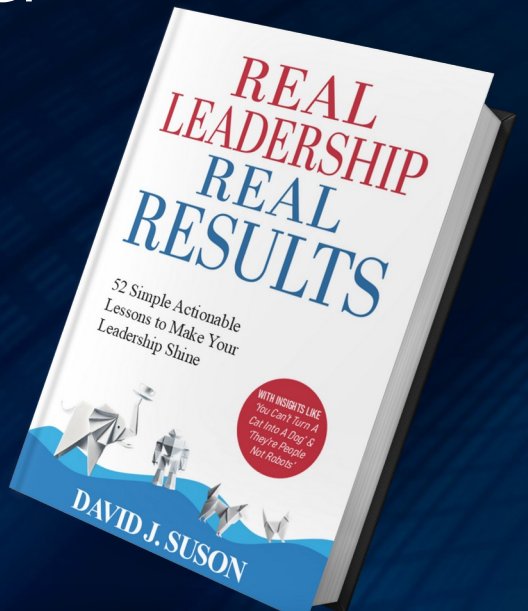
Lead to Attract, Retain, and Inspire

Creating a Culture Where People Want to Stay and Thrive

DAVID SUSON

Author, Speaker





2026 ONSITE WASTEWATER MEGA CONFERENCE
Westminster, Colorado

The materials being presented represent my own opinions, and do NOT reflect the opinions of NOWRA



↑ Outcomes

↑ Teamwork

↑ Engagement

↑ Morale

↑ Retain &

Attract

↓ Problems

↓ Stress


THE FOUR AGREEMENTS
Patrick Bet-David
with Greg Dinkin
THE DAILY STOIC
366 MEDITATIONS ON WISDOM, PERSEVERANCE, AND THE ART OF LIVING
RYAN HOLIDAY
and STEPHEN HANSELMAN
GRIT
Angela Duckworth
BUILDING A STORY BRAND
DONALD MILLER
HOW TO win friends AND influence people
DALE CARNEGIE
15 MILLION BOOKS SOLD WORLDWIDE
ROBIN SHARMA
AUTHOR OF THE #1 WORLDWIDE BESTSELLER THE MONK WHO SOLD HIS FERRARI
THE LEADER WHO HAD NO TITLE
A Modern Fable on Success in Business and in Life
THE WARREN BUFFETT WAY
ROBERT G. HAGSTROM
Dr. Paul L. Hokemeyer
fragile power
Start Now
Get
Atomic Habits

SIMPLE


EASY

Root Cause





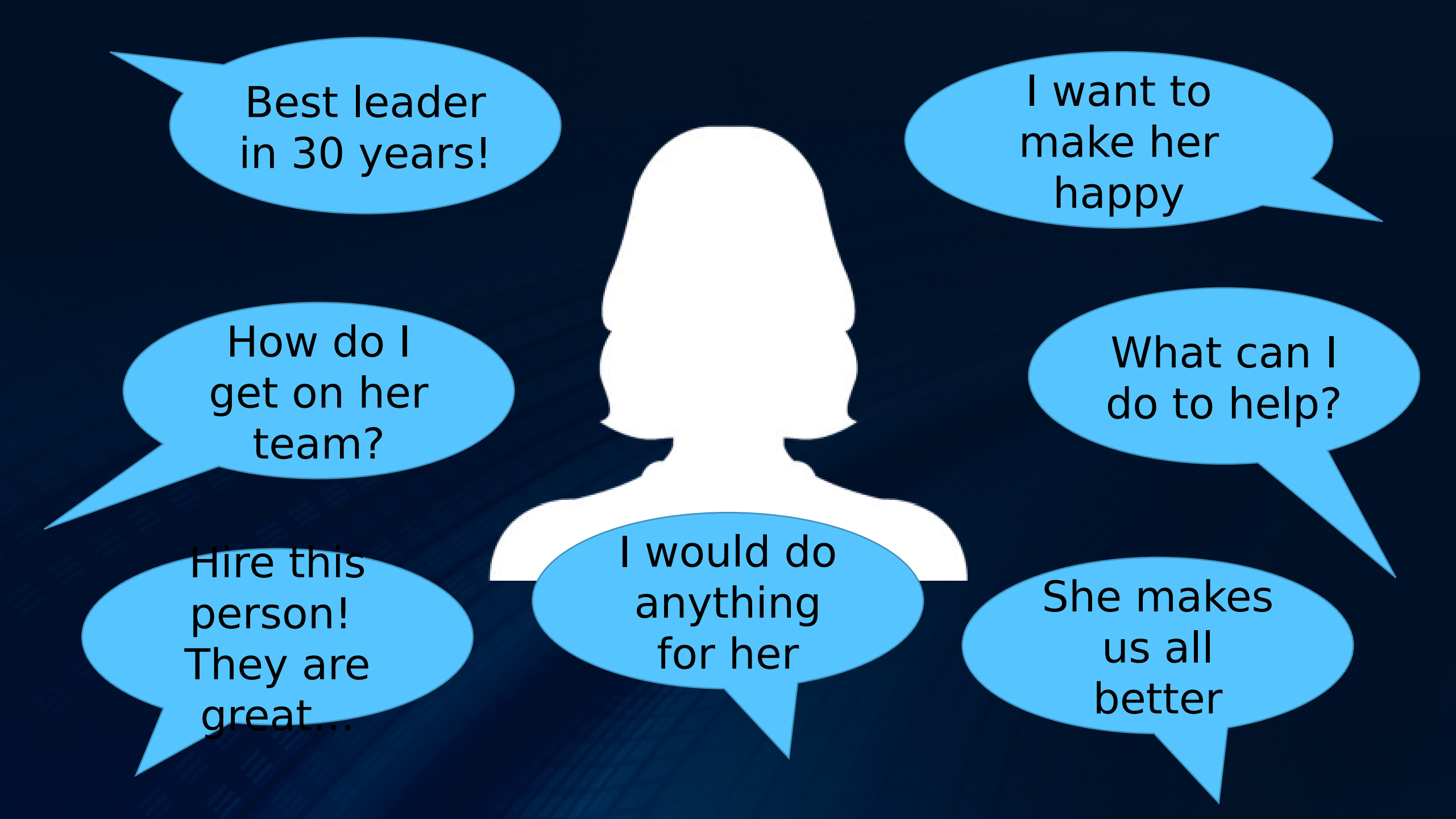
Mary










Best leader in 30 years!
I want to make her happy
How do I get on her team?
What can I do to help?
Hire this person! They are great...
I would do anything for her
She makes us all better

↑ Teamwork

↑ Engagement

↑ Morale

↑ Performance

↑ Retain &

Attract

↓ Problems

↓ Stress



Empathy

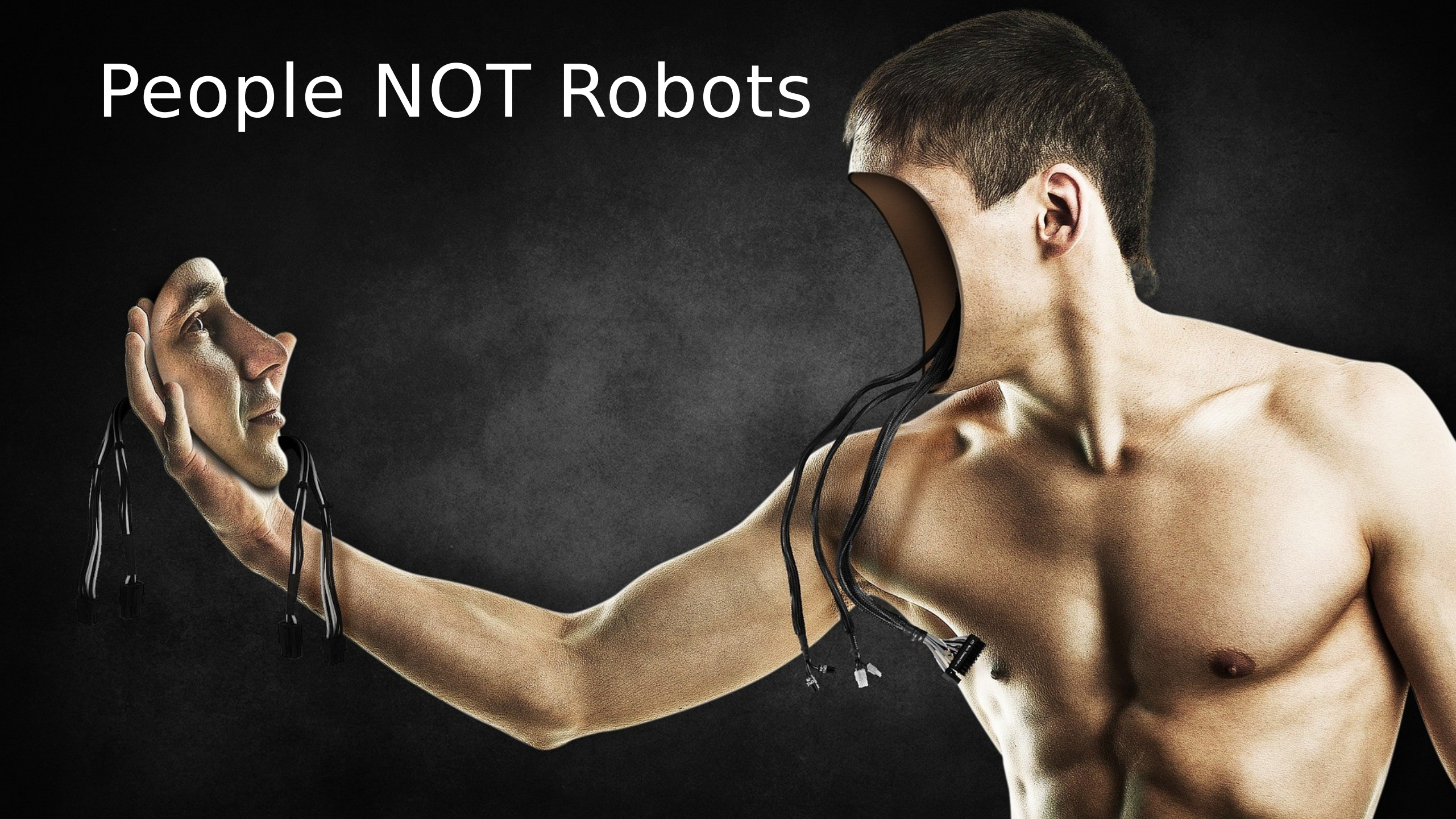
Put yourself in their shoes

Empathy

Be THEM in THEIR shoes



People NOT Robots









WHY EMPLOYEES QUIT JOBS?



"Hate"

WHY EMPLOYEES **WON'T** QUIT JOBS?



"Love"

Hardest Part about Leading/Managing?

PEOPLE

People are **DIFFICULT**!

BABYSITTING

DON’T WORK HARD

YOUNG

ENTITLED

OLD

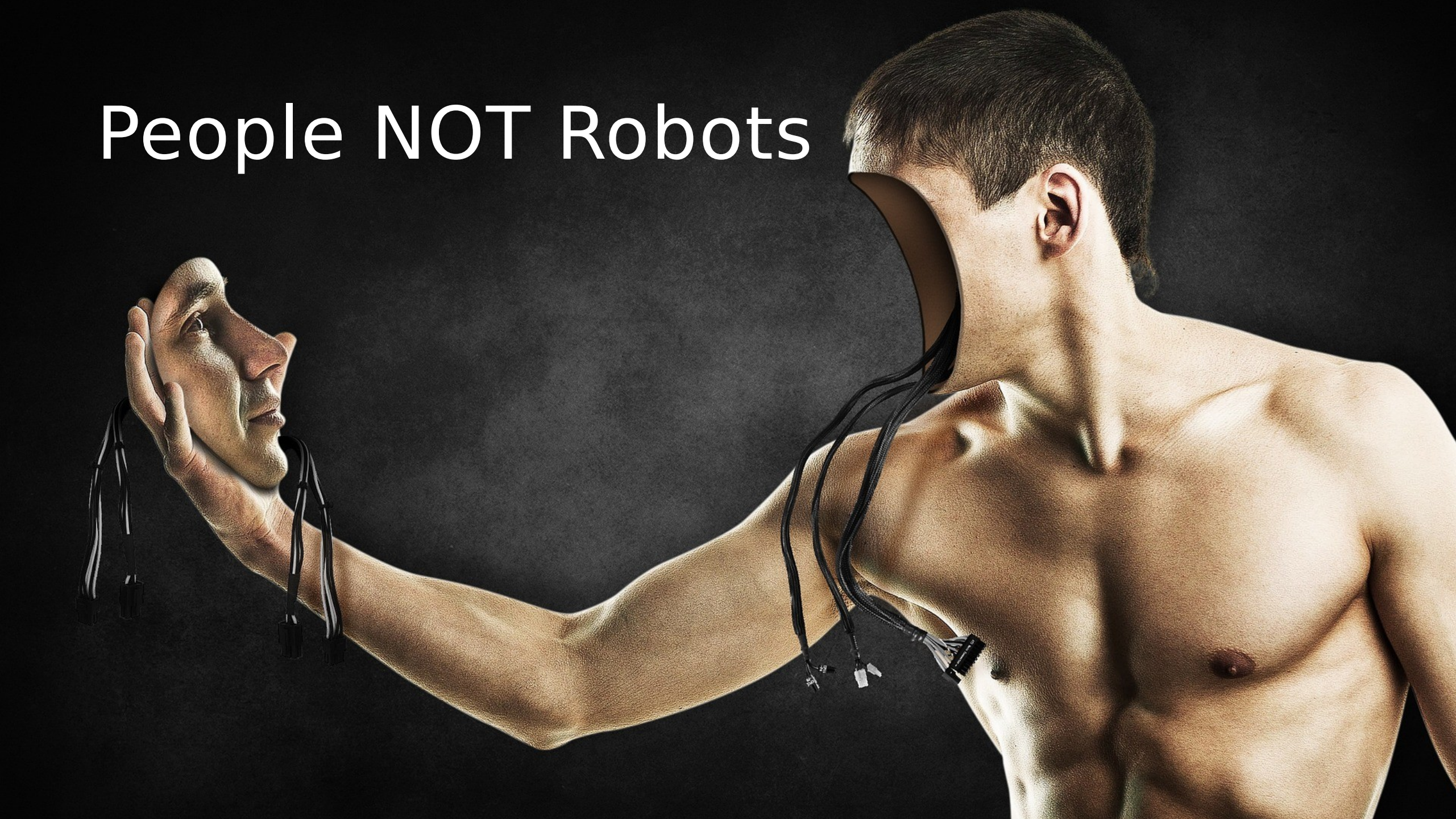
NOT COMMITTED

NO URGENCY

LAZY



People NOT Robots










Rice
9


10
DA SILVA
3
NEELS
23

SOLUTION?



MVP

M - MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP

MVP

M - MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP



MVP

M - Mindset

V – Value Them

P – Push them up



1. TEAM

2. YOU

DEFINE THE CULTURE

Example

Ownership
Accountability
Respect
Work Ethic
Safe

CAUTION

CULTURE

If **YOU DON'T** define it
It **WILL** get defined

BE THE CULTURE

Example

Ownership
Accountability
Respect
Work Ethic
Safe



Employees First
Customers Second
Shareholders Third

— Herb Kelleher —

Founder, Southwest Airlines

HANDOUTS!

Crafting Your Company's "Why" Worksheet

Discovering and Communicating Your Organization's Purpose

Step 1: Reflect on Values and Beliefs

Crafting Your Mission Statement Worksheet

Defining the Mission for Your Organization, Team, or Group

Step 1: Define Purpose and Scope

Defining Your Work Culture Worksheet

Fostering a Positive and Inclusive Work Culture

Step 1: Identify Core Values

2. Adjust Your Mindset



What was your

FIRST exposure to

“leadership” or
“management”?



...and then?







...and then?





NEW MINDSET

I am responsible

Coach
Mentor
Develop

Why Don’t We?

Coach
Mentor
Develop


60
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50
55
12
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11


SCHUTT


A Leader’s Job?



People NOT Robots




COACHING

LB & NT

LB

Liked Best

NT

Next Time

“even better”

NEW MINDSET



...but Dave...

TREAT THEM LIKE A



“If you can’t fire them
INSPIRE them.“

— David Suson —

MVP

M - MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP

Starts with Empathy

Be THEM in THEIR shoes




SPECIAL


How
can I


Thank You !


11
Hours

INTERESTS




FAMILY



Carl

SPECIAL DAYS




Thank their
significant other




SINCERE


FINDING
EMPATHY
CAN BE

A	B	C	D	E
F	H	I	J	K
L	M	N	O	P
Q	R	S	T	U
V	W	X	Y	Z


RAS

Think of someone

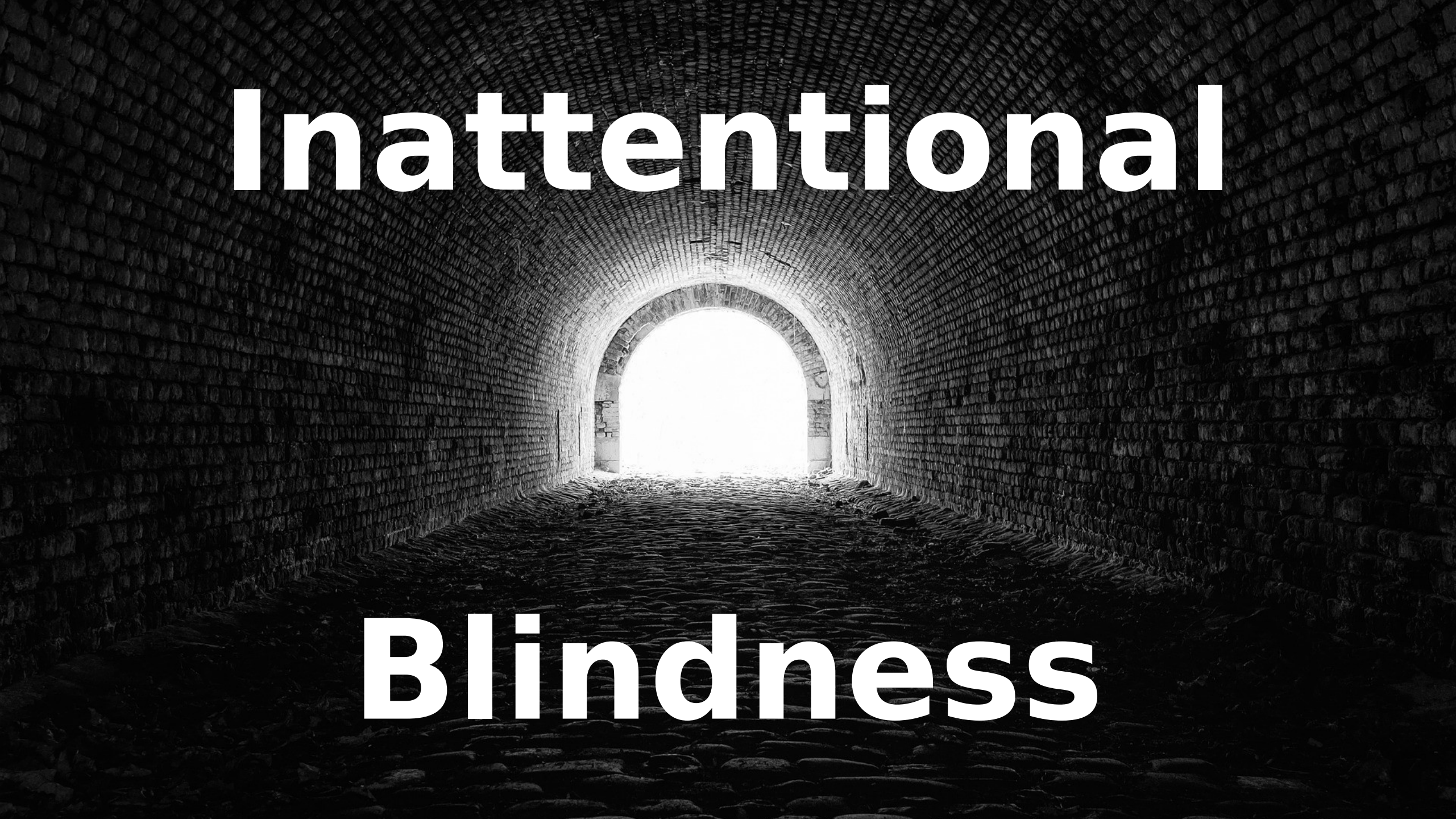
- Don’t like or…
- Don’t get along with or…
- Drives you nuts or…
- Mad / angry at

Write initials




3 good things
1.
2.
3.


?
difficult


Inattentional
Blindness

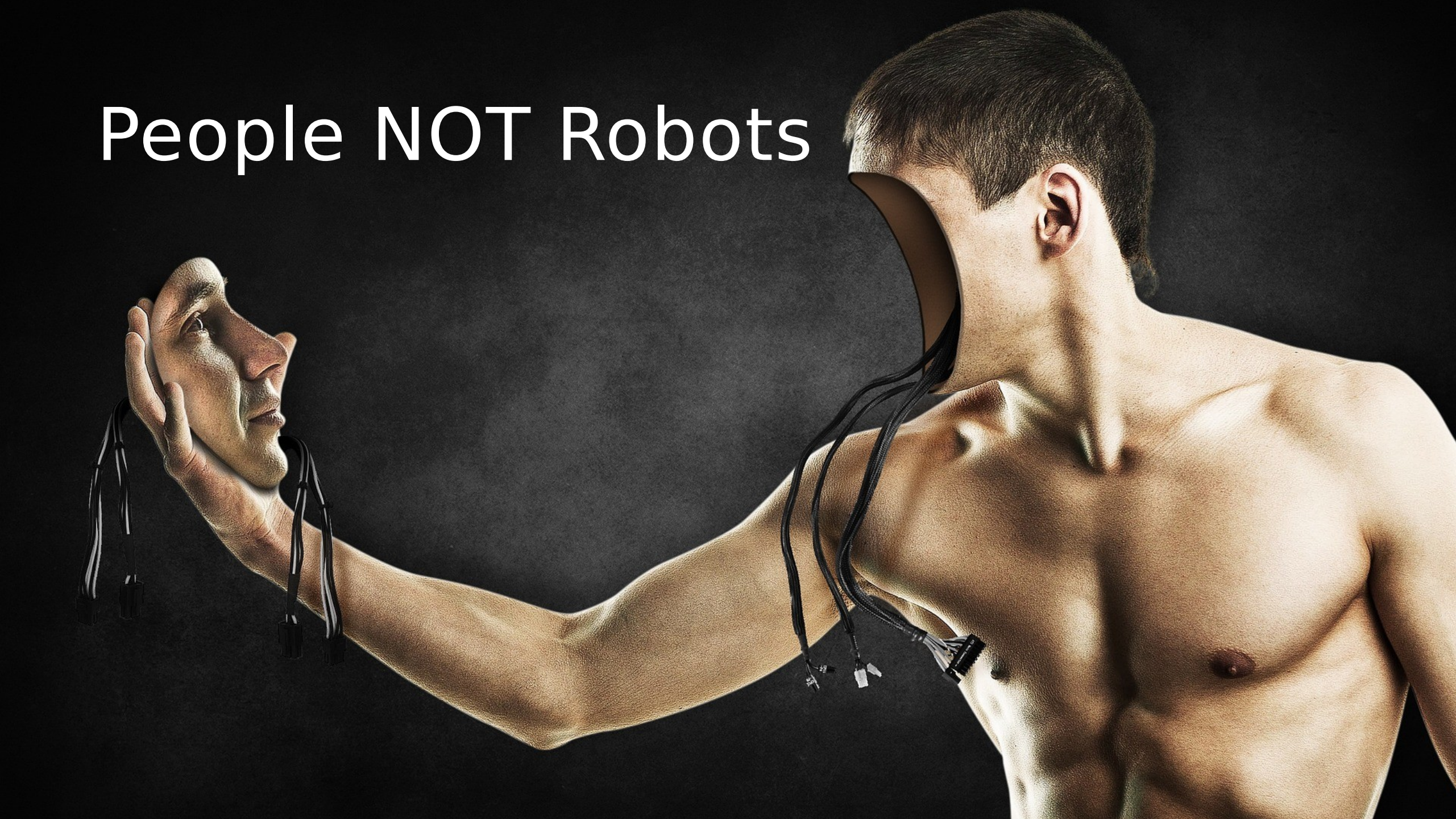
You don’t lead the person.

You lead the person you PERCEIVE

Empathy

Be THEM in THEIR shoes

People NOT Robots



MVP

M- MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP

HANDOUTS AND SLIDES?

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Fostering a Positive and Inclusive Work Culture

Step 1: Identify Core Values

25 Ways to Show You Truly Value an Employee

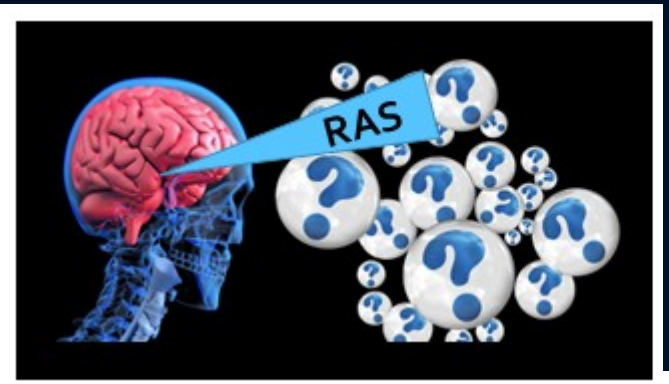
25 CREATIVE Ways to Show You Truly Value an Employee

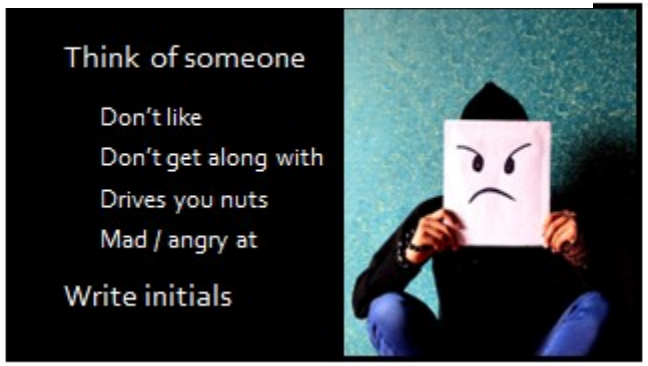
1. Hobby Clubs

Facilitate the creation of hobby clubs within the organization where employees can share interests, such as photography, gardening, or gaming

12 Books That Will Transform Your Leadership

(Some You Haven't Heard of But Should Read Now)









Give Feedback and Get Handouts & Slides

Scan this QR code

Or go to

https://talk.ac/david

and enter this code when prompted

MEGA26

David Suson
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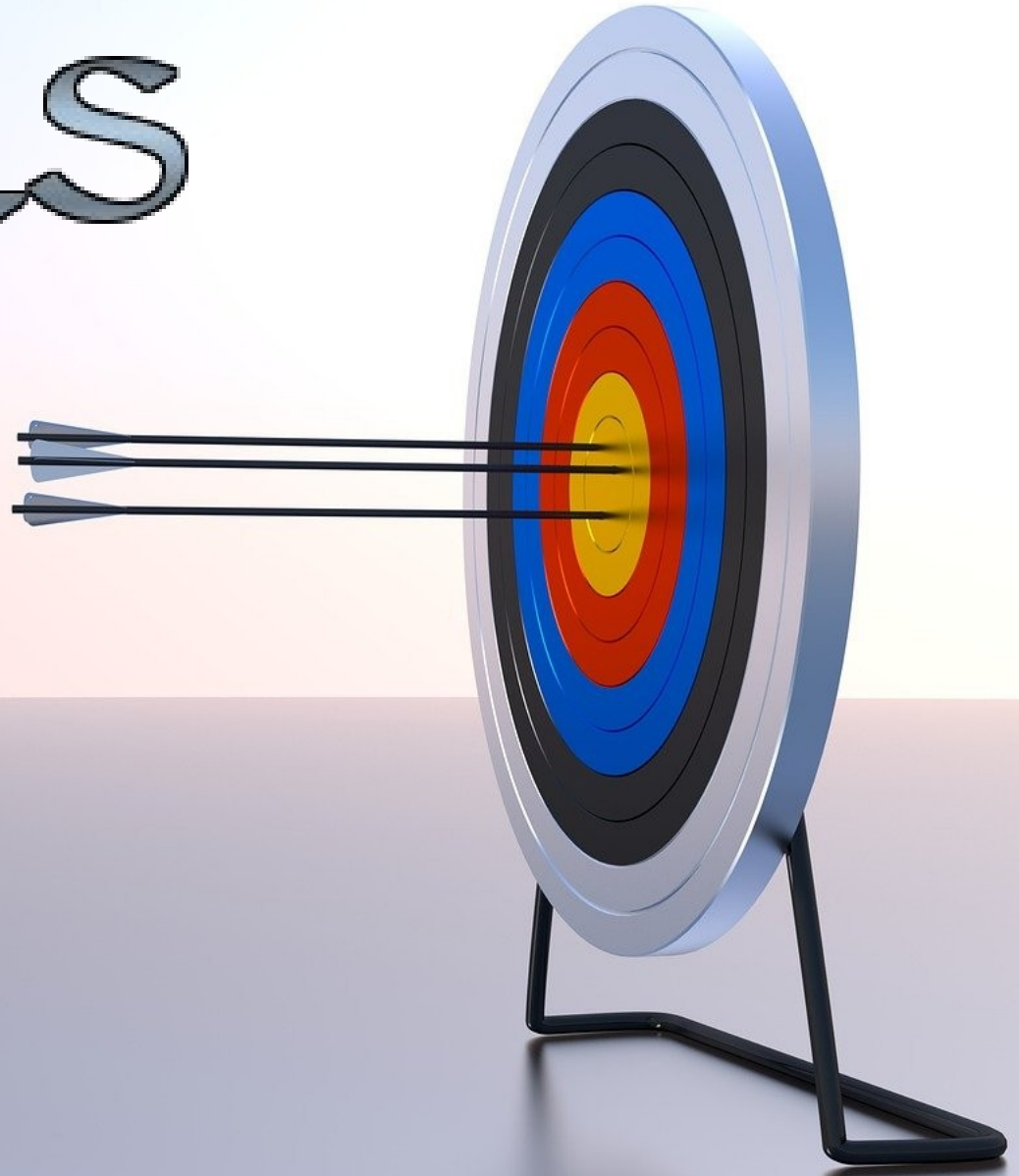
MVP

M- MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP

GOALS





What if they surpass me?



A rising tide lifts ALL boats



A rising tide lifts ALL boats



A rising tide lifts ALL boats



MVP

M - MINDSET

V – VALUE THEM

P – PUSH THEM UP

“I already know this”

“It’s a good reminder”

Are you doing it?

It’s NOT
What You Know,
It’s
What You DO
With What You Know

Will this MVP approach work for me?

Imagine…

↑ Teamwork

↑ Engagement

↑ Morale

↑ Performance

↑ Retain & Attract

↓ Problems & Stress

THANK YOU

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davidsuson
DavidSuson.com

