Culture Over Everything.

Cultivating a Thriving Workplace Culture

Darius McDonald, COO The Nashville Black Market Greg Bradley, Founder & CEO of GB Collective



MEET THE CREW

Opened Two Award-Winning Hotels in Tennessee



GB Collective

Greg Bradley

Born in NJ, raised in FL
20+ year, Hands-On Hospitality Veteran
Earned the Forbes Five-Star Award at 4 different U.S resort
UFC and Formula 1 (NY Football Giants fan)
Founder of GB Collective – A Hospitality Services Consulting Firm focusing on "Giving Back" to the hospitality community and their families.
Worked through 911, Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Bankruptcy,
Transitions, owner changes, brand creations, two openings, The Great
Recession and the Pandemic.
"Culture Over Everything"



The Nashville Black Market

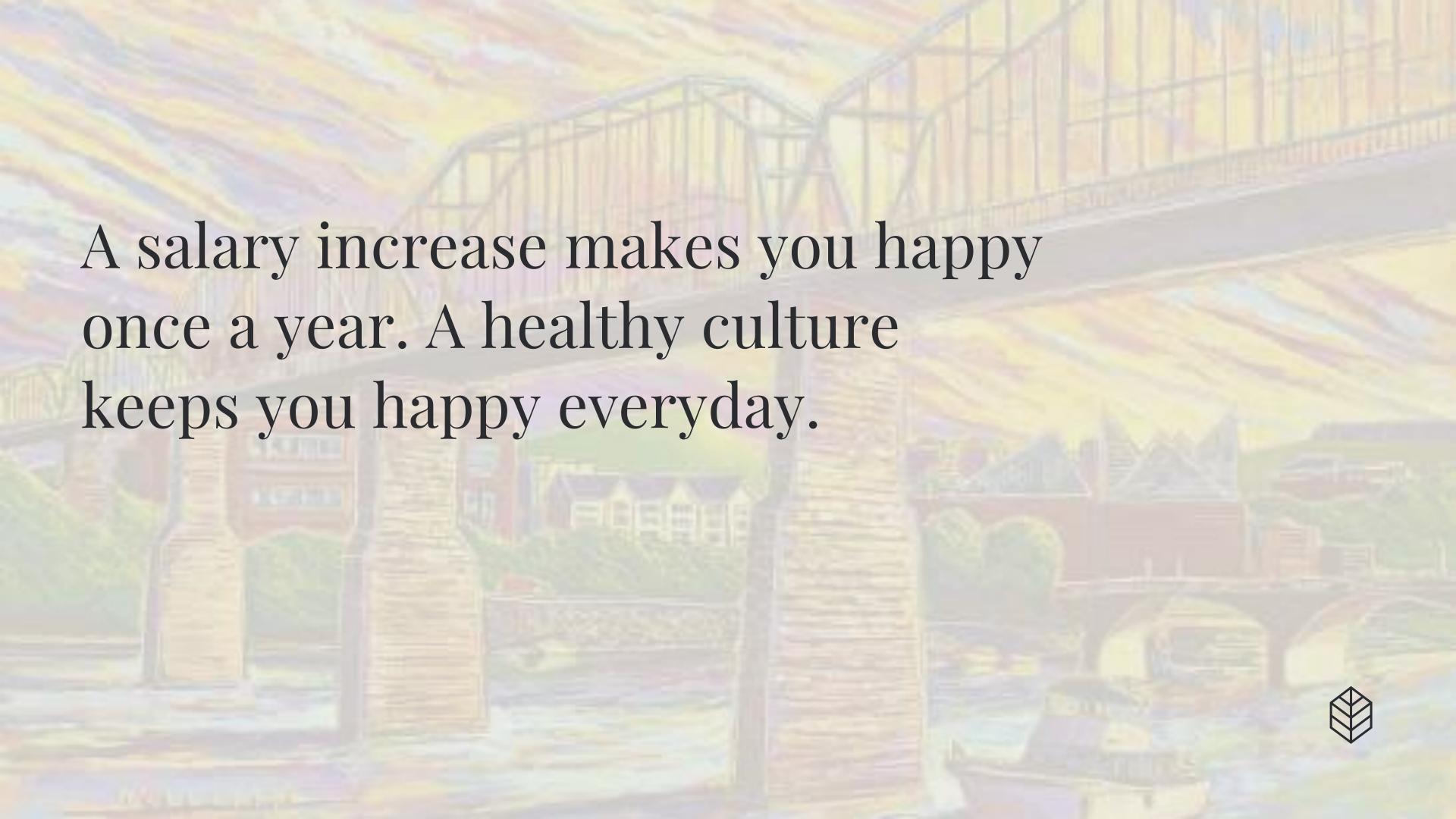
Darius McDonald

Born in GA, raised in FL

Multi-sport student athlete
Philly Eagles football fan
U.S. Army Veteran - 12B Combat Engineer (SAPPER, SOCOM)
Director of Operations & Membership Services, THCA Chief Operating
Officer, The Nashville Black Market
Board Member of The Tennessee Hospitality & Tourism Association

Board Member of The Tennessee Hospitality & Tourism Association and The National Museum of African American Music Minority Business Advisory Council (MBAC) Member, Metropolitan Government of Nashville & Davidson County "Excellence + Empathy"





The Numbers Don't Lie

70% of employees who actively disengage in the workplace do so because of their managers (Gallup)

Companies with high employee engagement experience 81% lower absenteeism and 23% higher profitability (Harvard Business Review)

Companies with highly effective recognition programs have a 31% lower turnover rate compared to those without such programs (Workhuman)

Organizations with a strong emphasis on work-life balance experience 25% lower employee turnover (Society for Human Resource Management, SHRM)



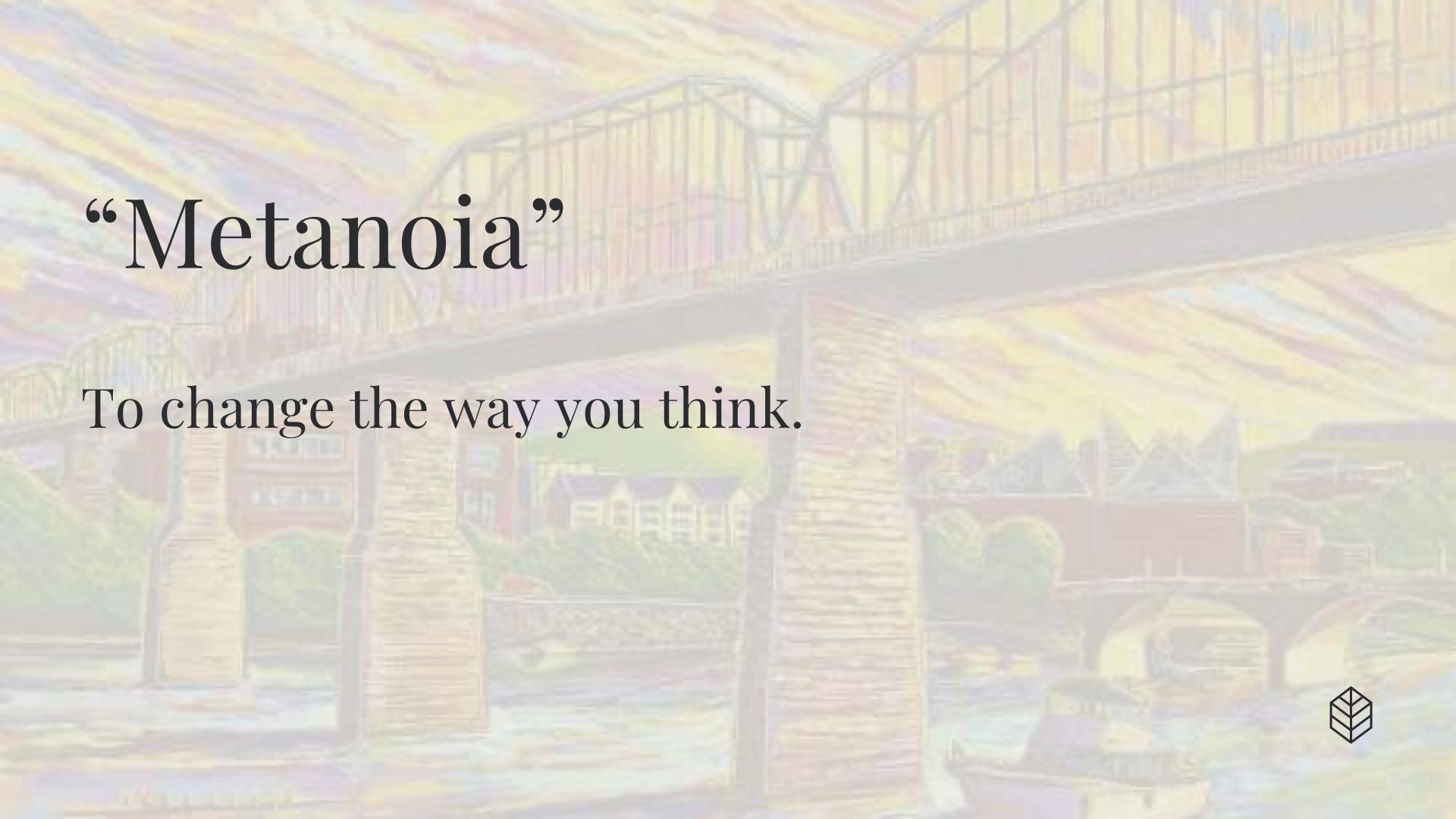
"WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT?"

Write Down 2-3 work-related challenges that are keeping up at night.



HOOAH!





WHAT IS CULTURE?

A True Definition

Culture Definition: the customs, arts, social institutions, and achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group.

People try to copy, duplicate, or appropriate a STYLE and call it culture. And that's just not the truth. Most people have a very shallow understanding of what culture is.



WHAT IS CULTURE?

Becoming A Culture Curator

Not everyone has a grid of understanding for what it means to truly CREATE culture. Some get culture confused with "style" or "surface similarities".

Culture takes intentionality. Creating a space that NATURALLY GIVES LIFE to the things you say you care about. (BOAT ANALOGY)

Creating an environment that is conducive to the culture you say you want to see in your work or organization

- Culture of Learning
- Culture of Innovation
- Culture of Excellence
- Culture of Social Well-being
- Diversity (of people and of THOUGHT)
- In the Organizational Development world, a lot of people don't realize that when it comes to turnover and things alike...the true workplace experience is made up of what we call "micro-experiences"



Organizational Skill Progression does not end at task competence.

MICRO - EXPERIENCES

What are they, and have you seen them?

• When people feel safe enough to raise their hands and say, "I made a mistake" or "I need some help." The leader has obviously created an environment of "phycological safety" where their people feel safe to be themselves. When team members are scared to make mistakes, they become preoccupied with protecting themselves from the forces within the organization.

• If there's a lack of inherent trust and your organization is more concerned about getting a doctor's note to justify your absence from work rather than asking about your health and what they can do for you, *this clearly* shows that you're only a commodity; you are not valuable, and you are not safe.

The Journey of Embracing Accountability See It, Own It, Solve It, Do It

SEE IT

- Obtain perspectives of others
- Communicate openly & candidly
- Ask for and offer feedback
- · Hear the hard things to see reality

OWN IT

- Be personally invested
- Learn from both successes and failures
- Align my work with desired company results
- · Act on the feedback I receive

SOLVE IT

- •Constantly ask: "What else can I do?"
- · Overcome cross-functional boundaries
- Creatively deal with obstacles
- Take the necessary risks

DO IT

- ·DO the things I say I'll do
- Focus on the top priorities
- · Don't blame others
- BUILD and SUSTAIN an environment of trust



WE SET THE TONE

What You Expect

To genuinely care for the customer & team.

To smile and have a good attitude.

To bring joy to the job.

To be present.

To have grit and be empowered.

What Your Team Expects

To genuinely care for the customer & team.

To smile and have a good attitude.

To bring joy to the job.

To be present.

To have grit and be empowered.



CULTURE IS FRAGILE

- ☐ Your workplace culture requires DAILY nurturing.
- ☐ Take Ownership. If you don't like the current state of your culture, you can fix it.
- ☐ Get everyone positively involved. They will contribute regardless for the better or the worse.
- ☐ Build a team that elevates culture and each other.

Treat your culture as a department you manage and make it worthy of your time.



Aspect	Baby Boomers (1946-1964)	Generation X (1965-1980)	Millennials (1981-1996)	Generation Z (1997-2012)
Work Ethic	Values hard work, loyalty, stability	Self-reliant, resourceful, values work-life balance	Seeks meaningful work, entrepreneurial, collaborative	Seeks meaningful work, pragmatic, entrepreneurial
Communication Style	Prefers face-to-face, formal channels		Prefers digital communication, including social media	Favors digital but also values face-to-face interactions
Technology	Experienced tech rise later, less tech-savvy		Digital natives, highly proficient with tech	Digital natives, expect tech integration
Leadership Preferences	Favors hierarchical structures, traditional		Prefers flat structures, transparent leadership	Prefers collaborative, inclusive environments
Workplace Expectations	Job security, retirement benefits, clear career path	,	Work-life balance, flexibility, continuous learning, values alignment	Flexibility, job security, work-life balance, values alignment

SHATTER THE MODEL BY PERSONALIZATION

- ☐ Be Aware, But Don't Assume
- ☐ Adjust your communication style to the individual
- ☐ Understand what is most important to your leaders and develop a personalized leadership approach
- ☐ Humanize their work experience
- ☐ Be Vulnerable

Be aware of how generational differences may impact your ability to manage your team and your superiors, and tailor your management approach to the individual.



AT WHAT COST? MANAGING UPWARDS

- ☐ Eliminate "Us vs. Them" Mentality
- ☐ Build a strong relationship with your superiors & Be aware of generational differences
- ☐ When asking for support, consider what pressure they may be under
- ☐ Make sure your manager knows the costs of not supporting your recommendation

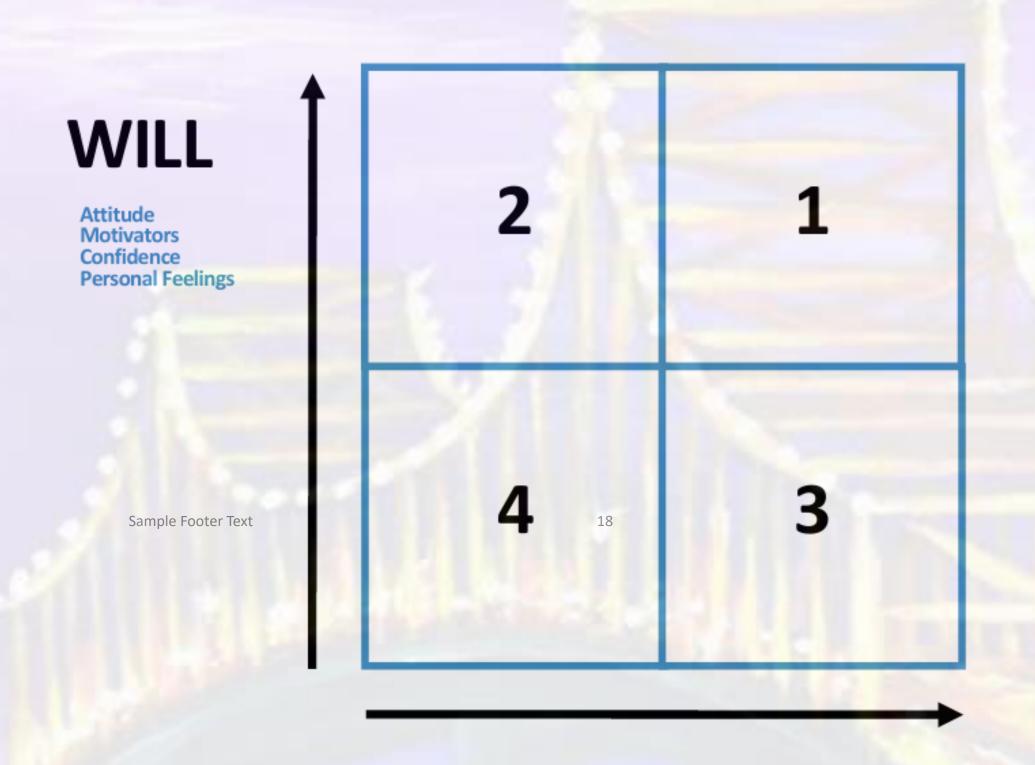
Build a solid business case to support your plans. Consider your timing, market conditions, values & vision alignment and the ROI on moving forward and the Costs of not moving forward with your recommendation.

MEMORABLE | MEANINGFUL

- ☐ Set aside consistent quality time with your leaders
- ☐ Make sure your A-level talent feels indispensable. Engage them in the recruiting process and projects that impact the work they do
- ☐ The power of Empathy and Genuine Care
- Avoid leadership auto-pilot

Find one thing that someone loves and decide to act on it. Repeat with consistency and without favoritism. Keep a list of interests and facts about your team.

Skill-Will Matrix

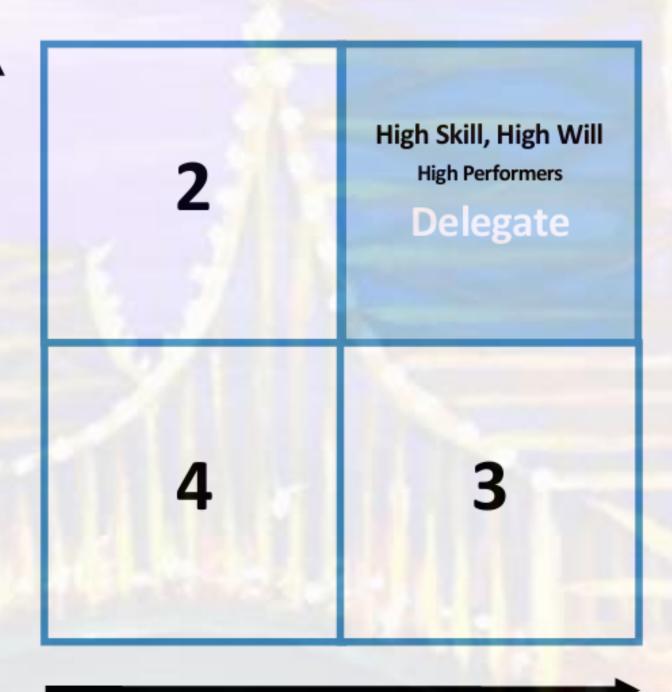


SKILL

Proficiency Experience Training Natural Abilities



Attitude Motivators Confidence Personal Feelings

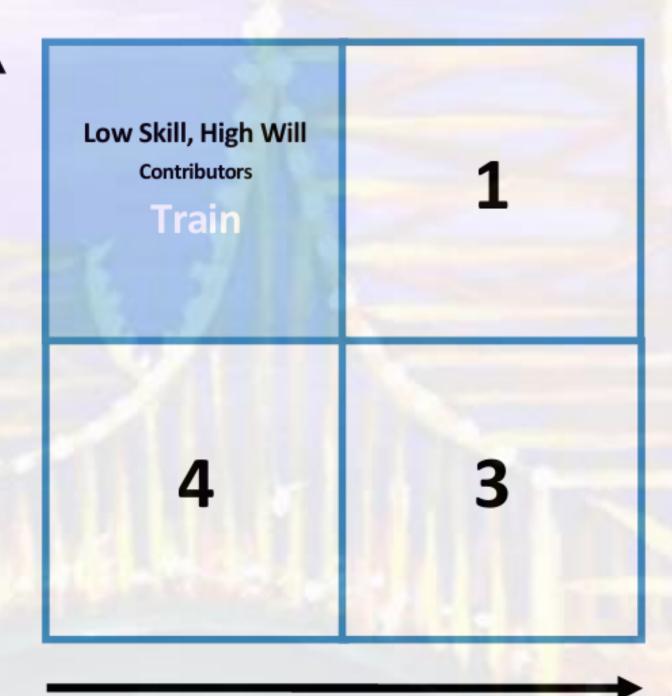


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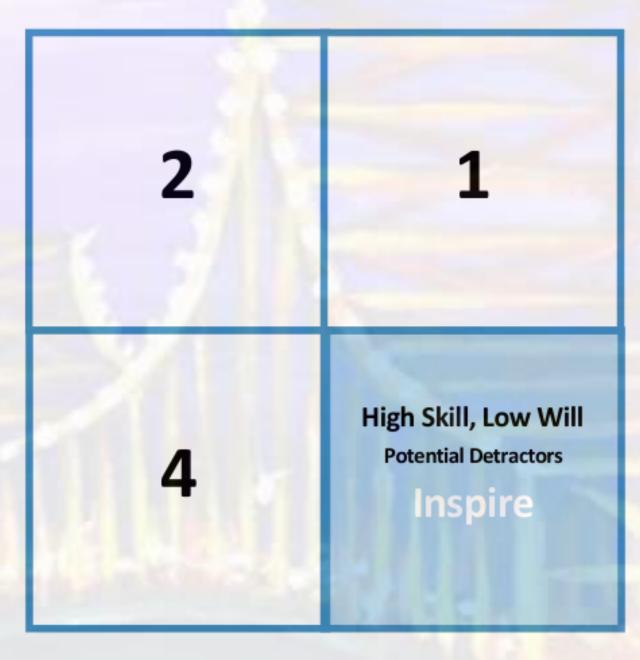


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SKILL

Proficiency Experience Training Natural Abilities



Attitude Motivators Confidence Personal Feelings Low Skill, Low Will Low Performers Coach Up or Out

SKILL

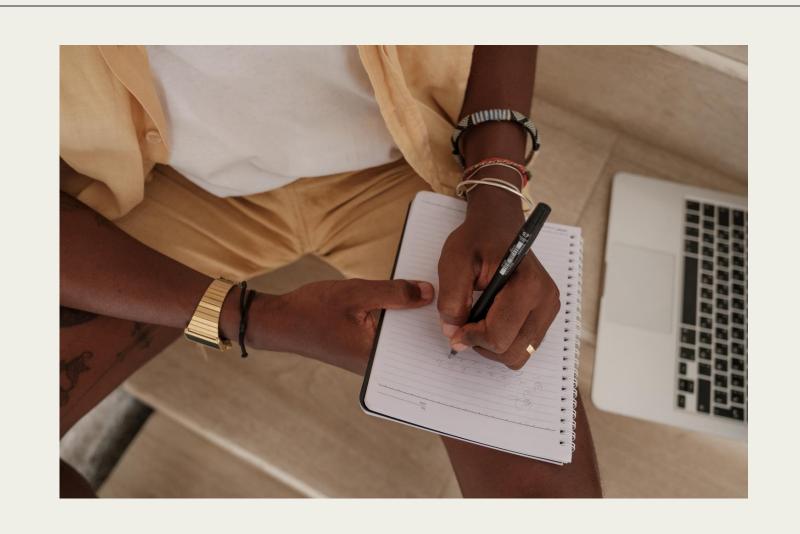
Proficiency Experience Training Natural Abilities



Skill-Will Matrix

Be careful to not misidentify.

Many leaders mistake lack of inspiration, well-being, and confidence with being "uncoachable."







"WHAT KEEPS YOU UP AT NIGHT?"

Write Down 2-3 work-related challenges that are keeping up at night.

How many hours each week are you investing into each of these challenges?



TIME MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Own where you are at
- ☐ Be intentional with your time
- ☐ View your time as an investment
- ☐ We can not grow what we do not spend time on

Build out a Culture Plan 1-2 weeks in advance. This should include activations and programming, RAK, thoughtful gifts/gestures, lineup topics, training.



INVEST IN YOUR TEAM

- ☐ It's our job to build an environment worthy of our team
- ☐ Honor your time with your team, they should feel valued & challenged
- ☐ Respect time off and establish healthy boundaries
- ☐ Build resiliency and encourage initiative
- ☐ Trust is required for Empowerment, Practice letting go

Build out a progression plan for each of your leaders. Know who they are, what is valuable to them and where they want to go.



FINAL TAKEAWAYS

- Use The Skill Will Matrix and build a detailed progression plan
- Be aware of generational sensitivities but manage to the individual
- Everyone contributes to the culture, but WE set the tone
- Be Present and Be the walking example of Empathy
- ☐ Prepare a detailed Culture Plan. Remove ambiguity
- ☐ Be Enthusiastic and Lead From The Front



Thank You!

HOW TO STAY IN TOUCH







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