LEADERSHIP IN CURRENT TIMES

Prof.dr.Nick van Dam

Teaching Leadership Programs in 2025

- 25+ programs
- 1000+ Leaders
- 40+ Nationalities

NYENRODE BUSINESS UNIVERSITEIT

ie UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

McKinsey & Company

Penn GSE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

Harvard Business Publishing Corporate Learning

Theme 1: In Search of Purpose

noun:

The reason for which something is done or created or for which something exists

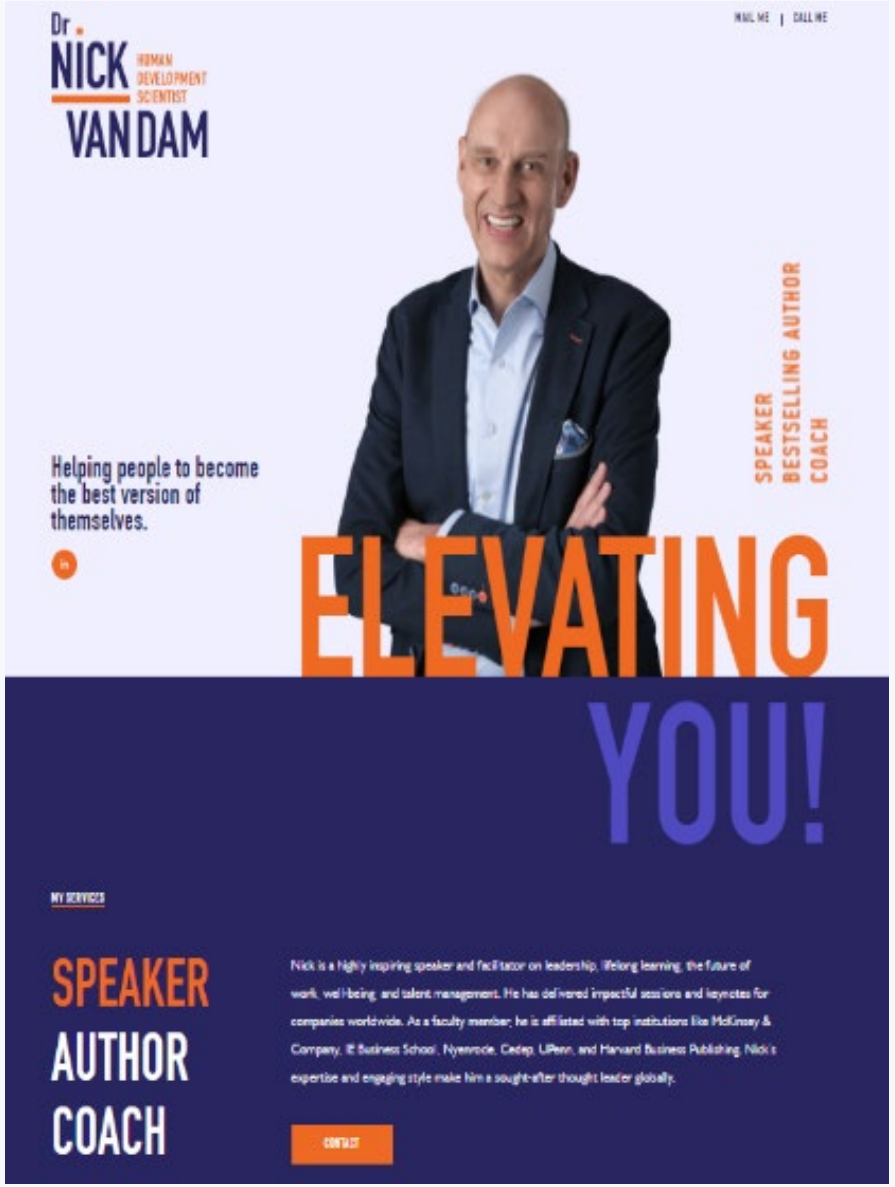
Source: Oxford Dictionary

Connects

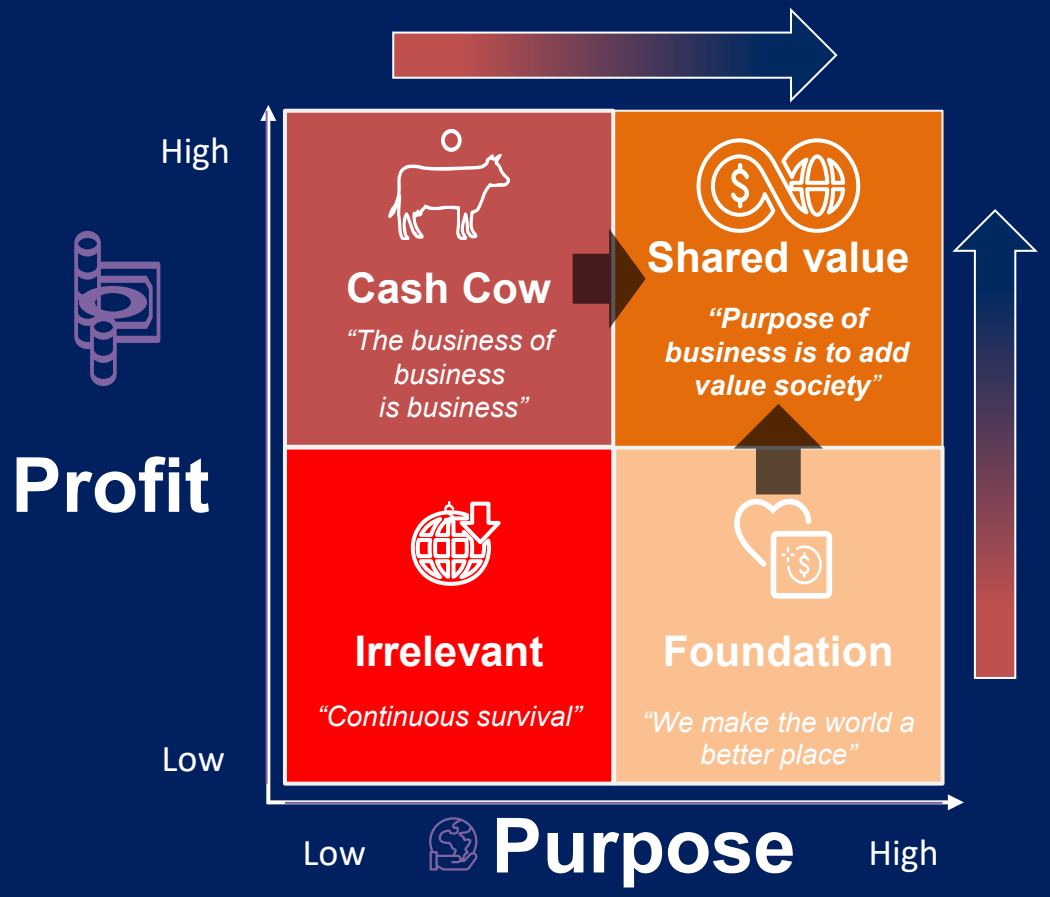
Energizes

Direction & Aligns

Source: **2026. Nick van Dam**


Dr.
NICK
VAN DAM
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT SCIENTIST
MAIL ME | CALL ME
Helping people to become the best version of themselves.
SPEAKER
BESTSELLING AUTHOR
COACH
ELEVATING
YOU!
MY SERVICES
SPEAKER
AUTHOR
COACH
Nick is a highly inspiring speaker and facilitator on leadership, lifelong learning, the future of work, well-being, and talent management. He has delivered impactful sessions and keynotes for companies worldwide. As a faculty member, he is affiliated with top institutions like McKinsey & Company, IE Business School, Nyenrode, Cedep, UPenn, and Harvard Business Publishing. Nick's expertise and engaging style make him a sought-after thought leader globally.
CONTACT

Organizations with a Purpose



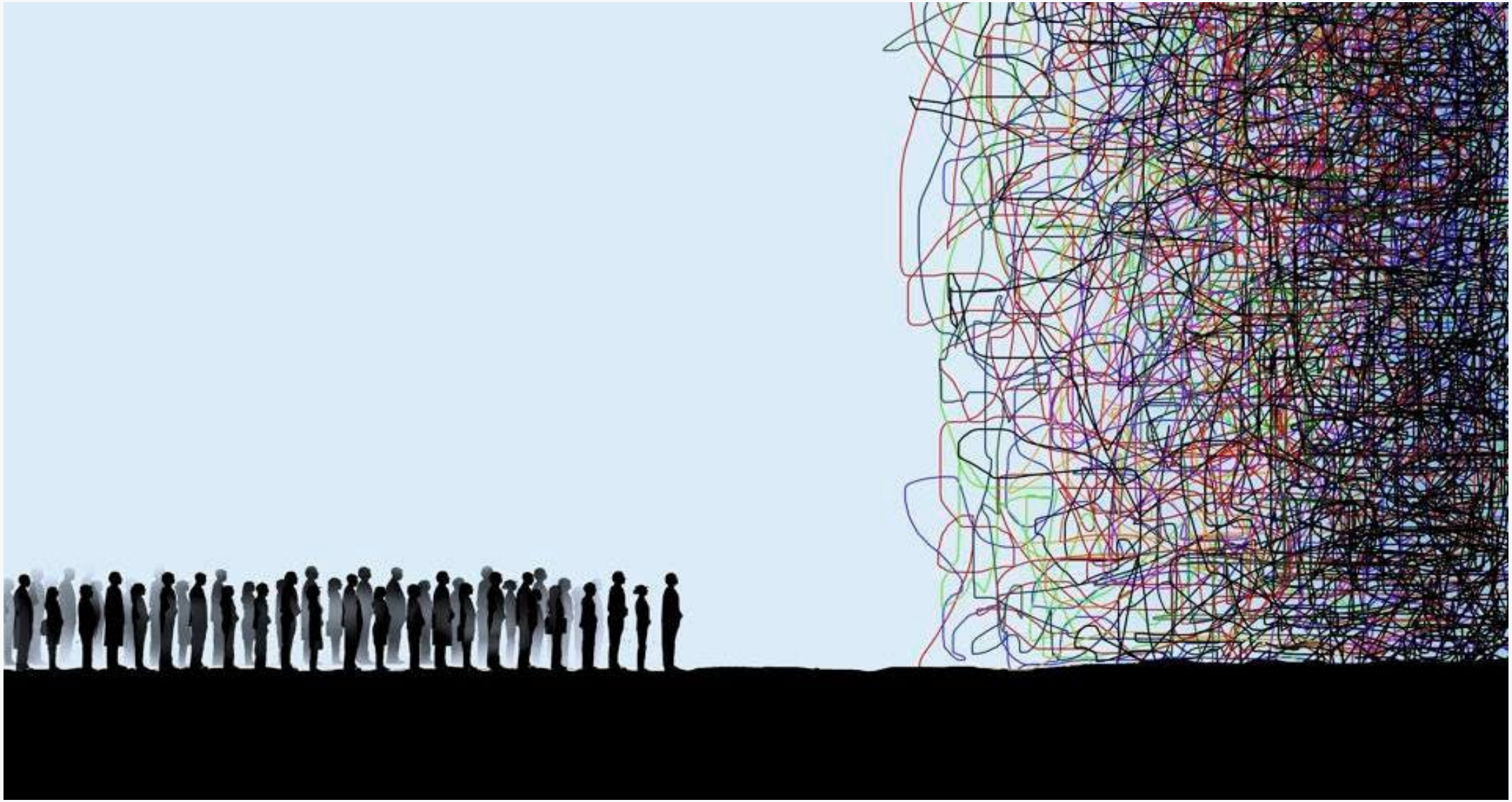
Source:© **Nick van Dam , 2026**

Imagine what happens when **individual** purpose aligns with **company** purpose?

2.3x

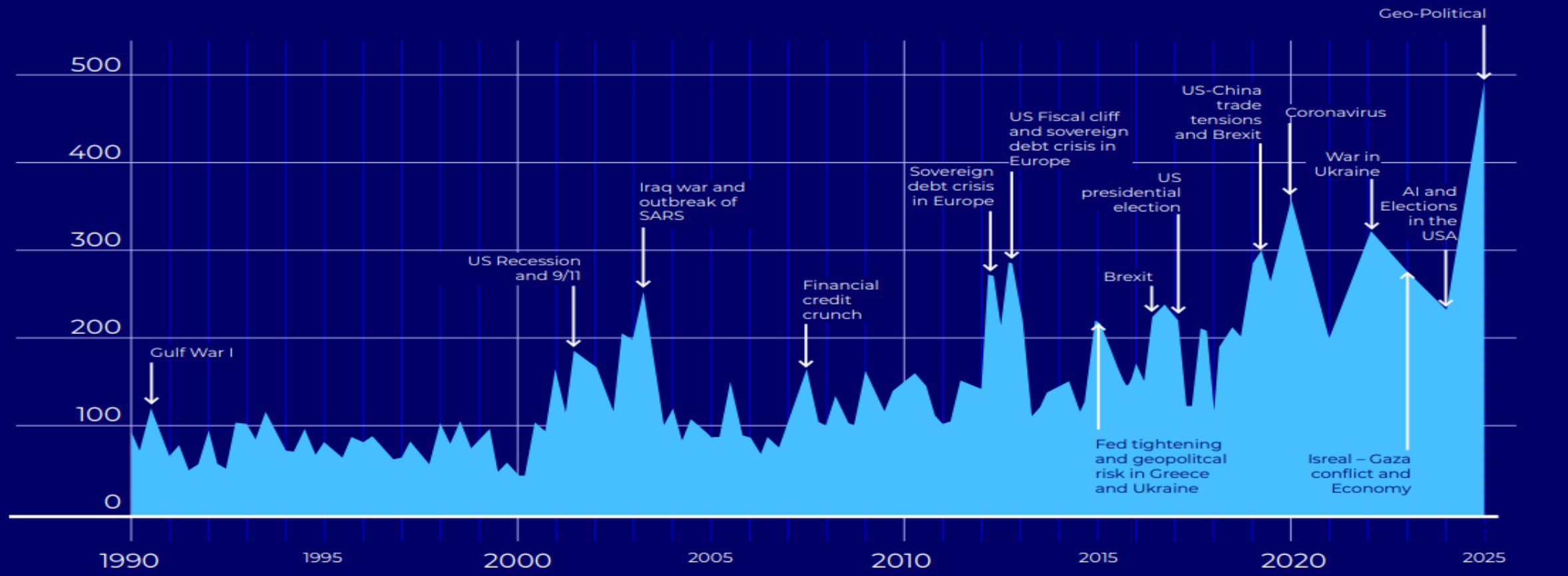
People who experience purpose at work are 2.3 times as likely to be **engage**

THEME 2: LEADING IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINY



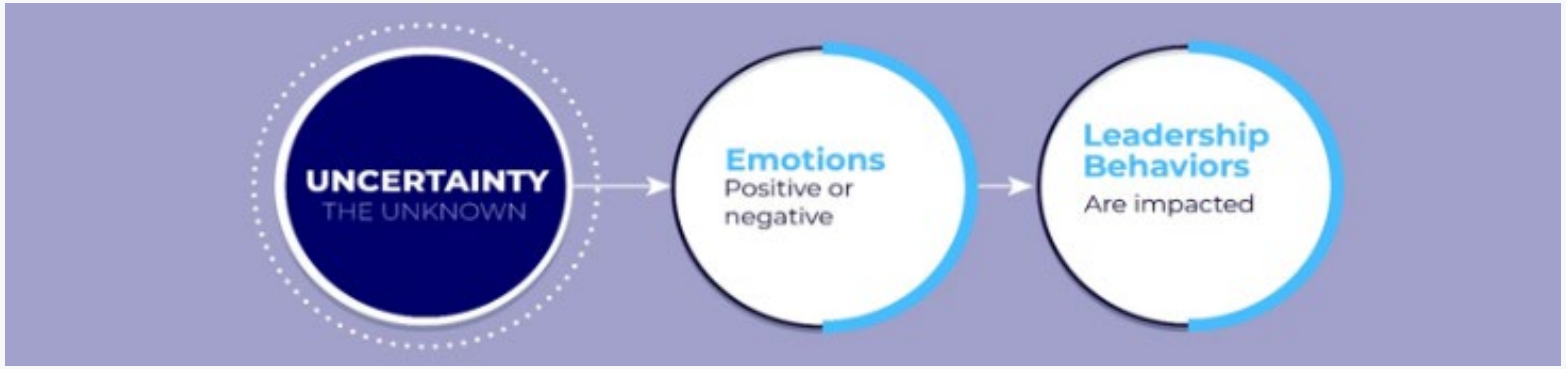
World Uncertainty Index

1990 – 2025



© 2025. Nick van Dam, based on https://worlduncertaintyindex.com

LEADING OTHERS:
THE IMPACT OF UNCERTAINTY ON LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS



GROUPS OF 2

What are some **negative leadership** behaviors that might result from leaders facing significant uncertainty?
(share examples)

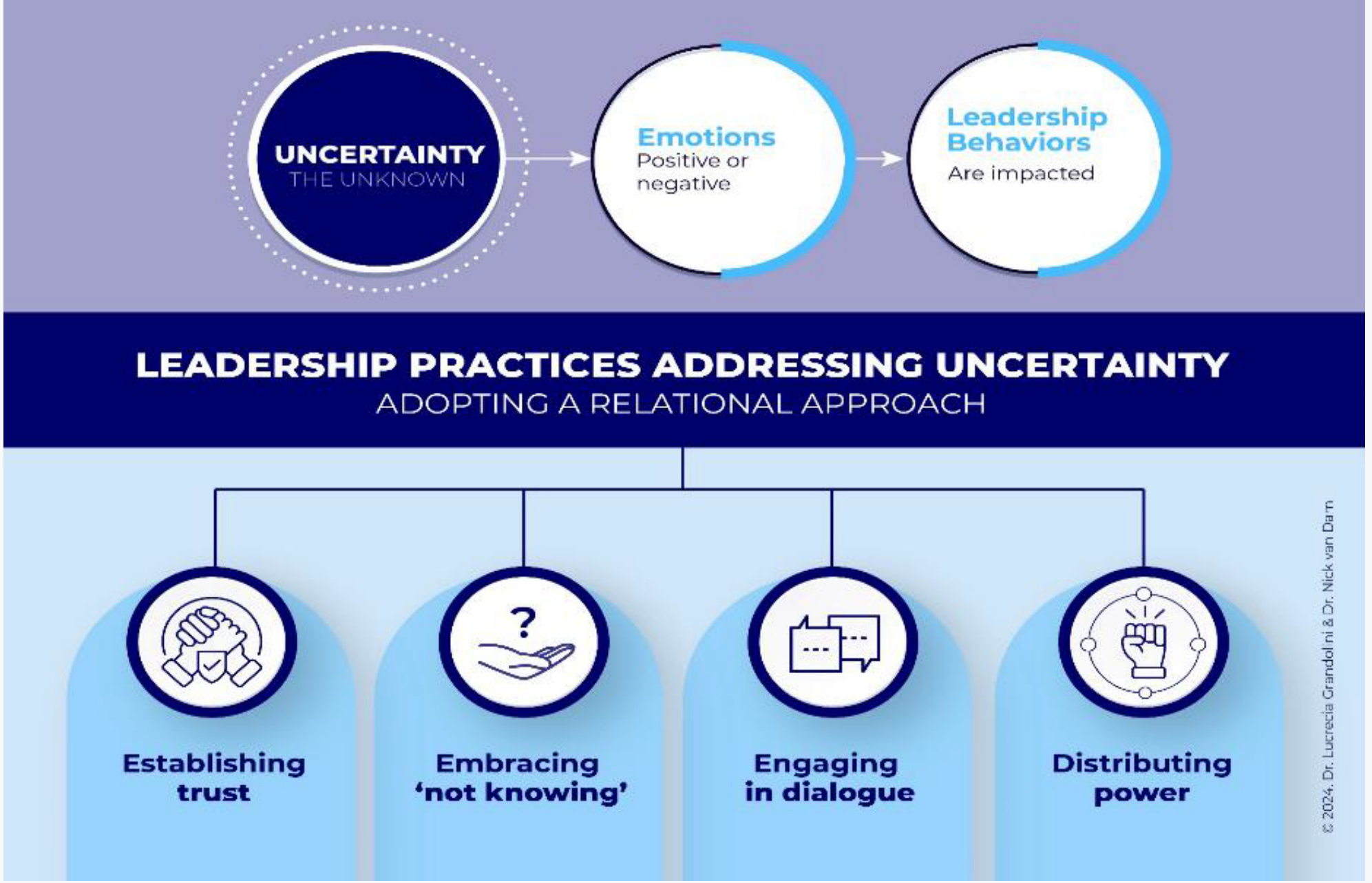
Negative leadership behaviors driven by significant uncertainty

- **Autocratic Leadership**
  - Not engaging others in decision making
  - Keep social distance from team members
  - Punishment and threatening others
  - Micromanagement
  - Lack of empathy and ignoring employee well-being

- **Intolerance of Uncertainty**
  - Use social defense mechanisms including denial or mispresenting information
  - Withholding Information
  - Blaming others
  - Resisting change

- **Reducing Uncertainty**
  - Continue seeking for additional information
  - Delaying decision making

FROM FEAR TO OPPORTUNITY: A RELATIONAL APPROACH TO LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY


UNCERTAINTY
THE UNKNOWN
Emotions
Positive or negative
Leadership Behaviors
Are impacted
LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ADDRESSING UNCERTAINTY
ADOPTING A RELATIONAL APPROACH
Establishing trust
Embracing 'not knowing'
Engaging in dialogue
Distributing power
© 2024. Dr. Lucrecia Grandolfini & Dr. Nick van Dam

THEME 3: LEADERSHIP, SYSTEMS AND ETHICAL EROSION

NUREMBERG

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD)
Prevalence: ~1–6% of general population

Leadership risk profile:
•Grandiosity, entitlement
•Excessive need for admiration
•Exploitative interpersonal style
•Low empathy

Organizational impact:
•Ethical risk-taking and overconfidence
•Suppression of dissent
•High volatility in strategy
•Toxic culture centered around leader image

Source: DSM-5-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2022)

Paranoid Personality Disorder (PPD)
Prevalence: ~2–4% of general population

Leadership risk profile:
•Distrust and suspicion
•Attribution of hostile intent
• Suspicious over-attention

Organizational impact:
•Culture of fear
•Over-control and micromanagement
•Reduced collaboration
•Escalating internal conflict

Psychopath Personality Disorder
Prevalence: ~0.5–1% of the general population.

Leadership risk profile (psychopathic traits)
- Emotional detachment and lack of empathy
- Instrumental manipulation of people and information
- Moral disengagement and absence of remorse

Organizational impact
- Normalization of unethical and rule-bending behavior
- Fear-based compliance replacing trust and engagement
- Short-term performance spikes followed by long-term decline

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD)
Prevalence: ~1–6% of general population

Paranoid Personality Disorder (PPD)
Prevalence: ~2–4% of general population

Psychopath Personality Disorder
Prevalence: ~0.5–1% of the general population.

QUESTION:

Which biases in our hiring and promotion systems allow toxic personality traits to be mistaken for leadership potential?

System: People can become part of harmful systems without intending to

System Effect

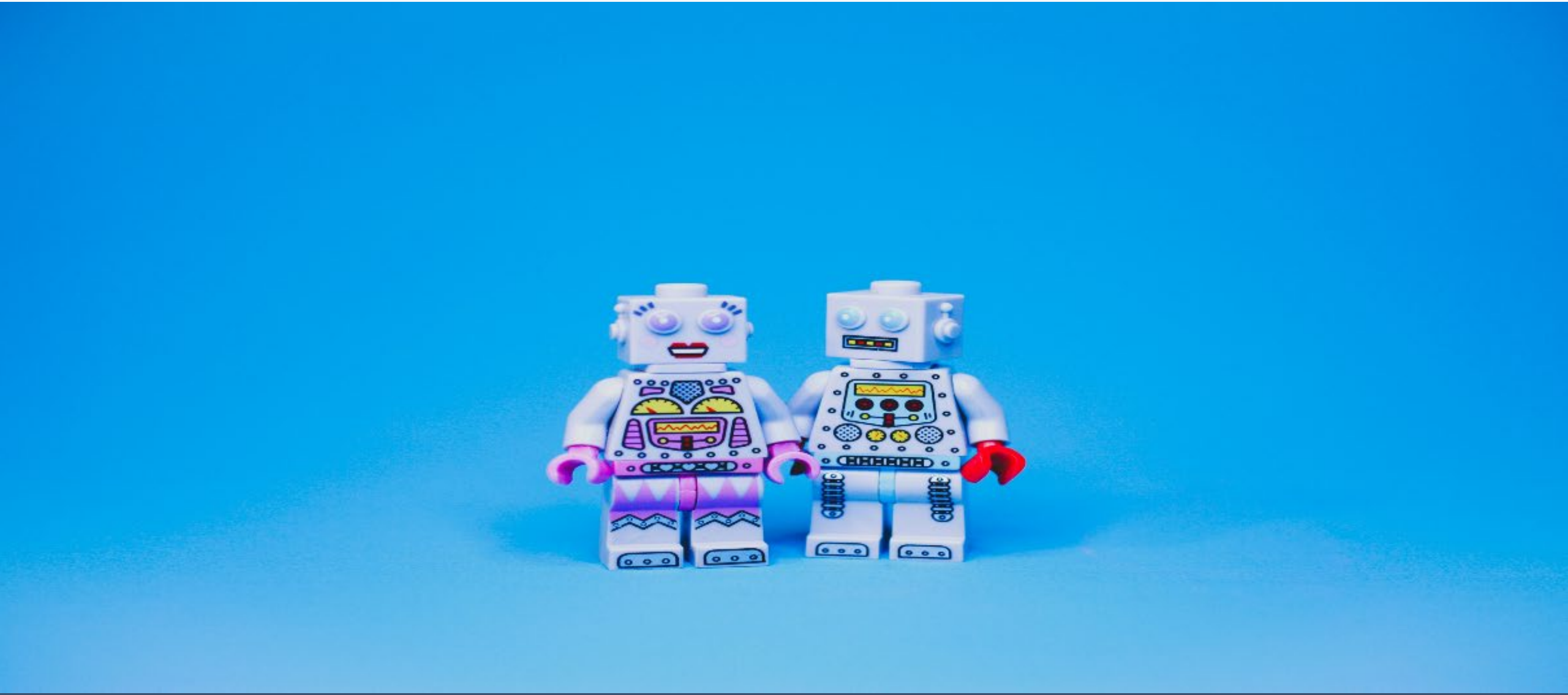
- People adapt to systems faster than systems adapt to values
- Careers, fear, conformity shape behavior
- Silence becomes passive endorsement
- Culture teaches what is “realistic”

How drift happens (rarely through one big decision):

- Gradual normalization of small deviations
- Incentives override values
- Authority reduces dissent
- Diffusion of responsibility (“just my role”)

QUESTION: What needs to be done to prevent ´drifting´ in organization?

THEME 4: Human Edge in The Age of AI



Humans and Machines
Partners in Progress

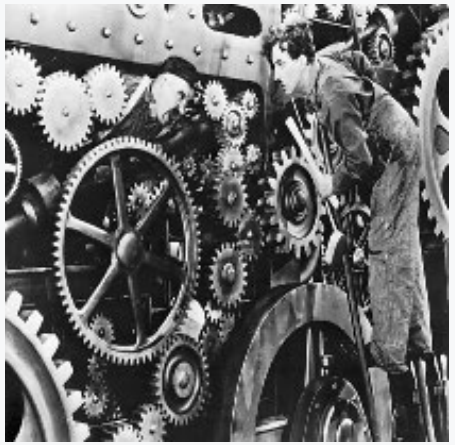
ie UNIVERSITY

NYENRODE BUSINESS UNIVERSITEIT

NYENRODE BUSINESS UNIVERSITEIT

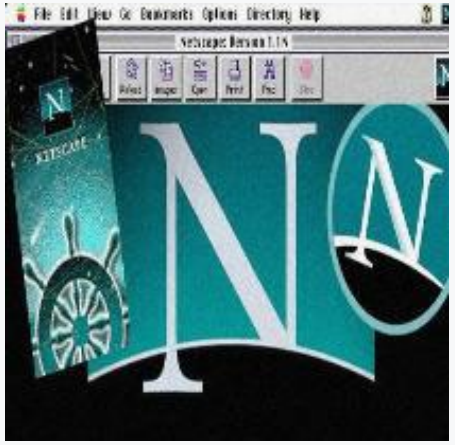
TECHNOLOGIES

The Driving Force of Change in Work



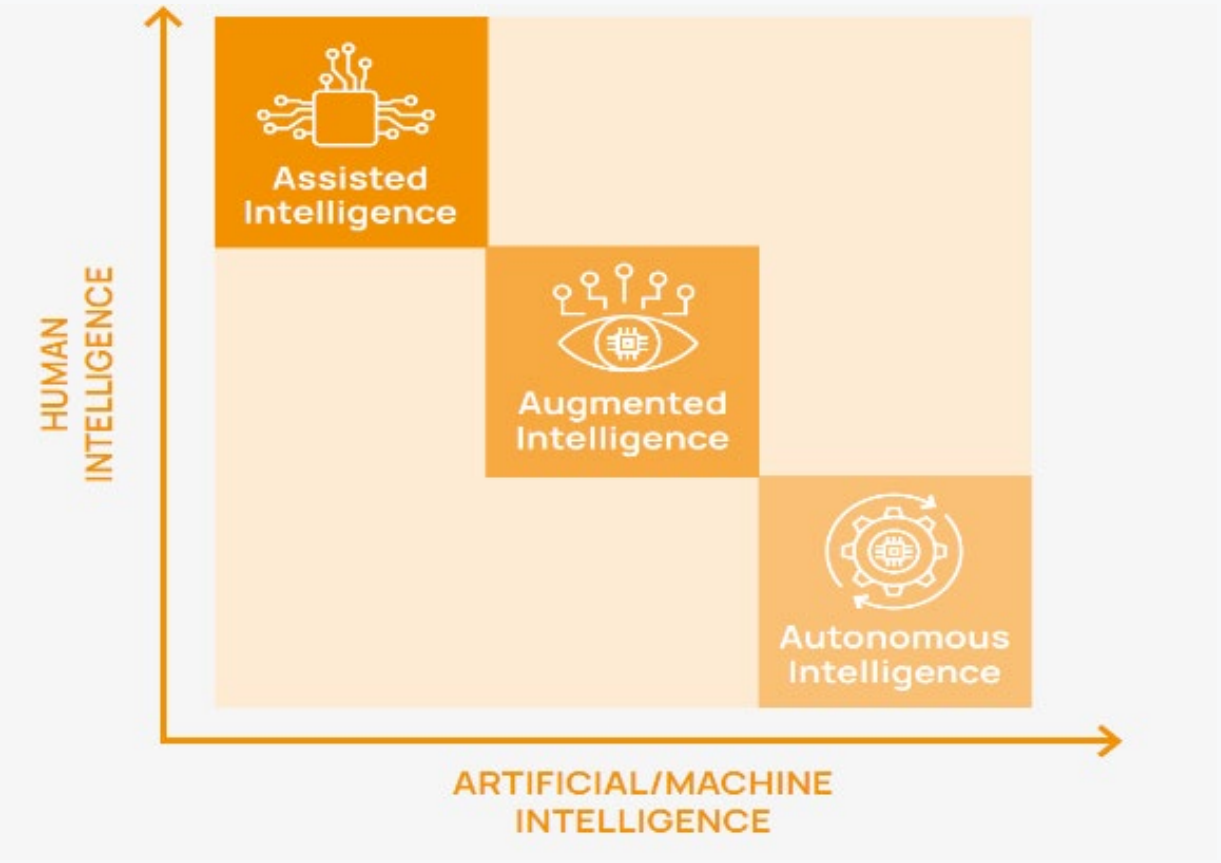
'I've always thought of AI as the most profound technology humanity is working on . . . more profound than fire or electricity or anything that we've done in the past.'

– Sundar Pichai, CEO of Alphabet

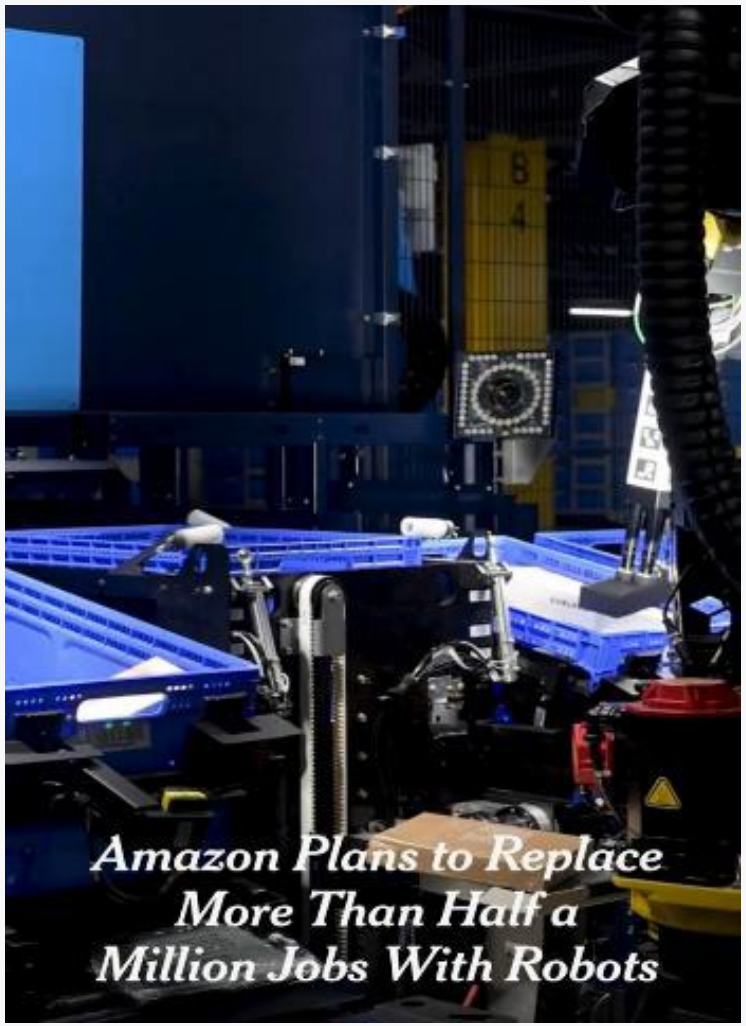


GEN AI

Three Stages of AI Human Collaboration



HISTORY SHOWS
ONCE MACHINES EXCEL, HUMANS CAN´T WIN



THE RISE OF AI-POWERED LAYOFFS IN 2025

Microsoft to cut about 4% of jobs amid hefty AI bets

Computer giant Dell continues this year's tech industry layoffs, firing around 12,500 employees or 10% of its global workforce. This move comes as Dell implements its new artificial intelligence (AI) strategy.

Morgan Stanley to cut 2,000 jobs as AI reshapes Wall Street

Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff says his company has cut 4,000 customer service jobs as AI steps in: 'I need less heads'

100,000+ tech layoffs in 2025: Amazon, Microsoft, Intel, and these companies cut thousands of jobs

Intel: Plans to reduce its workforce by 21,000 to 25,000 employees (15-24%), including 15%-20% cuts in its **Intel** Foundry division, to focus on AI chip production and factory streamlining, led by CEO Lip-Bu Tan.

What sets humans apart in AI-driven workplaces?

5 Leadership Traits That AI Can’t Replace

Instinct: The Wisdom of the Body, Mind and Heart

5 Leadership Traits That AI Can’t Replace

Intuition: Knowing Without Knowing Why

5 Leadership Traits That AI Can’t Replace

Imagination: The Source of All Possibility

5 Leadership Traits That AI Can’t Replace

Integrity: Acting from Inner Alignment

5 Leadership Traits That AI Can’t Replace

Integrity: Acting from Inner Alignment

WHAT ARE THE HUMAN SKILLS OF THE FUTURE?

OUR RESEARCH

REPORTS

World Economic Forum

McKinsey & Company

Harvard Business School

IFTF Institute for the Future

Mercer

INNER DEVELOPMENT GOALS
Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development

EXECUTIVE EDUCATION INSTITUTES

Harvard Business School

INSEAD The Business School for the World®

STANFORD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

ie BUSINESS SCHOOL

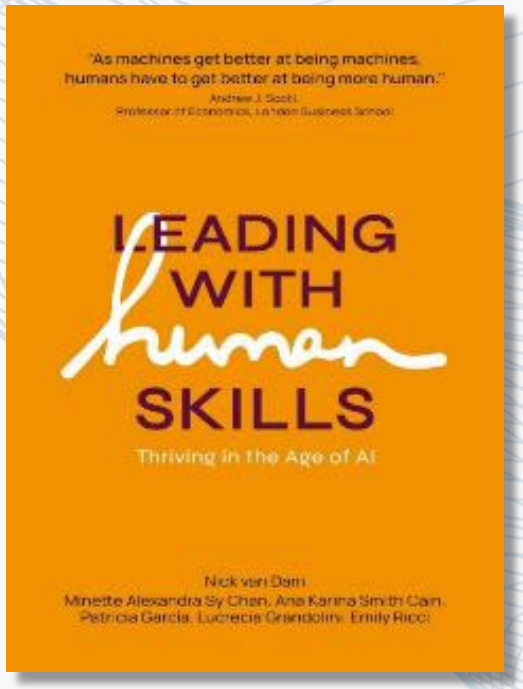
Columbia Business School

IMD
REAL LEARNING. REAL IMPACT.

London Business School

Dr. Nick van Dam
Dr. Lucrecia Grandolini
Dr. Minette Chan
Ana Karina Smith Cain, MSPOD
Patricia Garcia, Esq., LLM
Emily Ricci, MA

Top 50: Human Leadership Skills



Leading Self

- Curiosity
- Lifelong Learning
- Self-Efficacy
- Self-Awareness
- Confidence
- Resilience
- Adaptability
- Agility
- Self-Regulation
- Well-Being Management
- Mindfulness
- Critical Thinking
- Purpose-Driven Decision-Making
- Energy Management
- Time Management and Discipline
- Intuition
- Integrity
- Identity Awareness
- Self-Reflection
- Courage to Act
- Creative Thinking
- Emotional Intelligence

Leading Others

- Trust Building
- Empathy
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Building
- Connecting
- Coaching and Mentoring
- Active Listening
- Inspiring & Mobilizing
- Influencing
- Storytelling
- Giving Constructive Feedback
- Negotiating
- Verbal and Non-Verbal Comm.
- Co-Creation
- Optimism

Leading Organizations

- Systems Thinking
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Practical Wisdom
- Leading Change
- Cultural Sensitivity
- Collaborative Leadership
- Learning Agility
- Imagination
- Navigating Paradoxes
- Organizational Navigation
- Reframing
- Organizational Navigation
- Moral Judgment & Ethical Reasoning
- Strategic Thinking

HUMAN LEADERSHIP SKILLS EXERCISE

Share a story with a participant.

1. What makes this skill a human skill?
2. How have you used this skill in your career?

CONCLUSION

NOT ENOUGH TIME TO DO OUR WORK

OUR TALENT IS UNDERUTILIZED

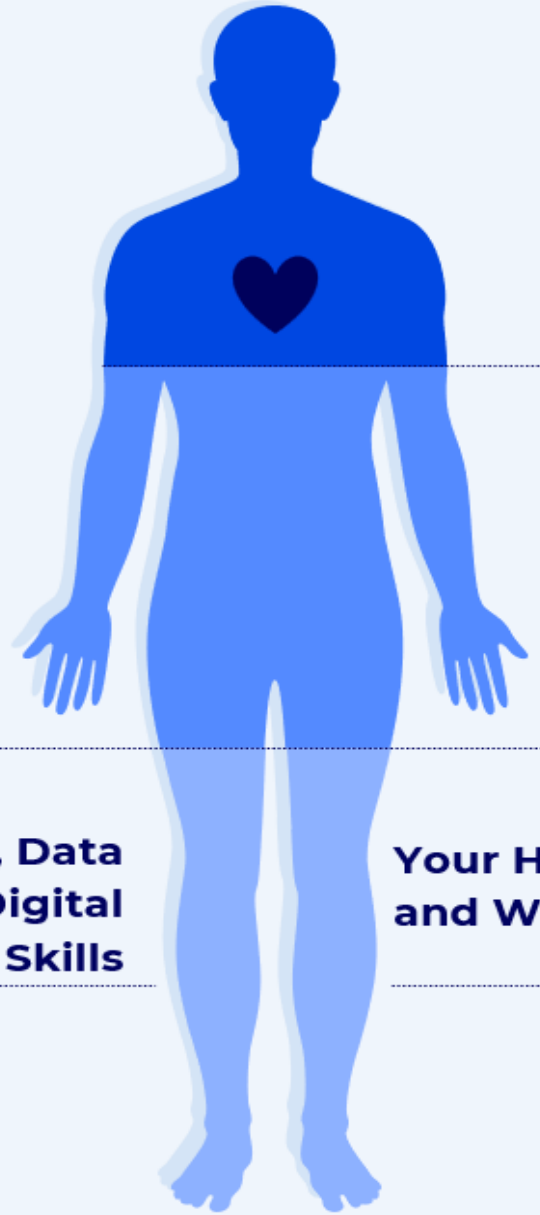
EMPOWERS PEOPLE TO DEVELOP NEW SKILLS

GROWING LABOUR MARKET SHORTAGES IN AGING COUNTRIES

MORE PEOPLE NEEDED TO INNOVATE AND SOLVE BIGGER PROBLEMS

REASONS FOR OPTIMISM IN AI ADOPTION

The Professional in the Age of AI

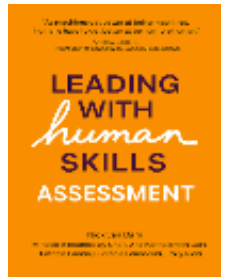


Your Human Leadership Skills

Your Body of Expertise

Your AI, Data and Digital Skills

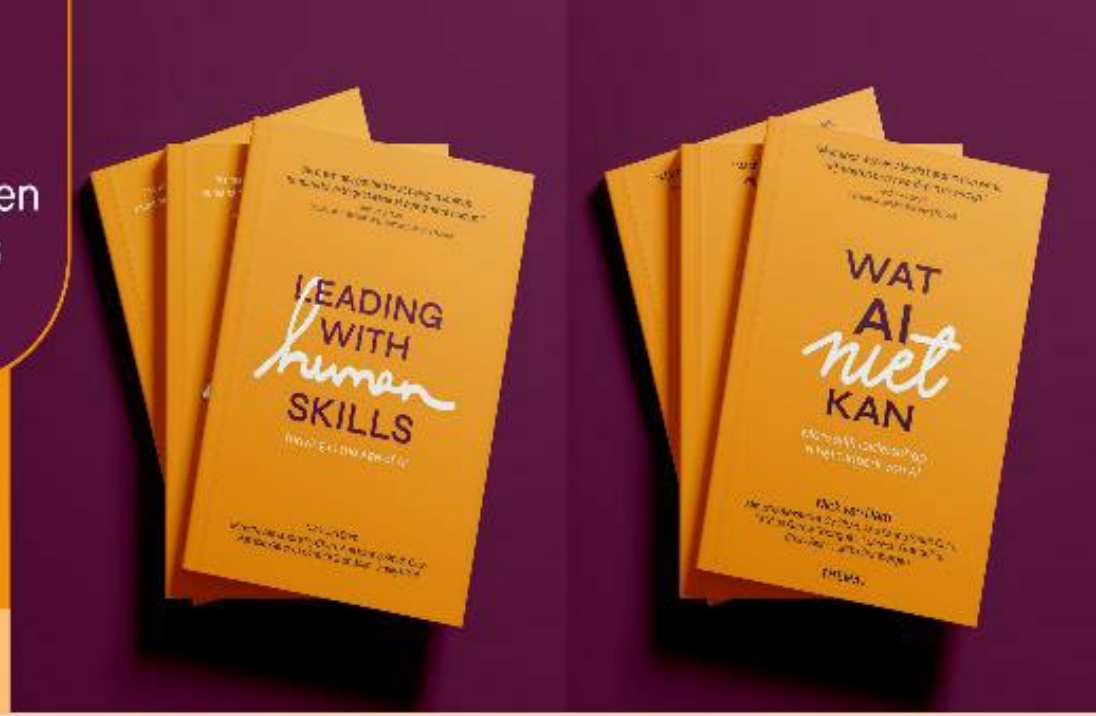
Your Health and Well-Being



© 2025. Nick van Dam et al., Leading with Human Skills

BOOK LAUNCH EVENT

March 5, 2026
Schouten & Nelissen
The Netherlands



INTERACTIVE KEYNOTE:
What AI Can't Do: Leading with Human Skills

SCAN ME

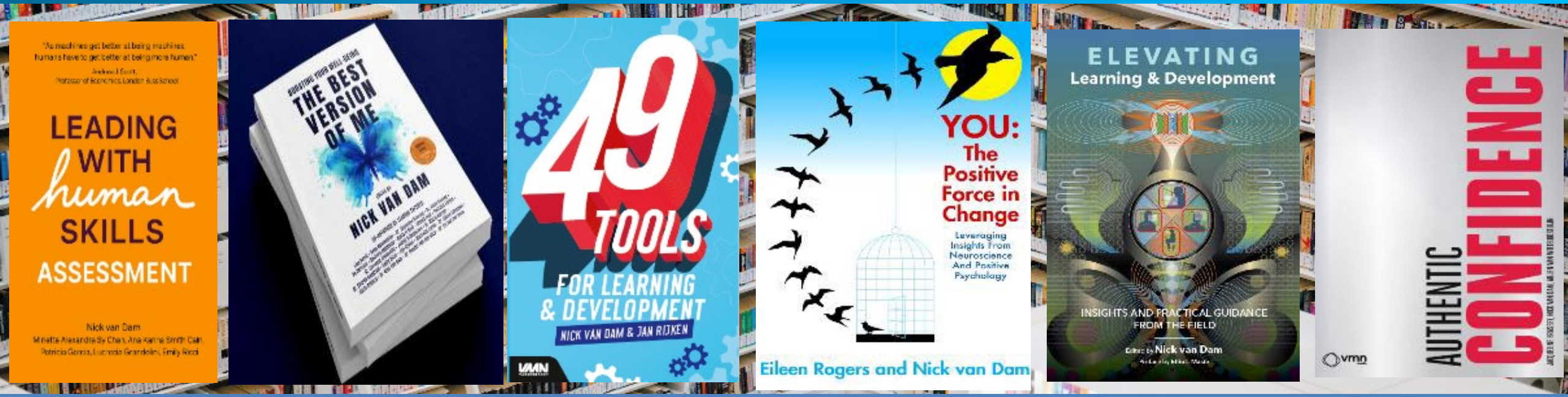
WORKSHOP TITLES:

- **Mastering Leadership Communication:** Developing Your Signature Presence
- **From Self-Negotiation to Strategic Influence**
- **Signal over Noise:** The Practice of Better Thinking
- **Leading in Paradox:** How Leaders Navigate Opposing Forces
- **The Human Connection:** Leading with Trust
- **Curiosity First:** Unlocking Creativity and Imagination at Work
- **Appreciative Inquiry:** Speaking Up Through Positive Framing

Nick van Dam. Judith Grimbergen. Minette Alexandra Sy Chan. Ana Karina Smith Cain. Patricia Garcia. Lucrecia Grandolini. Emily Ricci.

e-learning for kids

THANK YOU!



All royalties will be donated to the e-Learning for Kids Foundation and Save The Children.

Contact:
nick.vandam@ie.edu