how fortunate he felt to start his own company, one that reflects his vision to unlock unprecedented potential across various industries. Bala emphasized how his passion for technology led him to work on early prototypes for NASA using Macromedia Flash to build interactive applications for emerging tech, discrete developments which were eventually implemented on the International Space Station.

Bala then transitioned into how his company Datanetiix Technologies pivoted to mobile apps during the smartphone boom, which helped them expand their reach across industries like e-learning. In 2013, he completed his MBA at Pepperdine University, further shaping his business acumen and guiding Datanetiix's growth into a one-stop solution provider for enterprise technology software services. His company now offers services like AI-powered custom mobile apps, RPA (Robotic Process Automation), cloud services, and infrastructure management using platforms like AWS, Azure, and Microsoft Dynamics 365. Bala's emphasis on visualization as a best practice in growing the tech industry showcased his commitment to combining creative vision with technological solutions.

Pivoting to his main topic, Bala explained that the era of quantum computing is upon us, a time where the boundaries of possibility are constantly being redefined. He explained that traditional computing is based on bits, which function like a light switch, either on (1) or off (0). In contrast, quantum computing uses qubits, which, thanks to the concept of superposition, can exist as both 0 and 1 simultaneously. This opens up unprecedented possibilities for processing complex data, making calculations that would take a traditional computer 10,000 years solvable by a quantum computer like Google's Sycamore in just 200 seconds.

Bala went on to outline the applications of quantum computing, particularly in areas like healthcare, where genetic secrets can be unlocked in seconds, and finance, where real-time optimization of portfolios and precise market predictions can revolutionize the field. He delved into the practical applications of quantum computing and its profound impact across different industries. One of the most striking points Bala made was the application of quantum computing in healthcare, where he highlighted how genetic sequencing and complex medical calculations that would take traditional computers years to process could be completed in mere seconds with quantum systems. This advancement will allow for rapid breakthroughs in drug discovery, personalized medicine, and even predictive analytics for disease prevention.

In finance, quantum computing is positioned to revolutionize portfolio management by enabling real-time optimization of investment portfolios and market predictions with an accuracy that was previously unattainable. Quantum systems can process enormous datasets at unprecedented speeds, helping financial institutions better manage risk and identify emerging market trends before they become apparent to competitors. Bala emphasized that these real-time capabilities would transform how financial models are created and executed.

Another significant area of transformation is in Artificial Intelligence and machine learning. With quantum computing, AI algorithms will be able to process far more data in a shorter time span, which would lead to smarter, faster, and more adaptable AI systems. These developments could fundamentally change industries like manufacturing, transportation, and supply chain management, where optimized processes will lead to more efficient systems and reduced costs.

Bala also introduced the concept of holographic technology powered by quantum computing, explaining that soon we may be able to communicate with lifelike holograms, capable of processing information at speeds that surpass human capabilities. In the near future, this emerging technology, spearheaded by the advanced capability quantum processing, could allow individuals to interact with lifelike holograms that possess the cognitive and processing power of quantum machines. This will impact not just communication but also education, telemedicine, and virtual collaboration in ways we can only begin to imagine today.

Bala Sriraghavan
at Canalan Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night Three

In terms of corporate adoption, Bala discussed the current state of quantum computing in large organizations. Companies like IBM and Google have already begun building quantum systems, and while these systems are still in their early stages, the potential is undeniable. New staggering differences in speed and capability – such as from Google's Sycamore project – signals the dawn of a new era in computing power, which businesses are now racing to adopt.

Bala turned his focus toward the future challenges and next steps for the industry and businesses in integrating quantum computing into their operations. Bala underscored the significant hurdles that still need to be addressed for quantum computing to become mainstream and fully operational across industries.

Bala also touched on the importance of interoperability between classical computing systems and quantum computers. While quantum computing promises to revolutionize many fields, it will not entirely replace classical systems. Instead, businesses will need hybrid computing environments where quantum systems work alongside classical computers. This hybrid approach will enable organizations to harness the power of quantum computing for complex data processing while relying on classical systems for everyday operations.

Another challenge Bala highlighted is the regulatory environment. Quantum computing, with its vast capabilities, raises concerns about data security and ethical implications. As these systems become more powerful, they could potentially crack encryption methods that protect sensitive information today. Governments and corporations will need to establish new security protocols and frameworks to protect against the misuse of quantum technology. Bala encouraged the development of quantum-safe encryption standards and collaboration between public and private sectors to ensure that these technologies are deployed responsibly.

Finally, Bala concluded his speech with a look at the future opportunities quantum computing presents. He described a world where quantum computing would disrupt industries, from finance and medicine to artificial intelligence and logistics. The ability to solve complex optimization problems in seconds could lead to breakthroughs in drug discovery, climate modeling, and cryptography. Businesses that embrace these advancements early will be able to outpace their competitors and lead their industries into the next era of technological innovation.

"WELCOME TO THE ERA OF QUANTUM COMPUTING, WHERE THE BOUNDARIES OF WHAT'S POSSIBLE ARE BEING REDEFINED."

– Bala Sriraghavan

While wrapping up his presentation, Bala left his audience with a profound call to action, encouraging organizations to start exploring quantum technologies now, while also preparing for the inevitable integration of quantum systems into their workflows. He emphasized that while challenges remain, the potential of quantum computing is too significant to ignore, and businesses that position themselves for the future will reap the rewards of being early adopters in this transformative space.

TECHNOLOGY REDUNDANCY AND CYBERSECURITY

By **Arman Movassaghi**

Arman Movassaghi serves as the VP of Operations at Delarman Technologies. He plays a pivotal role in overseeing operational efficiency and driving technological innovation within the company founded by his father, Safa Movassaghi.

In his keynote on **Technology Redundancy and Cybersecurity**, Arman Movassaghi introduced the audience to **Delarman Technologies**, a family business founded by his father, Safa Movassaghi, more than three decades ago. Arman, as the Vice President of Delarman, emphasized their goal of providing enterprise-level IT services with a primary focus on cybersecurity and system redundancy. The company's approach is designed to ensure that technology becomes an asset rather than a liability, providing businesses with robust protection from various threats while improving operational efficiency.

Arman began by reflecting on the impact of recent global technological failures, such as major system crashes that paralyzed industries worldwide, to underscore the importance of redundancy in IT infrastructure. He used the example of massive system breakdowns caused by network failures to illustrate how the lack of proper redundancy can lead to significant operational disruptions, ultimately resulting in financial losses. Arman stressed that Delarman's mission is to prevent such issues by diving deep into the processes of their clients and building redundancies not only in hardware and data storage but also in network systems, cloud services, and software environments.

The key philosophy at Delarman is to create redundancy in every aspect of the business, ensuring that systems continue to function smoothly even during unexpected breakdowns or security breaches. Arman explained that cybersecurity is no longer just about preventing viruses or malware but encompasses comprehensive protection against modern-day threats, including hackers and ransomware. In this regard, he pointed out the increasing vulnerability of non-IT personnel in organizations. Hackers, he noted, no longer target IT professionals as their systems are heavily protected, but rather focus on business employees who might unintentionally grant access to sensitive systems.

As Vice President of Delarman Technologies, Movassaghi highlighted the importance of education and awareness in cybersecurity. Delarman places a strong emphasis on educating their clients about the nature of modern threats and training staff to avoid falling victim to phishing or hacking attempts. His remarks focused on ensuring that businesses remain secure, not just through IT solutions but by also addressing the human element of cybersecurity, which he explained is often the weakest link in any organization.

Arman went on to describe the value Delarman brings to its clients by offering tailor-made solutions that align with the specific needs of each business. He provided an overview of Delarman's history and how the company evolved over the years to serve a wide range of industries, from hospitality to enterprise-level businesses. He also shared insights into his personal experience of stepping into the role of Vice President five years ago, noting that the journey has been exciting and full of learning opportunities as he worked to enhance the company's offerings and expand its reach.

Among the lush rainforests of Nayarit, he had set the stage for a detailed discussion with IMPACT attendees on how Delarman integrates redundancy and cybersecurity into its clients' systems. The company's philosophy, which Arman attributes to his father, revolves around keeping solutions simple and efficient—a principle encapsulated in the phrase "Keep It Simple, Stupid" (KISS).

Arman then delved deeper into Delarman Technologies' approach to providing comprehensive IT solutions. He expanded on the importance of redundancy in ensuring the smooth operation of business processes, especially in times of system failures or cybersecurity threats. Arman introduced the concept of redundancy in all key areas, such as hardware, network, data, and power systems, and how Delarman specializes in ensuring that no part of a business's IT infrastructure is left vulnerable.

One of the key aspects of Delarman's strategy is its focus on cloud services and infrastructure management. Arman explained that many of their clients have a hybrid IT setup, which includes both on-site servers and cloud servers. This combination allows businesses to leverage the flexibility of cloud computing while maintaining control over their data with on-site backups. The company ensures that redundancy is built into these systems, so that if one component fails—whether it be an on-site server or a cloud service—there is another layer of protection ready to take over without disrupting the client's operations. He emphasized that Delarman serves a wide variety of industries, from small businesses to large enterprises, but one of their key markets is the hospitality industry. Delarman has built a strong client base among yacht and country clubs, particularly in Orange County, Los Angeles, and San Diego. Arman invited the audience to visit some of the projects Delarman has completed for these clients to see firsthand how their technology infrastructure has improved the efficiency and security of these organizations.

The focus was now centered on the practical implementation of Delarman's technology solutions, as Arman emphasized the importance of proactive management and constant testing to maintain system integrity. He illustrated how Delarman's tailored solutions are designed to give businesses peace of mind by protecting their data, ensuring continuity, and enabling their profitability through secure and efficient IT operations.

Arman then brought the focus back to the testing culture at Delarman Technologies, emphasizing the need for constant verification of IT systems and processes. He encouraged business owners and IT leaders to be actively involved in testing their backup and recovery systems, ensuring that everything functions as intended, especially in the event of a cyberattack or system failure. Arman highlighted that while IT teams might confidently state that backups are being performed regularly, it is essential to verify this through regular drills and tests.

He shared a key practice that Delarman implements: "Fun Mondays"—a day where the team intentionally pulls the plug on certain systems to see how the backup and redundancy measures hold up. Arman explained that this type of hands-on testing reveals weaknesses that might not be apparent until a real emergency strikes. He humorously noted that when no one panics during these drills, it's a sign that Delarman has done its job well. This light-hearted yet serious approach emphasizes the company's commitment to proactive IT management. Furthermore, Arman advised the audience to frequently challenge their IT departments by asking them to restore data from specific dates and times to ensure that backups are reliable and that the disaster recovery systems are up to date. He stressed that trust in IT professionals is important, but so is accountability—business owners should feel confident that their data is secure and that their IT infrastructure is prepared for any potential disaster.

Arman concluded the session by revisiting the core mission of Delarman Technologies: ensuring that businesses remain profitable and operational through robust IT solutions. He reiterated that Delarman's success is tied directly to the success of its clients, and this drives the company to constantly improve efficiencies and secure infrastructures. In a world increasingly reliant on technology, ensuring that IT systems are secure, redundant, and resilient is more critical than ever.

The final message Arman left with the audience was a simple challenge: "Get involved." Easier said than done, he encouraged business owners to be actively engaged in their IT operations, ask the right questions, and never take their systems' security for granted. By doing so, businesses can ensure that they are fully prepared for whatever challenges come their way and can continue to thrive in an increasingly technology-driven world.

Arman & Safa Movassaghi
at Jetty Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night One

FROZEN CAPITAL MARKETS, IDENTIFYING OPPORTUNITIES

By **Chris Norton**

Christopher Norton serves as the Senior Managing Director at Sutter Securities. With extensive experience in financial services and strategic advisory, Chris has been instrumental in guiding clients through complex financial landscapes and achieving their financial goals.

Chris Norton of Sutter Securities began by addressing the sharp decline in Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) over the past few years. He illustrated this trend with a striking comparison: in the fourth quarter of 2021, there were 84 IPOs, while by 2022, that number had plummeted to just seven. This massive decline in IPO activity, he explained, is symptomatic of broader challenges in the capital markets. One of the central reasons for this, Norton argued, is economic uncertainty. The lingering effects of COVID-19, coupled with geopolitical tensions and the volatility of commodity prices, have led to inflationary pressures that significantly impacted companies' decisions to go public. Norton noted how disruptions in supply chains during the pandemic exacerbated these issues, leading to inflation spikes. This inflation, particularly in essential goods like groceries, has put pressure on consumers and affected market valuations, leading many companies to hold off on IPOs.

Norton also pointed out that companies today have access to private funds in ways they didn't decades ago. In the past, companies like Google had little choice but to go public to raise large amounts of capital. However, today's companies can access substantial private funding, allowing them to stay private for longer. For example, OpenAI reached a valuation of $29 billion in 2023 without needing to go public. Similarly, xAI, founded by Elon Musk, achieved a valuation of $24 billion in its first round of venture capital funding.

As a result, companies are less inclined to pursue IPOs in a market that is unpredictable and offers less favorable valuations than in the past. Norton emphasized that inflationary pressures and the rapid rise in interest rates—with the Federal Reserve implementing 500 basis point increases in 2022—have been the most significant factors freezing the IPO market.

He also highlighted the uneven performance of the markets, noting how top-heavy growth has characterized the past few years. In particular, the performance of the S&P 500 has been driven primarily by the Magnificent Seven companies, which saw massive gains in 2023, while many other companies lagged behind.

Norton then set the stage for a deeper dive into the macroeconomic factors impacting IPO activity, with a particular focus on inflation, interest rates, and private capital as key elements that have reshaped the landscape of the capital markets. He delved deeper into the factors contributing to the frozen markets, focusing on the broader macroeconomic landscape and how interest rates are impacting IPO activity. In particular, Norton highlighted the Federal Reserve's aggressive interest rate hikes, noting that the 500 basis point increase in 2022 was one of the most rapid in modern history. This sharp increase in rates has made it much more difficult for companies, especially growth-oriented businesses, to justify going public. In an environment where interest rates are rising, companies face the challenge of lower valuations and diminished market multiples. Norton emphasized that companies looking to go public are now concerned about receiving lower valuations compared to just a few months earlier, which has contributed significantly to the frozen state of IPOs over the last 24 to 36 months.

"COMPANIES NOW ARE NO LONGER THINKING ABOUT GOING PUBLIC, BECAUSE THE VALUE THEY'LL CAPTURE IS OFFSET BY UNPRECEDENTED INFLATION RATES OF RECENT YEARS."

– **Chris Norton**

One critical factor Norton pointed out is the rising cost of goods for consumers, using the example of grocery prices to show how inflation has permeated everyday life. For many middle-class families, the sharp increase in basic items like eggs—which rose 200%—illustrates the broader inflationary pressures at play. This is not just a consumer problem, but a major concern for companies that depend on consumer spending and economic stability to justify going public.

Norton also touched on how the S&P 500 has been dominated by just a handful of companies—the Magnificent Seven—whose performance has largely driven the market's growth. He pointed out that while the S&P 500 increased by 90% between 2019 and 2023, most of that growth came from these seven companies. For smaller companies on the cusp of going public, this concentration of market performance makes it harder to justify an IPO, as they struggle to compete with the behemoths in the marketplace.

He emphasized that private funding has become a viable alternative for many companies. Historically, companies like Google had to go public because they needed to raise large sums of money, but today's private markets are more robust, offering companies the option to stay private longer. The 2012 JOBS Act increased the threshold for the number of shareholders a private company could have before being required to go public. This has allowed companies to stay private and raise larger rounds of funding, further contributing to the frozen IPO market.

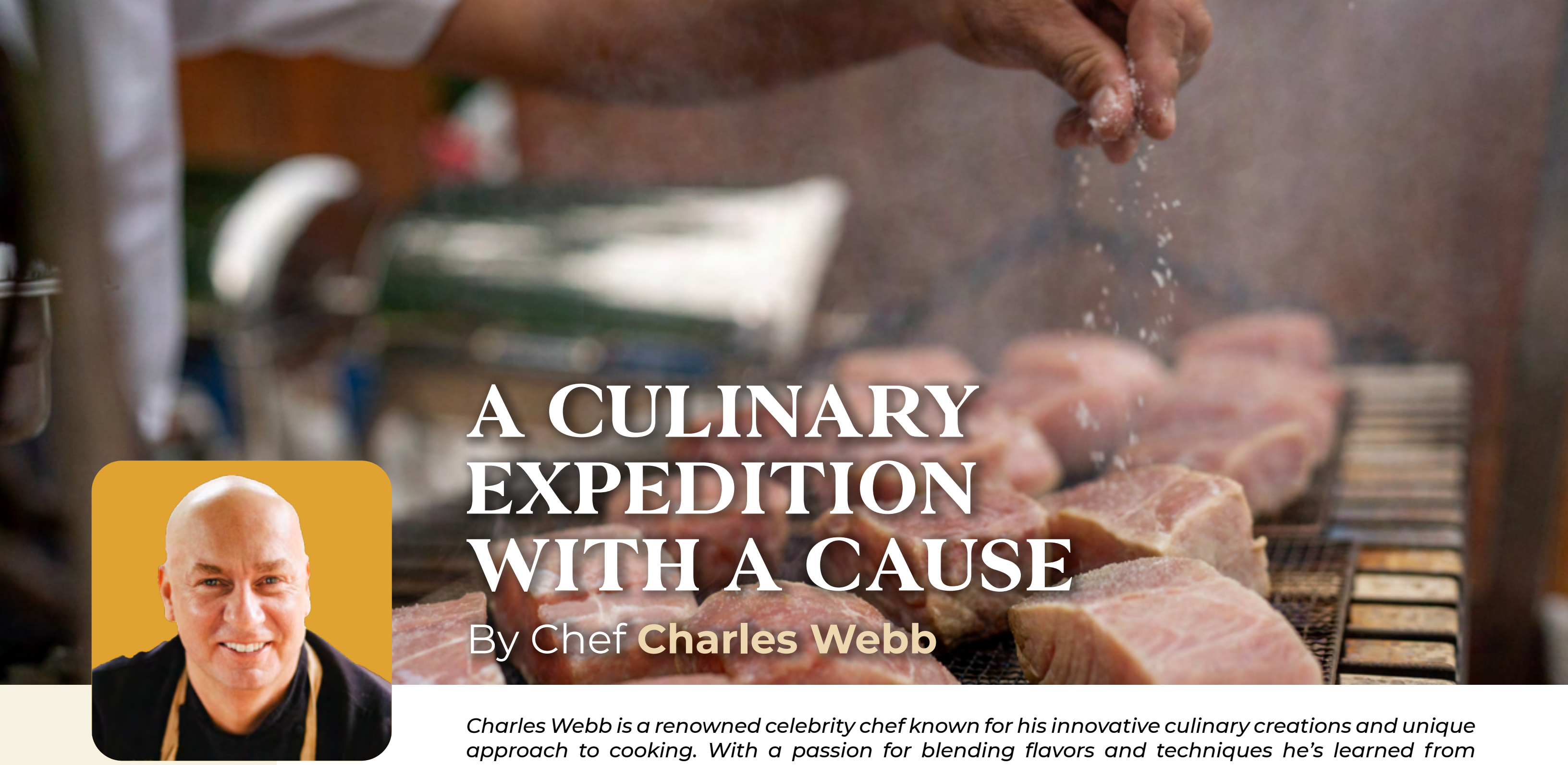
Norton underscored the fact that interest rate cuts are expected to be the primary catalyst driving the next cycle of IPOs. He pointed to historical data showing that when interest rates are cut, stock market returns tend to rise significantly. He explained that the Federal Reserve's actions—whether or not they decide to lower rates—will largely determine how the market performs. Norton noted that the current market is top-heavy, dominated by a few large companies, but this could change if interest rates decrease and the market becomes more favorable for smaller companies.

To emphasize the potential impact of rate cuts, Norton referenced economic cycles and how the market has traditionally performed under different circumstances. He showed a slide demonstrating that, on average, stock market returns during periods of rate cuts without a recession are around 15%. Even in the case of a recession, the returns are still positive, at around 11%. These returns, according to Norton, suggest that companies waiting for the right time to go public may have better opportunities if the Fed does indeed begin to lower rates in the coming months or years.

Norton lastly discussed the importance of liquidity in the private markets, which have become more accessible to companies in recent years. He highlighted how private equity has allowed companies to remain private for much longer than in previous decades. This ability to raise large funding rounds without going public has changed the landscape, allowing companies to grow and innovate without needing to meet the strict requirements of public markets. However, once interest rates decrease and market conditions become more favorable, many of these companies may consider an IPO to capitalize on the improved market environment. He wrapped up his presentation by offering his outlook on the future. He believes that IPO activity will pick up once interest rates start to fall, but it will begin with the largest and strongest companies. Once these companies demonstrate that favorable valuations can be achieved in a lower-rate environment, smaller companies will follow, leading to a more active IPO market.

"CAPITAL MARKETS ARE ON THE PRECIPICE OF A THAW AS RATES GO LOWER. WE BELIEVE THAT THE STRONGEST PRIVATE COMPANIES WILL BE THE FIRST ONES OUT OF THE GATES AS IT RELATES TO IPO ACTIVITIES." – **Chris Norton**

Chris Norton
at Villa One
IMPACT 5050
Night Three



A CULINARY EXPEDITION WITH A CAUSE

By Chef **Charles Webb**

Charles Webb is a renowned celebrity chef known for his innovative culinary creations and unique approach to cooking. With a passion for blending flavors and techniques he's learned from around the world, Charles has built a reputation for delivering unforgettable dining experiences.

At IMPACT 5050, celebrity chef Charles Webb introduced the concept of *#ChefOnTour*, a global culinary journey he has embarked on, which is not only focused on food but also on spotlighting communities and individuals making a difference in various fields, such as art, fashion, technology, and entrepreneurship. The program is targeted at a younger demographic—specifically people between 25 and 45 years old—who are increasingly interested in understanding how global cities are evolving and impacting their lives. Many of these individuals lead nomadic lifestyles, working remotely as they travel the world, and they are keen to engage with the cultural and socioeconomic issues shaping modern cities.

Through *#ChefOnTour*, Chef Webb highlights stories of these cities and their inhabitants, focusing on their efforts to improve communities and contribute to social good. Webb emphasized that purpose is a central theme in both his personal journey and the work he showcases through the program. He shared that, over his lifetime, he has held 92 different jobs across nine countries, gaining diverse experiences in various fields. However, his true calling is rooted in purpose-driven work, which he believes is essential for creating lasting impact.

"IF I CAN HELP THE WORLD AND MAKE IT A BETTER PLACE, WHAT WOULD I DO?" – **Chef Charles Webb**

Chef Webb gave an example of one of his philanthropic initiatives in Medellín, Colombia, where many underprivileged families lack access to basic kitchen appliances such as ovens and stoves. His mission is to fundraise through his private dinners and other events to help provide these families with the tools they need to nourish themselves. For Webb, the program is not just about creating digital content for lifestyle and travel; it's about making a difference by directly contributing to the well-being of the communities he visits.

He also made it clear that impact is what drives him, more than just being a celebrity chef or donning a chef's jacket. His efforts go beyond cooking to encompass social responsibility, where he actively supports foundations in the cities he visits, aiming to improve lives and bring positive change. He expanded on the impact-driven mission of *#ChefOnTour* by elaborating on his approach to storytelling and the specific projects that are tied to his philanthropic vision.

For Webb, his work goes beyond just creating culinary experiences; it's about using food as a platform to bring awareness to socioeconomic issues and support community-focused initiatives.

"FOOD IS SOMETHING THAT BRINGS US ALL TOGETHER, NO MATTER WHERE WE COME FROM." – **Chef Charles Webb**

Chef Webb explained that each city he visits as part of *#ChefOnTour* provides a unique opportunity to engage with the local community. Through his travels, he looks to identify local organizations or foundations that are doing impactful work and partners with them to support their missions. This is done by hosting fundraising dinners in collaboration with local chefs, businesses, and other influencers. These dinners not only celebrate the local cuisine but also serve as a means to raise funds for specific causes that benefit the local population.

For example, in Medellín, Webb partnered with a foundation that focuses on addressing poverty in the city. He specifically mentioned that many families in the neighborhood do not have access to basic cooking appliances, such as ovens and stoves. In response, he has taken on the mission to provide these families with the tools they need to cook nourishing meals. This initiative is emblematic of the larger purpose of *#ChefOnTour*—to bridge cultures, bring positive social impact, and improve the daily lives of people in need, all through the power of food.

Webb also reflected on how his personal journey—living in multiple countries and working a wide array of jobs—has shaped his worldview. His experiences have instilled in him the belief that food is a universal connector, capable of fostering dialogue and understanding among diverse groups of people. By tapping into this idea, Webb's new series aims to tell authentic stories about each destination, giving his audience a deeper understanding of the cultural dynamics and challenges faced by the communities he visits.

In this way, *#ChefOnTour* is as much about culinary exploration as it is about social advocacy. For Webb, each plate of food he serves is an opportunity to bring attention to larger global issues, whether it's food insecurity, economic disparity, or environmental sustainability. The program resonates with a growing generation of socially-conscious travelers who want to experience the world in a more meaningful way.

Through multiple examples, Webb had underscored the idea that purpose is at the heart of everything he does. Whether through cooking, storytelling, or philanthropy, Webb strives to create impact that goes far beyond the kitchen. *#ChefOnTour* is his vehicle for making that impact, and by partnering with local communities, he's able to help elevate voices that might otherwise go unheard. Webb shared more specific anecdotes and personal reflections from his travels, focusing on the broader mission of creating positive impact on a global scale.

Webb illustrated in his trailer that *#ChefOnTour* is about much more than just food—it's about telling stories that inspire connection and action. He detailed how the program strives to capture the essence of each community by showcasing not only their cuisine but also their cultural heritage and challenges. Through film and social media, Webb and his team work to convey these stories to a global audience, creating an emotional resonance that encourages others to get involved in philanthropic efforts.

By weaving in the voices of local influencers, entrepreneurs, artists, and activists, Webb ensures that each episode of his series highlights the diversity and creativity within the communities he visits. He envisions the program expanding into new markets, bringing even more attention to global issues through the lens of food. He spoke passionately about the power of collaboration and the importance of building a global network of like-minded individuals who are committed to making a difference.

In the end, *#ChefOnTour* is a reflection of Webb's personal journey—a journey that has taken him across multiple countries and through countless jobs, all in pursuit of a greater purpose. For Webb, the culinary arts serve as a vehicle for social advocacy, global connection, and positive change. Through his work, he continues to inspire others to think beyond the kitchen and use their passions to make the world a better place. Webb leaves the audience with a powerful message:

"IF WE CAN HELP MAKE EVEN A SMALL DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD, WE SHOULD." – **Chef Charles Webb**

In a handful of words, Chef Webb perfectly encapsulates the ambition and cultural spirit of *#ChefOnTour*, as it encourages individuals to find purpose in their own lives and use it to contribute to the greater good of humankind.

Chef Charles Webb
at Carao Dinner
IMPACT 5050
Night Two

LAYERED LEADERSHIP

By Larry Armstrong

Larry Armstrong is the Chairman of Ware Malcomb, a leading design firm, where he has driven significant growth and innovation, transforming the company into a global powerhouse in architecture and interior design.

Larry Armstrong, the Chairman of Ware Malcomb, architect, and artist, kicked off his interactive presentation by discussing the concept of layers. He introduced this as a metaphor for understanding both leadership and life, emphasizing how layers exist in physical spaces, lighting, sound, and emotions. This theme of layers would serve as the foundation for the entire session.

He invited the audience to observe the physical layers in the room—the high ceilings, the furniture, and the landscape visible outside—and used these tangible elements to explain how layers are everywhere in our lives, both material and emotional. Armstrong believes this layering applies not just to physical design but also to human experience, creativity, and business leadership. This multidimensional thinking is central to his leadership philosophy, which he has captured in his upcoming book, ***Layered Leadership***.

Key Points Introduced by Larry:

- **LAYERS IN LIFE:** Larry explained how the concept of layers extends beyond the physical world. He encouraged the audience to think about their emotional and intellectual layers, which influence their thoughts and actions.
- **LAYERED APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP:** Larry has applied this idea of layers to his leadership style, explaining that success is built through a balance of structure (orderliness) and unpredictability (chaos).
- **INSPIRATION FROM LEONARDO DA VINCI:** Larry highlighted how Da Vinci's whole-brain thinking influenced his approach to leadership and creativity, advocating for continuous learning and balancing imagination with logic.

Armstrong transitioned into the interactive portion of the presentation, with each attendee provided a blank canvas and painting supplies, illustrating that leadership and life require both creativity and strategic structure. This creative and hands-on activity began with an instruction by Larry to paint strokes that represented orderliness, followed by adding strokes to represent chaos. This exercise encouraged the audience to think about the balance between order and chaos in their own leadership styles.

As paint met canvas, Larry took the opportunity to delve deeper into the concept of layers, and began to connect it to leadership and personal development. He emphasized that layers aren't just a design element but an analogy for life and growth. His artistic background gave him a unique perspective on how order and chaos coexist and shape creative and leadership processes.

Key Discussion Points:

- **ARCHITECTURAL LAYERS AS A METAPHOR FOR LEADERSHIP:** Armstrong emphasized how the architectural layers in a space mirror the layers of leadership. Just as a building's design incorporates multiple materials, shapes, and layers, so too does effective leadership. It requires a harmonious blend of different elements—vision, strategy, people, and adaptability.
- **CHAOS AND ORDER:** Armstrong's mixed-media art piece, which he showcased, was a vivid illustration of how chaos and order work together in harmony. He encouraged participants to embrace chaos while also maintaining the structure necessary for success. He noted that balancing the two is essential for growth and innovation, both in leadership and personal life.

Larry's leadership philosophy, outlined in his book *Layered Leadership*, explores how successful leadership is not linear but multidimensional. As leaders navigate business challenges, they must build on layers of experience, learning, and adaptability. He encouraged the audience to think critically about how they build their leadership layers, stating that leaders are constantly layering new knowledge, new challenges, and new solutions on top of previous experiences.

Influences from Leonardo Da Vinci:

Larry discussed how Leonardo Da Vinci influenced his thinking, particularly Da Vinci's **whole-brain thinking approach**. Da Vinci **balanced the logical** and **the creative,** and Armstrong urged leaders to adopt a similar mindset. Da Vinci's emphasis on continuous learning resonated deeply with Armstrong, who believes that leaders must constantly evolve and build upon their layers of knowledge. The interactive painting exercise, where participants were invited to represent order and chaos on their canvases, mirrored this leadership lesson. Armstrong encouraged the audience to see their brush strokes as a metaphor for how they balance structure and unpredictability in their leadership roles. Chaos and order, and the coexistence of various layers, both in art and leadership, create the foundation for growth and innovation. Through his artistic practice and business experiences, he highlighted that true leadership requires the ability to synthesize complexity and find a balance between contrasting forces.

Larry Armstrong
with Sinan Kanatsiz
IMPACT 5050
Night Two

Blue Ocean Strategy:

Armstrong emphasized the importance of embracing the Blue Ocean Strategy as a critical factor in growing Ware Malcomb. He described how "Blue Ocean" strategies are about creating uncontested market spaces that make the competition irrelevant. Ware Malcomb was an example of how a company moved away from the traditional focus on speculative office buildings and diversified into areas like healthcare, retail, and industrial design.

Armstrong explained that the visible light spectrum serves as a metaphor for diversification. Each color in the spectrum represents a different market or area of expertise within the company. The key, according to Armstrong, is to focus on the areas (or colors) where the company can excel, while being mindful of not straying too far outside the core strengths (represented by areas outside the visible light spectrum). This approach allowed Ware Malcomb to expand strategically without losing focus or overextending themselves into areas that wouldn't make sense for the company.

Lombardi Philosophy:

Another influence on Armstrong's leadership approach is the philosophy of the legendary football coach, Vince Lombardi. Armstrong connected Lombardi's belief that everyone, regardless of where they start in life, has the responsibility to improve their position to the way he managed his company. At Ware Malcomb, Armstrong's mission was to create opportunities for as many people as possible, empowering his employees to reach their full potential. This idea of empowerment is at the heart of Armstrong's leadership style. He discussed how giving people the tools and opportunities to grow not only benefits them but also contributes to the overall success of the company. Just as Lombardi built his team around excellence and self-improvement, Armstrong sought to create a culture at Ware Malcomb where people are encouraged to improve every day.

Continuous Learning and Whole Brain Thinking:

In connection with Leonardo da Vinci's philosophy of whole-brain thinking, Armstrong stressed the importance of continuous learning as a leader. Leaders, he said, must constantly adapt and build upon their experiences, just as Da Vinci did through his multifaceted genius. Armstrong tied this concept to his own approach in building a successful business, encouraging the audience to never stop learning and to push the boundaries of what they think is possible.


"ReudhKueitGhreBhel 2.0"
Acrylic on Board
by Larry Armstrong

Roadrunner and Coyote Metaphor:

Armstrong also introduced the audience to his Roadrunner and Coyote metaphor as a representation of the balance between business development and operations. Using the famous cartoon as a metaphor, he explained that the Roadrunner symbolizes business development and growth, while the Coyote represents operations. The idea is that growth (Roadrunner) should always be just ahead of operations (Coyote) to ensure that the business is pushing forward and developing new opportunities, but not too far ahead that the operations can't keep up. If operations fall too far behind, the business collapses under the weight of its own growth.

Larry explained how this metaphor helped him maintain balance at Ware Malcomb, ensuring that their growth was sustainable. By keeping a close eye on both sides—business development and operations—the company was able to grow strategically without overextending.

Metaphors as Business Tools:

During the interactive experience, Armstrong shared more of his creative metaphors for business leadership, illustrating how he has applied lessons from different disciplines and experiences to grow Ware Malcomb. For example, he highlighted how art and design thinking can influence business strategies and decision-making, providing a fresh perspective for leaders who are more accustomed to conventional business approaches.

Armstrong used these metaphors to explain how leaders can foster innovation within their organizations by seeing problems through a different lens. This approach enables leaders to synthesize different ideas, much like how an artist layers different elements in a composition, to come up with solutions that are both practical and creative.

Leadership Beyond the Boardroom:

In this section, Larry emphasized that leadership isn't just about running the day-to-day operations of a company. Instead, it's about inspiring people, creating a culture where employees feel empowered to bring their own creative ideas and innovations to the table. He encouraged the audience to lead with vision, but to also remember that building a great team is one of the most important things a leader can do.

This section of the presentation reinforced Armstrong's belief that creativity and visionary thinking should be at the heart of any company's leadership strategy. He urged the audience to see leadership as an ongoing creative process, where new ideas, insights, and solutions are constantly emerging.

For the final crescendo, Armstrong would bring together all of these concepts, solidifying his message on how to use layered leadership to inspire growth, build stronger teams, and stay ahead of the competition. He wrapped up his hands-on session by reflecting on the conceptualization of layers—both in leadership and in life. He connected the idea of layering in art to the building blocks of leadership, emphasizing how effective leadership requires combining different skills, experiences, and perspectives in a coherent, intentional way to create a strong foundation for growth.

"I THINK ABOUT LEADERSHIP THE SAME WAY I THINK ABOUT CREATING ART… IT'S ALL ABOUT HOW YOU LAYER THINGS. EACH DECISION, LIKE EACH STROKE OF PAINT, ADDS COMPLEXITY AND DEPTH." – **Larry Armstrong**

Art and Leadership:

Armstrong asked participants to step back and examine the canvases they had been working on during the session. Each person had used different colors and strokes to represent order, chaos, and the in-between, reflecting their personal interpretation of leadership and their experiences within it. Armstrong pointed out that no two canvases looked alike, just as no two leadership styles are the same. This exercise illustrated how leaders must adapt their styles and approaches to fit their unique situations while maintaining core principles.

He highlighted how businesses, like the canvases in front of them, require a blend of both order and chaos. There needs to be a structure in place to ensure things run smoothly, but also enough flexibility to allow for creativity and innovation.

Key Takeaways:

- Synthesis and Adaptation: Armstrong reiterated that one of the most critical skills for any leader is the ability to synthesize diverse inputs—whether from personal experiences, business insights, or external trends—and adapt them to fit the specific needs of their organization.
- Continuous Growth and Curiosity: Drawing inspiration from figures like Leonardo da Vinci, Armstrong emphasized the importance of lifelong learning and maintaining an inquisitive mindset. He stressed that curiosity and creativity drive innovation and are essential for sustained success in any field.
- Team Empowerment: Armstrong also touched on how empowering your team is a key part of effective leadership. Leaders should focus on providing opportunities for growth and creating an environment where team members feel supported and motivated to reach their full potential.
- Balance of Chaos and Order: Using the canvases as a metaphor, he reiterated that while chaos is necessary for creativity and growth, order is required to keep things running smoothly. Leaders must learn to navigate this balance to keep their companies on track while still fostering innovation.

Armstrong closed by encouraging the audience to take what they had learned from this session and apply it to their own leadership journeys. He noted that the act of layering different approaches and ideas is what makes great leaders—those who can blend creativity with strategic thinking, and who are not afraid to adapt and innovate as they guide their teams toward success. With the session coming to a close and canvases left to dry, Larry invited the participants to pre-order a signed copy of his book as a tangible takeaway, a lasting reminder of the lessons shared and the importance of layered leadership in both business and life.

THE FUTURE OF REAL-WORLD TOKENIZATION

By **Billy Beach**

Billy Beach is the CEO of T7X and a seasoned real estate and property development expert with a passion for creating exceptional investment opportunities. With over two decades of experience in the industry, Billy has worked on residential developments to large-scale commercial ventures.

Billy Beach opened his discussion by addressing the potential of tokenization to democratize capital raising on a global scale, citing the remarkable success of recent projects where astronomical returns were achieved through fractional ownership of real-world assets. Beach introduced **T7X** as a platform designed to transform real-world assets like real estate into tokenized forms, thereby enabling capital to be raised more efficiently and returns to be distributed more reliably to investors.

"WE TOOK ALL THE BROKEN PIECES OF CRYPTO, AND WE HELPED CRYPTO GROW UP." – Billy Beach

TOKENIZATION AS A TOOL FOR GLOBAL INVESTMENT: Beach highlighted the power of tokenization to break down barriers in traditional capital markets. By converting physical assets into digital tokens, T7X facilitates global investments, allowing people from different parts of the world to invest in projects they otherwise might not have access to. This process not only broadens the investor base but also enhances the liquidity of assets that are typically considered illiquid, such as real estate and boutique resorts.

THE CASE OF BOUTIQUE RESORTS IN MEXICO: Using a specific example, Beach explained how T7X enabled the tokenization of boutique resorts in Mexico. Typically, such investments require significant upfront cash with no opportunity to reclaim that capital easily. Tokenization, according to Beach, changes this dynamic by offering investors a chance to participate in the equity of these properties through blockchain technology, providing them with potential returns and increased liquidity.

In his opening remarks, Beach set the stage for a deeper dive into how T7X leverages blockchain technology to create a more inclusive and efficient market for real-world asset investment, promising to further elaborate on the technical mechanisms and broader implications of their work in subsequent parts of his presentation. Beach delved deeper into how tokenization works on the T7X platform, emphasizing the security and transparency provided by blockchain technology. He outlined the basic concept of blockchain, describing it as a distributed ledger where every transaction is permanently recorded and cannot be manipulated. This ensures that the assets tokenized on T7X are secure and verifiable.

BLOCKCHAIN AND TOKENIZATION: Beach described blockchain as a tool for proving ownership and transfer of assets through "proof of algorithm," which verifies transactions between buyers and sellers. He compared the process to traditional IPOs, where shares are created and traded, but in this case, tokens represent fractional ownership of real-world assets like boutique resorts. By placing these tokens on a ledger, they are immune to tampering, ensuring that the value associated with the assets remains intact and secure.

ADVANTAGES FOR INVESTORS AND ASSET OWNERS: One of the standout points in this section was Beach's emphasis on how tokenization allows for liquidity in markets that traditionally lack it. For example, boutique resort owners in Mexico, who often face the challenge of securing loans or refinancing, can tokenize their assets to access capital. In turn, investors can earn competitive returns (between 8% and 10%) through this new model, bypassing traditional financial intermediaries like banks.

GLOBAL PARTICIPATION IN INVESTMENT: Beach continued by highlighting how the tokenization model allows people from across the globe to participate in investment opportunities that were previously out of reach. Investors from countries like India, for instance, can contribute even small amounts of capital, but when aggregated on a global scale, these investments can provide substantial funding for projects. This democratizes investment, allowing smaller players to engage in significant real-world assets and benefit from them.

"WITH TOKENIZATION, YOU HAVE THE ENTIRE WORLD TO HELP YOU RAISE CAPITAL FOR YOUR INVESTMENTS." – Billy Beach

LOOKING FORWARD – EXPANDING TOKENIZATION: Beach concluded his presentation by discussing the future of T7X and the broader tokenization landscape. He expressed optimism about the growing interest in tokenization and blockchain, predicting that these technologies will revolutionize not only real estate but also industries like energy, healthcare, and finance.

Beach invited attendees to imagine a future where anyone, anywhere, can invest in a wide variety of assets with just a few clicks, democratizing access to opportunities that were once reserved for the wealthy or well-connected. He believes that T7X is at the forefront of this shift, offering a safe, secure, and scalable platform for both asset owners and investors alike. With that, he opened the floor to questions, ready to engage the audience in deeper discussions about the future of real-world tokenization and how T7X plans to shape it.

Billy Beach
with Sinan Kanatsiz
IMPACT 5050
Night One

AUTHENTIC COMMUNICATION IN THE AGE OF AI

By **Victor Cho**

Victor Cho is the CEO of Emovid, an emerging company at the forefront of leveraging emotional intelligence in video content to enhance engagement and retention. With a background in technology and customer experience, Victor has led Emovid to innovate how emotions are integrated into digital media.

Victor Cho, CEO of **Emovid**, opened his speech by addressing the evolution of communication in the age of AI. He emphasized how essential communication is to building relationships, both in business and in life, and stressed that trust is the cornerstone of any meaningful relationship. He framed his speech around the idea that, although technology is advancing, we are in danger of losing authentic human connection, particularly face-to-face communication, which has been the foundation of relationships for millions of years.

KEY POINTS ON COMMUNICATION: Cho reflected on how, historically, face-to-face interaction was paramount for building trust and establishing relationships. Yet, today, businesses and individuals are increasingly relying on digital communication methods, many of which, while efficient, are poor at fostering real connections. He humorously noted the proliferation of tools like email, text-to-video generation, and even avatars that, while meant to streamline communication, often do so at the cost of authenticity and genuine interaction.

RISE OF AI IN COMMUNICATION: Victor discussed how AI-generated communication, such as text-to-video services, often leans into the "uncanny valley" effect, where the result is close to human interaction but lacks the subtleties that make communication feel real. He explained that many companies are pushing for efficiency, and while these tools may reduce time spent on communication, they do so by sacrificing the personal touch. This tension between efficiency, vanity, anxiety, and authenticity is a core challenge for the future of business communication.

Cho then posed the vital question:

> **"HOW CAN WE PRESERVE AUTHENTICITY IN A WORLD WHERE COMMUNICATION IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY MEDIATED BY TECHNOLOGY?"** – **Victor Cho**

Victor then explored the trade-offs we face when using AI and digital communication tools in both business and personal interactions. He pointed out the delicate balance between **efficiency, vanity, anxiety,** and **authenticity** that occurs whenever we choose a form of communication. Each of these factors competes for dominance, and achieving the right balance is key to maintaining authentic relationships while still benefiting from technological advancements.

EFFICIENCY VS. AUTHENTICITY: Cho explained that while AI tools like ChatGPT and text-to-video generators can save time and increase efficiency, they often fail to maintain the authenticity of communication. For example, using AI to write an email or generate a video may create a polished product, but it lacks the personal voice that would come through in a human-generated message. This can result in a loss of connection and trust between the sender and recipient.

VANITY AND ANXIETY: Another key point Cho made was about the role of vanity and anxiety in communication. People want to appear polished and articulate, often spending more time crafting their messages than is necessary. On the other hand, anxiety can prevent people from engaging in more direct forms of communication, such as video calls, leading them to opt for less personal methods like emails or texts. This trade-off contributes to the growing gap between efficiency and meaningful connection in communication.

Cho used these examples to illustrate how AI is reshaping the way we interact with each other, emphasizing that while technological advancements offer convenience, they often do so at the cost of authenticity.

"WHEN WE PRIORITIZE EFFICIENCY OVER AUTHENTICITY, WE RISK LOSING THE VERY ESSENCE OF COMMUNICATION. THE CHALLENGE IS TO CREATE SOLUTIONS THAT HONOR THE HUMAN ELEMENT WHILE STILL DRIVING PRODUCTIVITY." – **Victor Cho**

Victor Cho then presented to his audience the groundbreaking new technology at Emovid, the company he founded to address the challenges of maintaining authenticity in digital communication. Emovid focuses on amplifying productivity and maintaining the authenticity of communication in the business world, especially as AI and digital platforms become more prevalent. His vision for Emovid was to address these concerns by developing a platform that would prioritize both efficiency and authenticity in communication.

Cho explained that Emovid is a video messaging platform that allows users to send personalized, authentic video messages with the ease of sending an email. The platform addresses the challenge of balancing efficiency and authenticity by making it simple to record, send, and respond to video messages, all while maintaining the human element that is often lost in purely text-based communication. With Emovid, users can send quick video updates, recorded anywhere, and maintain the integrity of face-to-face interaction, even when working remotely or asynchronously.

Cho emphasized that Emovid ensures that every video message sent through the platform is verified for authenticity, which is essential in a world where deepfakes and AI-generated content can blur the lines between real and artificial. The platform's focus is on enhancing communication in a way that blends efficiency with emotional intelligence, fostering genuine connections even when users are miles apart.

"OUR GOAL WITH EMOVID IS SIMPLE: TO ENABLE BUSINESSES TO COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY BY COMBINING THE EFFICIENCY OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY WITH THE AUTHENTICITY OF HUMAN INTERACTION. WE BELIEVE THAT THE FUTURE OF COMMUNICATION MUST BRIDGE BOTH." – **Victor Cho**

KEY FEATURES OF EMOVID

1

MULTI-MODAL MESSAGING

Users can record a video message and attach additional forms of media like text transcripts, audio, or even AI-generated summaries of the message for efficiency.

2

REPLY FEATURE

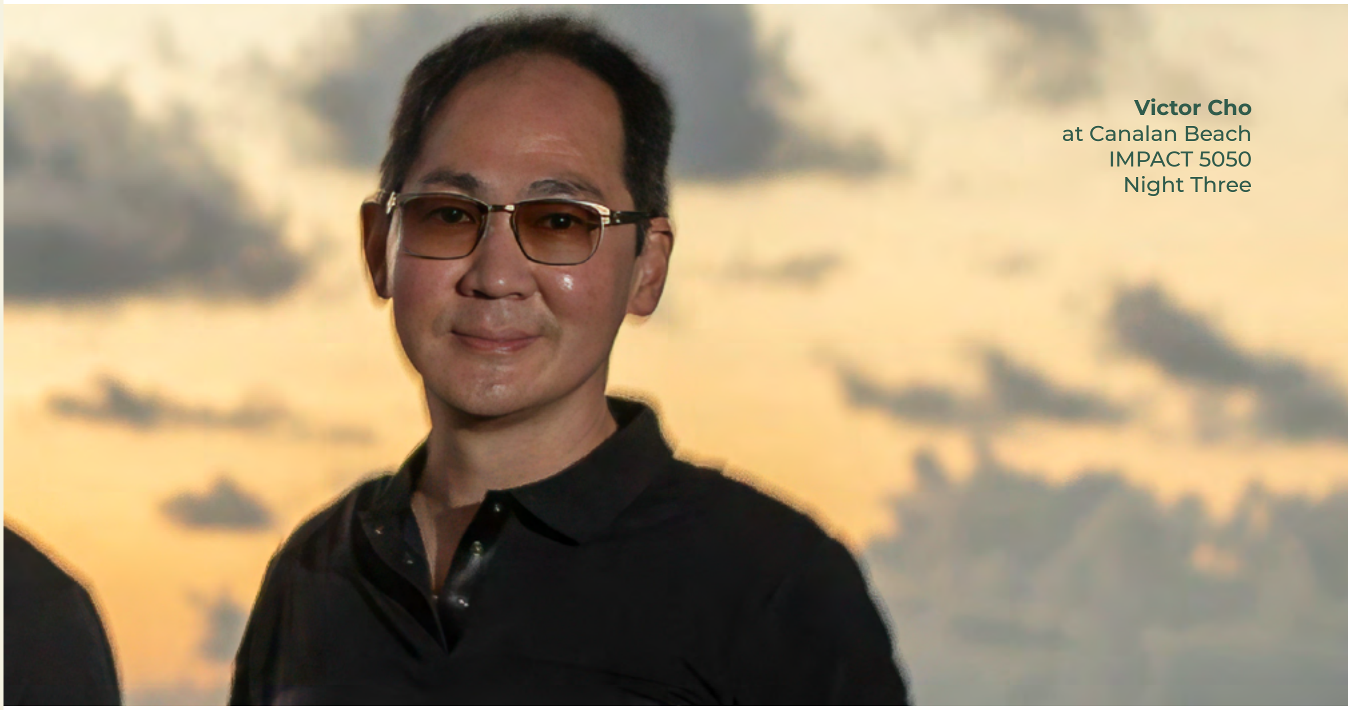
Recipients can easily respond with their own video message or other media, allowing for continuous dialogue without sacrificing the personal touch.

3

ONE-CLICK ACCESS

The platform is designed to allow users to create and share video messages with just one click, making it easy to integrate video communication into everyday business interactions.

Victor Cho's closing remarks centered around the need for leaders to foster deep human connections while embracing innovation. He emphasized that success is not only about achieving business goals but about creating a meaningful impact in the lives of employees, customers, and the broader community. Cho urged leaders to cultivate empathy, adaptability, and continuous learning to navigate the rapidly changing business landscape, stating, *"In a world of constant disruption, the most valuable asset any leader can develop is trust—trust in their people, their mission, and themselves."* In a final ask, Cho invited IMPACT attendees to join the platform as early adopters and send him a video message, highlighting the potential impact of using Emovid to strengthen relationships and build trust in their own businesses.



Victor Cho
at Canalan Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night Three

EXTENDED REALITY, COLOR, AI AND THE NEXT GENERATION

By **Joe Fries**

Joe Fries is the Chief Growth Officer of Codazen, a company specializing in digital solutions that drive business transformation. With a strong background in technology and leadership, Joe has been instrumental in guiding Codazen's growth and driving success for its clients.

Joe Fries, Chief Growth Officer of Codazen, shared an insightful presentation on the intersection of emerging technologies, digital engineering, and the future of immersive web environments. With his extensive experience, Joe introduced the audience to the exciting new developments his team at Codazen is working on and highlighted the importance of creating interactive, accessible experiences without relying solely on technologies like virtual reality headsets.

Joe began by reflecting on his professional journey, particularly his time leading a company on the West Coast that became one of the largest brand management and marketing services firms before it was acquired by a public company in 2005. One of the critical lessons he emphasized from his experience was the need to embrace discomfort to drive growth and innovation.

At Codazen, a 17-year-old digital engineering agency, Joe is now helping the company explore the future of immersive web experiences. The company specializes in building intelligent marketing solutions for large clients, with Meta being one of their primary partners. Codazen is known for its work in producing advanced digital environments that go beyond traditional web experiences, using technologies like AI, 3D interaction, and data science to drive engagement and performance improvements.

Joe was soon to present to his audience two core concepts Codazen is now developing:

- **IMMERSIVE WEB:** Codazen believes the future of the web will be more interactive and immersive, offering more engaging experiences without the need for VR headsets. This focus is particularly relevant for industries like product training, education, and automotive, where improving engagement and retention is key.
- **PERCEPTION:** A generative AI tool that offers a science-driven approach to color selection for brands, allowing them to generate color palettes that resonate with specific emotional and psychological triggers. Joe demonstrated how this technology is being applied to industries like home improvement, where consumers can use the tool to choose paint colors that align with their aesthetic goals.

Joe Fries continued his presentation by introducing Codazen's new initiative in immersive web environments. He emphasized that the future of the web would extend beyond traditional browser-based interactions, leaning into immersive, multi-sensory experiences that engage users in innovative ways. Codazen is pioneering this shift by integrating 3D elements directly into web browsers, offering immersive experiences without the need for cumbersome VR headsets.

Joe highlighted that while virtual reality (VR) headsets have opened new doors for interactive learning and engagement, they come with limitations. The adoption rate for VR headsets remains relatively low, and not all users are willing to strap a device onto their faces for prolonged periods.

"YOU GET IMPROVED LEARNING AND HIGHER RETENTION WITH SOMETHING IMMERSIVE. BUT NOT EVERYONE WANTS TO STRAP ON A HEADSET TO THEIR FACE." – **Joe Fries**

As such, Codazen is developing technologies that create an immersive experience without the requirement of a VR headset, enabling greater accessibility and convenience. This approach ensures that users can still benefit from the rich, interactive features of immersive environments, all while using their standard web browsers.

One of the key markets Codazen is targeting with this technology is product training and education. Joe explained that immersive web experiences could significantly improve learning outcomes by offering higher engagement and retention compared to traditional learning methods. The ability to interact with products or environments virtually, without the need for physical presence or advanced hardware, opens up new possibilities for industries like automotive, healthcare, and manufacturing, where understanding and interaction with complex systems are critical. The immersive web is not just a vision for the future but a practical solution that Codazen is actively developing to enhance the way users engage with the web and digital content. By focusing on simplifying complex interactions and creating seamless user experiences, Codazen is helping large companies like Meta innovate their digital environments, ultimately delivering more value to end-users.

As Joe Fries continued his presentation, he introduced Perception, one of Codazen's most innovative tools developed using generative AI. Perception focuses on the science behind color selection, moving away from the subjective nature of traditional branding and design choices and into a more data-driven, scientific approach. Joe explained that Perception was born out of a collaboration between Codazen's digital design team and one of their clients.

Conference Day at
Salon Papelillo
IMPACT 5050
Day Two

Perception isn't just about aesthetic preference—it's about ensuring that the colors chosen for a brand or product resonate emotionally and functionally with its target audience. This technology has practical applications in industries such as home improvement, where consumers might use it to select the perfect paint colors for their homes based on mood, ambiance, and emotional resonance. Codazen has already begun conversations with paint companies to integrate this AI-driven tool into the consumer decision-making process, revolutionizing how people choose colors for their living spaces.

Joe emphasized that Perception fits neatly into Codazen's broader mission of using science and technology to enhance user experiences. By combining Perception with their work on immersive web environments, Codazen is creating a powerful toolkit for brands looking to elevate their digital presence and create more meaningful interactions with their customers.

"WE'RE CREATING NEW EXPERIENCES FOR PEOPLE USING REAL SCIENCE." – **Joe Fries**

As he wrapped up, Joe reinforced Codazen's commitment to innovation and creativity, working to continually improve how people interact with technology. The future, as he described it, is one where immersive experiences and AI-driven insights work hand in hand to create deeper, more engaging experiences for both businesses and consumers.

Joe Fries
at Carao Pool Deck
IMPACT 5050
Night Two

REAL ESTATE MOMENTUM OF PARK CITY, UTAH

By **Solim Gasparik**

Solim Gasparik is a Principal at 4C Design Group, where he leads the firm's architectural and design projects. With a keen eye for aesthetics and functionality, Solim has overseen the development of numerous successful projects that blend innovative design with practical solutions.

Solim Gasparik, co-founder and Chief Visionary Officer of **4C Group**, began his presentation by outlining what sets 4C Design Group apart from other firms in the real estate development space. As he explained, 4C is not just a group of architects, interior designers, or construction professionals—it's an integrated team that combines all three under one roof, working collaboratively with clients from concept to completion. This full-spectrum approach allows 4C to offer clients a streamlined experience that simplifies the complex process of luxury home design and construction.

The Four C's and Full Collaboration

The "Four C's" in the group's name refer to the four corners at the design table:

- **ARCHITECTURE**
- **INTERIOR DESIGN**
- **CONSTRUCTION**
- **CLIENT'S VISION**

By having all these stakeholders at the same table from the start, 4C ensures that they can forecast the end result with precision. This integrated method also allows them to help clients understand costs and make informed decisions throughout the entire design process. As Solim mentioned, "It's about bringing in the designer and contractor together to make sure the project stays aligned with the homeowner's vision."

The Park City Real Estate Market

Solim quickly shifted focus to the Park City, Utah market, where 4C Group is deeply involved. Park City, once a mining town, has experienced a transformation into a luxury real estate hub. With the upcoming 2034 Winter Olympics set to bring an economic boom similar to the impact of the 2002 Olympics, the city is poised for continued growth.

Park City offers greater value, according to Solim, especially when compared to other high-end markets like Aspen. While Aspen homes can sell for up to $2,500 per square foot, Park City's market remains relatively more affordable, at approximately $800 per square foot. This price difference has caught the attention of luxury homebuyers from across the country, particularly those from Orange County, Texas, and Florida.

Promontory: A Flagship Development

One of the most significant projects for 4C is **Promontory**, a 7,200-acre luxury community in Park City. With 1,900 homesites and only half of them currently developed, Promontory is a hotspot for future growth and innovation in luxury housing. Solim shared examples of how 4C has designed signature modern homes in the area, catering to clients who seek something unique while adhering to the development's **strict design guidelines**.

By leveraging its long-standing relationships with Promontory's developers, 4C was able to push the design envelope for contemporary home styles that challenged the traditional mountain home aesthetic. Their success in Promontory showcases their ability to stay ahead of trends while maintaining strong partnerships with developers.

> **"WE DO HIGH-END LUXURY HOMES. WE TAKE THE HOMEOWNER'S DREAM AND TAKE IT ALL THE WAY TO THE CONSTRUCTION PHASE. WE DO THIS FOR HOMEOWNERS, INVESTORS, AND DEVELOPERS. ALL DELIVERED FROM THE EXPERTISE OF A HIGHLY COLLABORATIVE TEAM."** – **Solim Gasparik**

Solim Gasparik continued his presentation by highlighting the vast growth opportunities in Park City, focusing on several key luxury developments that are attracting high-end buyers from across the country. He explained that many of the current and upcoming projects are being designed with **long-term growth in mind**, positioning Park City as a premier destination for luxury real estate.

Comparing Park City to Other Luxury Markets

Solim emphasized the value proposition of the Park City market compared to other luxury destinations like Aspen and Jackson Hole. For instance, homes in Aspen are selling for as much as $2,500 per square foot, whereas in Park City, buyers can still find homes for approximately $800 per square foot. This pricing advantage, coupled with the high quality of life and increasing amenities in Park City, has made it a magnet for investors and homeowners seeking luxury living at a better value..

The 2034 Winter Olympics Impact

One of the most exciting prospects for the future of Park City, Solim noted, is the anticipated 2034 Winter Olympics, which will be a major draw for both tourism and real estate investment. He drew a parallel to the 2002 Winter Olympics, which had a transformative impact on the region's economy, driving significant infrastructure improvements and a surge in property values. The upcoming Olympics are expected to deliver even greater benefits, solidifying Park City's status as a world-class destination for both winter sports and luxury living.

Featured Resort Developments

In his presentation, Solim shared a detailed look at some of the most prestigious and high-growth luxury communities in Park City, including:

- **PROMONTORY** – This massive 7,200-acre development is one of the largest in the area, with over 1,900 homesites. Despite its size, only half of the lots have been developed, leaving significant room for future growth. 4C Group has been working on custom homes in Promontory for nearly two decades, positioning themselves as key players in the community's evolution.

- **MARCELLA** – Another exciting development, Marcella is a luxury community located near Deer Valley Resort. It features exclusive ski-in, ski-out properties, a private clubhouse, and limited memberships, offering a highly exclusive and unique living experience. This development, which includes a Tiger Woods-designed golf course, exemplifies the luxury and exclusivity that is drawing buyers to Park City.
- **THE COLONY** – Solim also highlighted The Colony, a smaller but equally prestigious development known for its ski-in, ski-out properties. With only 30 homesites remaining, this community offers some of the most coveted real estate in the area. 4C has been working on custom homes for private investors, helping them design, market, and sell these properties ahead of schedule due to strong demand.

Looking Ahead: Opportunities in Park City's Expanding Market

As Solim wrapped up his presentation, he reiterated that Park City is poised for significant growth in the coming years, thanks in large part to the upcoming 2034 Winter Olympics and the continued expansion of its luxury real estate market. With more than 20 high-end developments planned or underway, 4C Group is well-positioned to lead the charge in creating luxury living experiences for homeowners, investors, and developers alike.

Solim confidently underscored that, whether you're a homeowner looking for a dream home, an investor seeking strong returns, or a developer trying to create a unique community, 4C Group's vertically integrated approach and their commitment to collaboration and innovation make them the ideal partner. They continue to deliver not just homes, but entire experiences that elevate the luxury real estate market in Park City. With their cutting-edge design processes and focus on collaboration across architecture, interior design, and construction, 4C Group has successfully carved out a niche in the high-end real estate market, offering clients unmatched expertise and a seamless experience from concept to completion.

THE FUTURE OF TRAVEL

By **Joshua Dominic**

As CEO, Joshua Dominic is a visionary leader and the driving force behind Dreamstar Lines. With a passion for innovation in the transportation industry, Joshua is leading his new passenger railway offering to new heights, offering luxury travel experiences that redefine industry standard.

Joshua Dominic, founder of Dreamstar Lines, opened his keynote by acknowledging the many downsides of current travel options in the U.S., including the discomforts and inefficiencies of air, road, and train travel. With limited opportunities to stretch, frequent delays, and unpredictable traffic, travelers often lose valuable time while commuting long distances. Dominic emphasized that medium-distance travel, which typically ranges from 8-12 hours, presents a significant opportunity for improvement, particularly as most people spend this time doing nothing productive—whether stuck behind the wheel or waiting at airports.

"TRAVEL TODAY HAS BECOME A HUGE HASSLE FOR MEDIUM-DISTANCE TRIPS. WITH AIR TRAVEL, LONG LINES, AND DELAYS, AND WITH DRIVING, YOU'RE STUCK BEHIND THE WHEEL FOR HOURS. IT'S TIME FOR AN ALTERNATIVE THAT'S BOTH COMFORTABLE AND EFFICIENT." – Joshua Dominic

To solve these challenges, Dreamstar Lines aims to revolutionize travel by focusing on overnight, medium-distance journeys. Dominic described their innovative approach: passengers would board the train in the evening, around 8 p.m., and arrive at their destination by 8 a.m. This would allow travelers to sleep comfortably throughout the journey, thereby not losing valuable time in transit. Instead of long waits through security or traffic, passengers can drive directly to the train, board with ease, and relax in comfort for the remainder of the trip.

Dominic's passion for improving the medium-distance travel market was palpable. He noted that there is a significant demand for alternatives to flying or driving, especially on highly trafficked routes like San Francisco to Southern California.

Joshua Dominic emphasized the advantages of Dreamstar Lines' travel model, describing it as a fourfold solution to many of the inconveniences of modern travel. First, by utilizing overnight trips, passengers can entirely bypass much of the hassle associated with flying or long road trips—no airport security lines, no long drives in traffic, and no lost workdays. Dreamstar aims to turn traditionally wasted travel time into a comfortable and productive overnight experience.

Another key advantage is that Dreamstar Lines eliminates the lost time typically associated with traveling. Dominic explained how their train service allows passengers to maintain their work schedule or vacation plans without disruption. By boarding the train in the evening and arriving in the morning, passengers effectively save an entire travel day, which is otherwise consumed by flying or driving.

"WE'RE THE FUTURE OF MEDIUM-DISTANCE TRAVEL. OUR MODEL ALLOWS PASSENGERS TO TRAVEL OVERNIGHT, SKIPPING THE HASSLE OF AIRPORTS AND ROAD TRAFFIC, WHILE ARRIVING REFRESHED THE NEXT MORNING WITHOUT LOSING ANY WORK OR VACATION TIME." – **Joshua Dominic**

The comfort of the Dreamstar journey is also a major selling point. Dominic described the spacious and private accommodations available on board, where travelers can sleep comfortably, take a shower, and even bring their pets along for the ride. He highlighted how Dreamstar offers a level of environmental friendliness that outperforms air and car travel. In addition to these benefits, Dominic alluded to an innovative auto-ferry service that would allow passengers to bring their cars with them on the journey, so they can seamlessly continue their trip once they arrive at their destination. This feature provides a unique convenience that no other form of transportation currently offers.

Joshua Dominic began to wrap up his insightful keynote on the future of travel by highlighting the market size and growth potential for Dreamstar Lines. The medium-distance travel market is a vast and untapped opportunity, particularly for routes that take advantage of overnight travel. Dominic pointed out that routes between Los Angeles and San Francisco are some of the most heavily trafficked in the country, and Dreamstar's model of providing a seamless overnight experience taps into a $469 billion market in the U.S. transportation sector.

"OUR MODEL FILLS THE GAP IN MEDIUM-DISTANCE TRAVEL, AND WE'RE STARTING WITH ONE OF THE MOST HEAVILY TRAFFICKED CORRIDORS IN THE COUNTRY—SAN FRANCISCO TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA. IF IT WORKS HERE, IT WILL WORK ANYWHERE."

– **Joshua Dominic**

Joshua Dominic
at Jetty Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night One

FINANCIAL HEALTH & LEADERSHIP

By **Colin Myers**

Colin Myers is the Founder and CEO of Blue Jasper Capital, where he leads strategic investments and financial advisory services. His expertise in financial strategy and investment management has driven significant growth and value for his clients.

Colin Myers began his talk by connecting his love for history with the lessons he's learned about leadership, particularly in financial management. He illustrated this by referencing Napoleon's leadership at the Battle of Austerlitz. Myers shared how his father would often discuss historical battles at the dinner table, which inspired Colin to understand leadership through the lens of military strategy. He described how Napoleon's success at Austerlitz was not just about his command of troops but about resource utilization—making the most of the assets at hand to ensure victory. This early fascination with **leadership** and **strategy** is what ultimately led Colin to join the U.S. Navy.

During his time in the Navy, Myers served on Ohio-class submarines as a nuclear engineer, working with nuclear missiles. He was entrusted with the responsibility of handling launch codes and ensuring readiness in case of a global threat. This experience taught him invaluable lessons in resourcefulness and adaptability. When cut off from communication, he and his team had to make do with the resources available onboard, often having to repurpose parts to ensure mission success. This necessity for making the most of what was available became a key principle in his approach to financial leadership.

The transition from the Navy to financial management was not as far-fetched as it seemed. Myers explained that financial management is essentially resource allocation—just as he deployed assets on submarines, he now focuses on deploying financial resources effectively. However, Myers stressed that financial leadership goes beyond simple management. It involves being intentional about how financial resources are used to support a larger vision. Every dollar, he explained, is an opportunity, and it is up to the leader to ensure that those dollars are deployed in a way that best supports the mission of the organization.

"EVERY DOLLAR UNDER YOUR CONTROL IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP ATTAIN YOUR VISION. BUT THIS TOO REQUIRES INTENTIONALITY." – Colin Myers

Colin Myers emphasized that financial leadership is about intentionality and resource management, not just the mere allocation of funds. He encouraged the audience to think of every dollar as an employee, with each having the potential to support a mission or vision.

Colin Myers
at Jetty Beach
IMPACT 5050
Night One

Nearing the conclusion of his speech, Colin Myers shifted from the tactical aspects of financial leadership to focus on integrity and values in financial decision-making. He emphasized the importance of ensuring that every financial decision aligns with both personal and organizational values, drawing a direct line between financial integrity and leadership effectiveness. Myers defined integrity not just as honesty, but as wholeness—the idea that personal, financial, and organizational goals should be fully integrated. In his view, every dollar that is spent or invested should contribute to a unified mission. To illustrate this point, he shared personal anecdotes about clients whose investments were unknowingly supporting causes that contradicted their core beliefs. Whether funding companies involved in activities they morally opposed, or inadvertently backing industries that exacerbated the very problems they were trying to solve, these examples highlighted the need for greater awareness and responsibility in investment choices.

"FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IS ESSENTIALLY RESOURCE ALLOCATION. BUT FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP? THAT'S ABOUT SEEING EACH DOLLAR AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO HELP ACHIEVE YOUR VISION… WHICH REQUIRES FORESIGHT." – Colin Myers

He also touched on the moral responsibility of financial leadership. As a Christian, Myers said his life's work is to honor his faith while helping others become good stewards of their resources. This, he explained, is a core value that guides him in advising clients on making investment decisions that reflect their own values and missions.

Myers lastly underscored the importance of wisdom transfer—the idea that leadership is not only about managing resources but also about passing on the wisdom gained from experience to future generations. This principle applies both in business and in personal finance, as passing down financial resources without the accompanying wisdom can lead to poor outcomes for the next generation. Through this framework of financial leadership, integrity, and wisdom, Myers provided the audience with a holistic approach to managing both personal and organizational finances in a way that supports long-term success and ethical leadership.

LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES IN 2025

By **Shawn Collins**

Shawn Collins is a Partner at Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth, where he specializes in providing legal expertise in corporate and securities law. With years of experience in the legal field, Shawn has successfully guided numerous clients through complex legal challenges.

Shawn Collins, Partner at Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth, opened his talk by recounting his personal journey in leadership, emphasizing that leadership is not about formal titles or degrees, but about caring for the people you lead and being adaptable in the face of changing circumstances. Drawing on his military background, Collins shared a defining leadership moment from his time in Afghanistan, where he served as a Navy JAG officer embedded with a U.S. Army Ranger unit in Kandahar City. This was far outside his comfort zone, yet it became a pivotal experience in shaping his leadership approach.

He recalled a specific incident where a young Army Ranger, distraught after witnessing a tragic event, needed support. Collins was asked to comfort the soldier, even though he wasn't the soldier's commanding officer or part of the Army chain of command. Despite his initial hesitation, Collins realized that his role was not about rank or authority, but about showing genuine care and compassion. By taking the time to talk to the soldier, Collins demonstrated that leadership often comes down to empathy and human connection, rather than technical expertise or formal responsibility.

> **"YOU CAN GET ALL KINDS OF DEGREES, ALL KINDS OF EDUCATION, AND THOSE THINGS ARE INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT. BUT THE REALITY IS, YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT'S GOING TO COME AT YOU ON ANY GIVEN DAY."** – **Shawn Collins**

This moment, he explained, taught him the true essence of leadership: being there for people in difficult moments and making them feel valued and understood. This experience shaped Collins' philosophy on leadership, and he continues to apply it in his legal practice today. Shawn Collins then transitioned from his military experience to reflect upon his current role as a legal partner at Stradling Yocca Carlson & Rauth. He emphasized how the lessons learned in Afghanistan still apply to his work in law, particularly in leading his practice group in consumer protection. He discussed how leadership in the legal field requires creativity and the ability to adapt to new and evolving challenges, such as the rise of artificial intelligence (AI) in advertising and the ever-changing legal landscape.

Collins pointed out that, just as in the military where flexibility and problem-solving were critical, legal professionals must constantly think on their feet. The law is not static; it evolves every day, sometimes with no existing precedents or case law to guide decision-making. He shared how he recently received an urgent email from a client about new AI regulations and had to come up with an immediate solution, despite the lack of prior legal cases on the subject.

For Collins, leadership in the legal field is about helping clients achieve their goals by offering innovative solutions and being proactive in navigating new, complex problems. This mindset, developed during his military service, continues to guide him in his legal practice, where adaptability and the ability to think outside the box are crucial. The legal profession, like many other industries, is being shaped by the fast-paced evolution of technology, particularly AI. Collins underscored how leadership in this context is about being prepared to confront challenges with **flexibility** and **imagination**.

"LEADERSHIP ISN'T ABOUT HAVING ALL THE ANSWERS. IT'S ABOUT BEING FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO GUIDE YOUR TEAM THROUGH UNCERTAINTY." – **Shawn Collins**

He described a situation where a client contacted him about a new regulation affecting AI in advertising. With no existing legal cases to reference, Collins had to rely on his team's creative problem-solving skills to navigate the new terrain. He pointed out that the ability to quickly devise strategies in uncharted areas is crucial for a leader in today's dynamic world.

In addition to this, he reflected on how his military background continues to influence his leadership style. Collins uses the same principles of adaptability, decisiveness, and caring for his team in legal practice, always ensuring they have the resources they need to succeed while working collaboratively toward solutions for their clients. Leadership is an ongoing journey shaped by constant change, he affirmed. It's not a question of *if* changes will occur, but *when* they will happen. As leaders, we must be prepared to adapt to evolving situations, whether in the context of new technologies like artificial intelligence or unexpected circumstances in our personal and professional lives. By fostering a collaborative, supportive environment, leaders can empower their teams to tackle new challenges with confidence and innovation.

In his closing remarks, Collins reiterated that while formal education and qualifications are valuable, true leadership comes from understanding, adaptability, and the willingness to care deeply for those we lead, echoing his personal story from his time in Afghanistan. Leadership is not static; it requires continuous growth, empathy, and the courage to face challenges head-on.

Shawn Collins at
Jetty Beach Dinner
IMPACT 5050
Night One

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ENTERPRISE

By **Tom Peck**

Tom Peck is the Executive Vice President and Chief Information and Digital Officer at Sysco, where he oversees IT transformations and drives technological innovation. With a focus on enhancing operational efficiency and service delivery, Tom's strategic vision has been key to Sysco's success in leveraging technology to stay ahead in the industry.

Tom Peck, Chief Information & Digital Officer at Sysco, began his presentation with a brief introduction to the company and its massive scale. Sysco is an $80 billion global foodservice distributor, ranked #151 on the Fortune 500 list. Peck emphasized that Sysco is not involved in retail grocery, but rather focuses on food distribution from farms and manufacturers to restaurants and other food service outlets. Sysco's customer base is broad, ranging from restaurants (62% of their customer base) to healthcare institutions, schools, cruise lines, and military installations.

With 14,000 trucks, 800 facilities, and a presence in 10 countries, Sysco operates massive warehouses that can cover around 800,000 square feet, managing around 20,000 stock items and operating in multiple temperature zones. This immense logistical challenge requires Sysco to constantly innovate to ensure efficiency in its supply chain, and Peck underlined how central digital leadership is to achieving these goals.

Peck set the stage by stressing the complexity and scale of Sysco's operations, as well as the vital role the company plays in delivering food efficiently to its customers. He also touched on how Sysco's leadership, technology, and innovation help drive continuous improvements in a highly competitive and challenging industry.

Tom Peck at Jetty Beach IMPACT 5050 Night One

Peck pointed out that a major challenge to the industry is managing inflation, both in terms of labor and food costs, which has put pressure on pricing and led to higher costs for consumers. In this context, Sysco's leaders must strike a balance between maintaining profitability and offering competitive pricing, all while continuing to innovate in supply chain management, labor retention, and customer service. This focus on leadership, innovation, and adaptability is key to Sysco's ability to remain a market leader in food distribution, especially in an industry as competitive and fast-changing as food service.

Tom Peck continued by emphasizing the role of technology in Sysco's ability to innovate and maintain a competitive edge. He provided examples of how Sysco has integrated technology into its operations, particularly focusing on warehouse management and fleet optimization. One key area of focus was how Sysco uses predictive technology and automation to streamline the pick-and-pack process in their distribution centers, reducing inefficiencies and labor costs.

Sysco experimented with assisted reality technology in their warehouses, exploring new ways to improve how workers pick items from shelves. While some innovations, like augmented reality glasses, didn't perform as expected in the freezer sections, Sysco found success with handheld devices that use predictive analytics. These devices guide employees through the warehouse, ensuring they follow the most efficient routes for collecting items and reducing time spent on tasks. This approach has led to significant improvements in labor retention and efficiency.

"WE FOUND OUT ASSISTED REALITY DIDN'T WORK SO WELL IN FREEZER SECTIONS, BUT HANDHELD PREDICTIVE DEVICES TURNED OUT TO BE A GAME-CHANGER. IT'S ABOUT GUIDING WORKERS TO THE RIGHT PLACE, AT THE RIGHT TIME, SAVING US MINUTES ON EACH ROUTE, WHICH ADD UP TO HUGE COST SAVINGS." – **Tom Peck**

Peck also discussed Sysco's fleet of 14,000 trucks, emphasizing the importance of technology in optimizing their routes. Using GPS and AI-based routing systems, Sysco's drivers can now cover more ground in less time, reducing fuel costs and improving delivery times. These innovations are helping Sysco reshape how food distribution operates on a massive scale, aligning with the company's strategy of reducing operational costs while enhancing service levels.

"LEADERSHIP IS ABOUT MOTIVATING AND INSPIRING PEOPLE TO DO WHAT THEY MIGHT NOT OTHERWISE THINK THEY'RE CAPABLE OF DOING. IT'S MORE THAN MANAGING TASKS AND BUDGETS—IT'S ABOUT TRANSFORMING HEARTS AND MINDS." – **Tom Peck**

Before concluding his keynote, Peck stressed to the IMPACT attendees the importance of collaboration and partnerships in driving innovation, particularly in a large-scale operation like Sysco's. He reiterated that the company is constantly exploring new ways to improve its processes, whether through in-house innovation or partnering with external experts. Peck left his audience with a reminder of the complexities behind getting food from farm to table, encouraging everyone to consider the vast logistics network involved the next time they enjoy a meal out at a restaurant.

TRANSFORM YOUR BUSINESS

By **Mark Samuel**

Mark Samuel is the CEO of IMPAQ Corporation, where he focuses on business performance improvement and operational excellence. With decades of experience in leadership and management consulting, Mark has helped numerous organizations achieve significant performance gains.

Mark Samuel, CEO of IMPAQ Corporation, opened his speech by emphasizing the immense learning and innovative ideas that were shared throughout the event. He aimed to tie it all together by focusing on how businesses can implement these new insights to improve their results, leadership, and organizational culture. He outlined the importance of achieving rapid, measurable business results and culture change simultaneously, asserting that contrary to the traditional belief, significant change doesn't need years to manifest. Mark shared that he has worked with numerous organizations and teams, proving that meaningful culture change can happen in as little as six months—and be sustained for years.

> **"YOUR CULTURE IS BASED ON YOUR LEADERS. THEY'RE THE ONES WHO CREATE IT BY WHAT THEY DO DAY IN AND DAY OUT. IF YOU DON'T CREATE A CULTURE THAT CHANGES, YOU CAN'T SUSTAIN THE BUSINESS RESULTS YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE."** – Mark Samuel

The core of his methodology centers around leadership. He strongly emphasized that leaders set the culture by how they operate day in and day out. For sustainable results, he noted that it's critical for businesses to align both their results and culture from the outset.

Mark also challenged the notion that continuous improvement—while necessary—might only lead to incremental changes and, in some cases, could result in businesses becoming obsolete, like Blockbuster or Kodak. Instead, he introduced the concept of paradigm shifts as crucial for long-term survival and growth.

He shared a personal example from his own business during COVID-19. Pre-pandemic, all of his organizational change work was done in person. The sudden global shift to virtual work forced him to abandon his deeply held belief that culture change could only be accomplished face-to-face. Within five months, Mark's company transitioned to entirely virtual programs. Contrary to his previous assumptions, they achieved the same measurable results, proving that flexibility and rethinking business paradigms are essential to survival and success.

"IT'S TOTALLY NOT TRUE THAT CULTURE CHANGE TAKES YEARS. YOU CAN ACHIEVE RAPID, MEASURABLE RESULTS WITHIN SIX MONTHS—BOTH IN TERMS OF BUSINESS OUTCOMES AND CULTURE." – **Mark Samuel**

Mark continued by introducing the idea that we need to break free from linear, rational thinking and embrace imagination. He pointed out that as children, we were naturally imaginative, picturing ourselves as astronauts, scientists, or other figures, and embodying that vision. However, over time, education systems and societal expectations shifted our focus toward logic and rationality, sidelining our imaginative capacities.

For businesses to successfully transform, Mark emphasized that it is crucial to reactivate this imaginative mindset. He often asks leadership teams to envision what their business could look like two years from now, without being bound by their current constraints or history. This exercise encourages creative thinking, free from the limitations of past paradigms.

Mark explained that when teams engage in this kind of open, forward-thinking visioning, they consistently identify the same critical factors: collaboration, transparent communication, problem-solving, and shared decision-making. These are the building blocks for achieving the desired business results.

By leveraging this shared vision, teams can develop new collective habits that align with the future state they want to achieve. He noted that getting buy-in for this new way of working becomes easier when leaders focus on creating a shared goal that everyone can rally around.

The process, Mark said, involves continual measurement and tracking of progress, ensuring that the organization stays on course to reach its newly imagined future. He highlighted the importance of leaders not just planning the change but living it, role modeling the new behaviors to ensure alignment across the entire organization. In summary, imagination should be harnessed as a critical tool to break free from linear thinking, allowing organizations to envision and work towards a bold new future.

"WE LOSE OUR IMAGINATION AS WE GROW UP. BUT TO ENVISION A NEW FUTURE, WE HAVE TO REIGNITE THAT CHILDLIKE CREATIVITY AND STOP BEING CONSTRAINED BY PAST RESULTS."
– **Mark Samuel**

Mark emphasized that to stay on track, organizations must maintain a forward-looking approach, focusing on the "B" state or end goal, rather than obsessing over the steps taken from "A" to "B." This shift in focus keeps the organization aligned and motivated to keep moving, rather than getting bogged down by problems or setbacks. The leadership body, Mark reminded his audience, must itself act as the "GPS" for the organization. When teams get off track, the role of leadership is to recalibrate the focus towards the future state (B) rather than dwelling on the past. By doing this, teams waste less time revisiting what went wrong but instead focus on how to course-correct and continue the journey towards their goal.

"LEADERSHIP IS ABOUT FOCUSING ON WHERE WE ARE GOING, NOT WHERE WE ARE. DON'T LOOK AT THE PLAN TO GET BACK ON TRACK, LOOK AT WHERE YOU WANT TO GO." – **Mark Samuel**

Mark Samuel
with Sinan Kanatsiz
IMPACT 5050
Night One

Mark also illustrated the importance of cross-functional collaboration and how it can break down silos within an organization. He pointed out that different departments are often focused on optimizing their own areas—sales focused on sales, quality on maintaining product standards, and so on. The problem arises when these teams work in isolation, resulting in conflicts that need resolution from someone higher up in the chain. This slows down decision-making and problem-solving.

This alignment around shared ownership at the top of the organization, according to Mark, accelerates decision-making and execution, enabling teams to act more swiftly and effectively. He highlighted the importance of having critical thinkers in every department who are focused on solving problems at the organizational level, rather than protecting their own functional areas.

"BREAK DOWN SILOS, GET EVERYBODY ALIGNED AT THE TOP SO THAT WE'RE ALL WORKING FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORGANIZATION. SHARED OWNERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACCELERATE DECISION-MAKING AND PROBLEM-SOLVING."

– **Mark Samuel**

Breaking down silos and ensuring cross-functional collaboration are key to driving transformation and achieving long-term success. This collective focus enables organizations to move faster, make better decisions, and align efforts toward shared objectives.

Mark elaborated on the importance of setting expectations from the top leadership down. He emphasized that transformation in any organization starts at the senior leadership level, no matter which group needs to make the most significant shift—whether it's middle management or individual contributors. Leaders need to role model new behaviors, set clear expectations, and hold middle managers accountable for those changes.

He continued by discussing how change must be driven by external factors, such as customer demands, market shifts, or regulatory requirements. Leaders often discuss these external drivers in private meetings but fail to communicate them to the rest of the organization. Without understanding the "why" behind changes, employees may feel disconnected or resistant. By sharing the external drivers for change, leaders provide context and clarity, which naturally fosters alignment throughout the organization.

Mark underscored that people are fundamentally motivated by hope. When leaders articulate a clear vision or "B state"—where the organization is headed—and link it to a hopeful outcome, employees are more likely to buy in. He also mentioned that it's essential to demonstrate what's in it for the employees, whether it's skill development, career advancement, or a better work environment. This approach encourages individuals to align with the organization's goals, fostering a shared sense of ownership and purpose.

Mark wrapped up his insightful exploration into shaping business culture and minds by returning to the importance of embedding hope into the communication process. For him, hope is a driving force behind any successful transformation. Leaders must consistently remind their teams of the hopeful vision they are working towards, reinforcing that hope through every communication, meeting, and decision-making process.

"YOU'RE NOT THERE TO MAKE YOUR DEPARTMENT LOOK GOOD. YOU'RE THERE TO MAKE SURE WE ACHIEVE OUR ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS. SHARED OWNERSHIP MEANS YOU'RE ACCOUNTABLE FOR SOLVING ANY BREAKDOWNS THAT IMPACT SUCCESS."

– **Mark Samuel**

To ensure lasting change, Mark argued that leadership must continually articulate the "what's in it for you" aspect—showing employees how they benefit personally from the changes. Whether it's through development opportunities, career progression, or a healthier organizational culture, employees need to see that the changes align with their personal and professional aspirations.

Mark concluded his insightful discussion by stressing that transformation isn't just about managing current challenges but about setting the organization up for long-term success. By creating a culture of collaboration, transparency, and shared ownership, organizations can not only meet their immediate goals but sustain their success far into the future. The key takeaway is that true business transformation is possible when leaders align their teams around a shared vision, foster hope, and ensure that everyone understands how they fit into the larger picture.

"PEOPLE ARE MOTIVATED BY HOPE. IT'S HOPE THAT DRIVES US – HOPE THAT OUR EXERCISE PLAN WILL WORK, HOPE THAT OUR EFFORTS WILL BRING RESULTS. HOPE IS ESSENTIAL TO LEADERSHIP. – **Mark Samuel**

Mark Samuel at
Jetty Beach Dinner
IMPACT 5050
Night One

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