



The Art of War

(for AEC Talent)

Five strategies for winning
the war for talent

Josh Miles

Josh Miles

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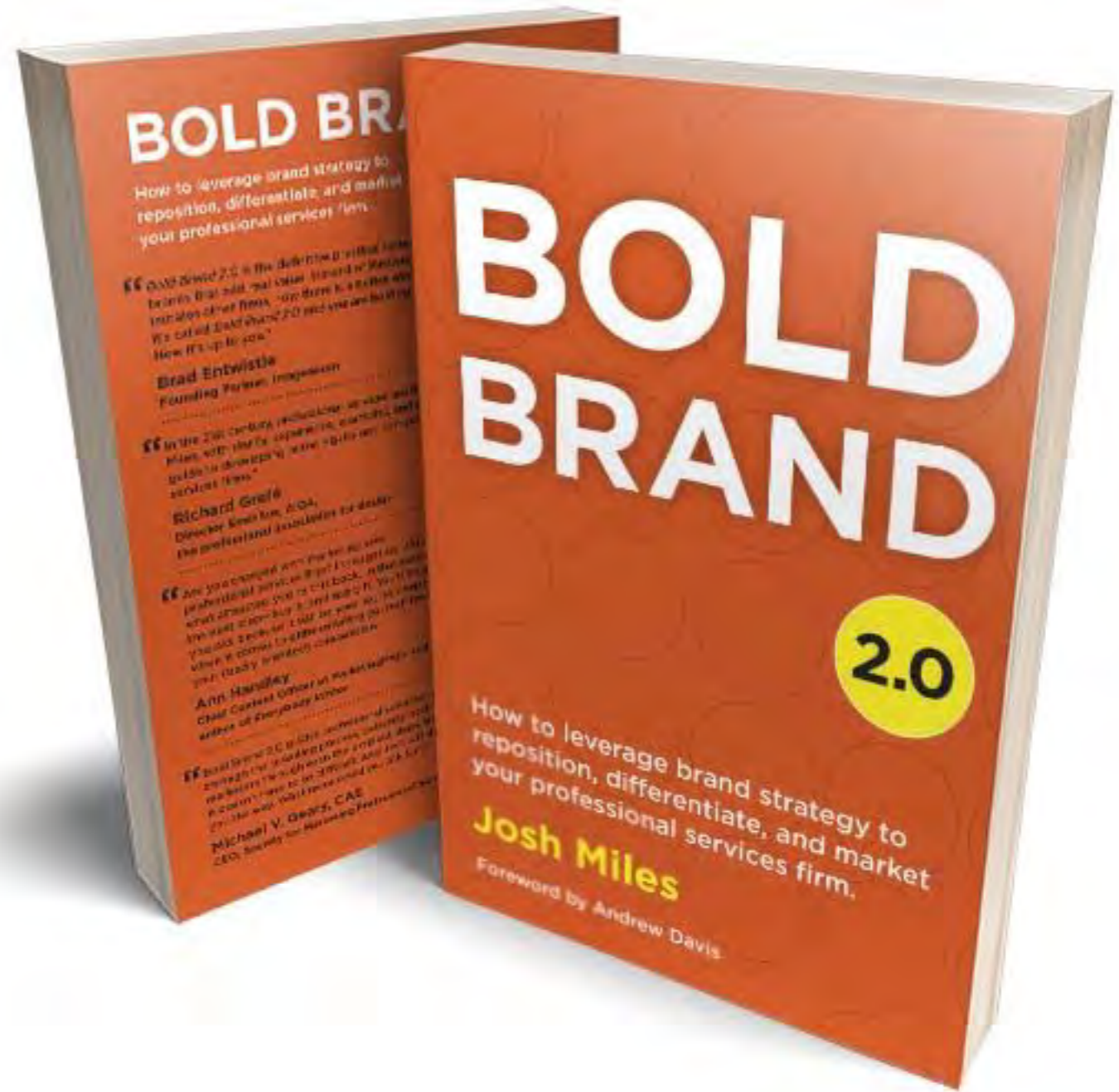


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Let's talk HR
shall we?

Ugh.

HR makes me itch.

But...

**the struggle
is real.**

a quick poll:

Get out your phones...

How is your firm doing in the War for Talent?

we're losing the war **A**

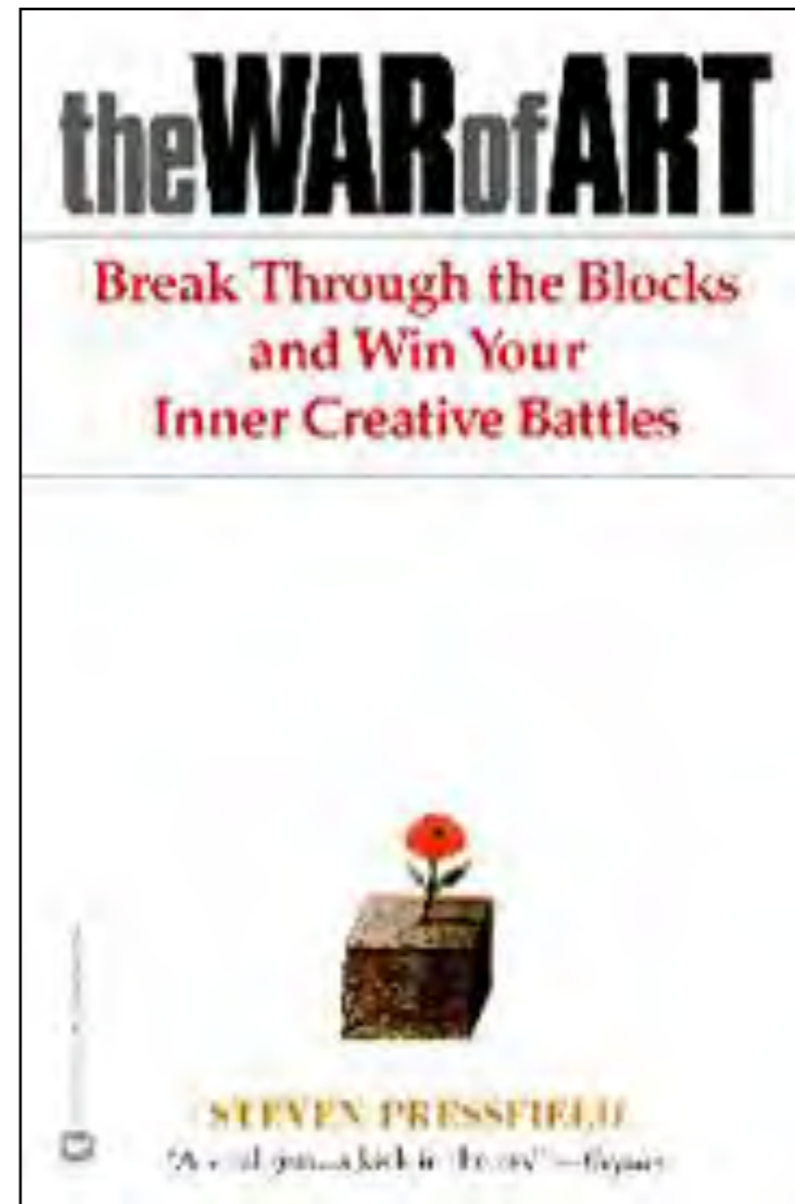
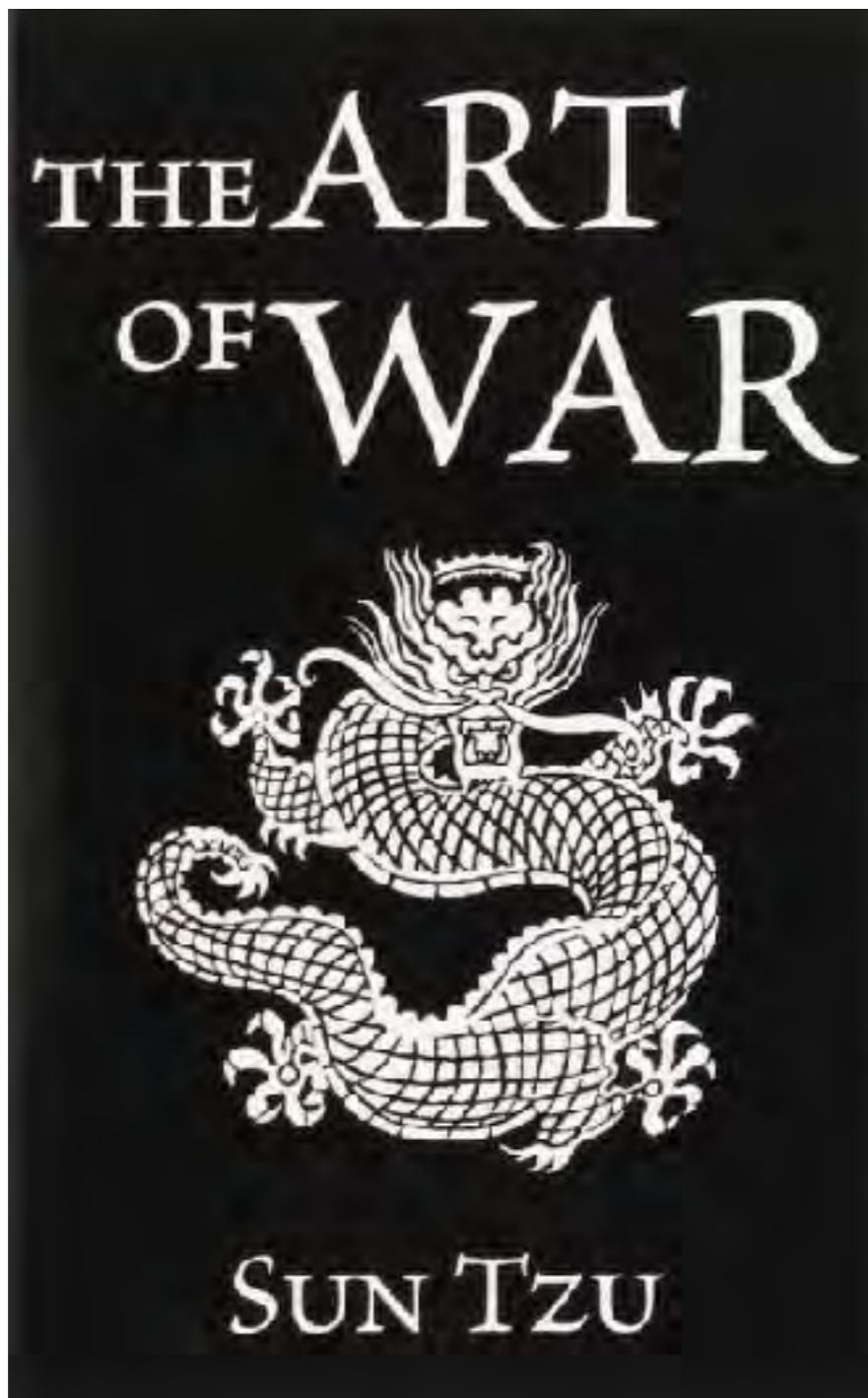
The struggle is real **B**

It's complicated **C**

We've mastered the Art
of War for talent **D**

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Agenda:

- ✓ **The talent war problem**
- ✓ **Stats & research from HR pros**
- ✓ **Five strategies for winning**
- ✓ **Case studies highlights**
- ✓ **Worksheets**
- ✓ **Q&A**

Who started it?

Roots of the talent war:

- ✓ **The Great Recession (2008-2010)**
- ✓ **Reduced supply of mid-level talent**
- ✓ **Startups & leading industries**
- ✓ **Improving economy**
- ✓ **Demand for our services**
- ✓ **Maybe we suck at keeping good people?**

Mystery Marketer:

***“The old guard was keeping
the ship together and lost
the focus on grooming
the next generation.”***

THE TALENT SHORTFALL

AEC firm execs express their concerns

It's taking us longer than ever to fill positions for qualified AEC professionals.	54.6%
We have good job openings for AEC professionals but can't seem to find qualified candidates.	52.8%
Our competitors are directly contacting our best AEC professionals.	40.1%
We have lost qualified AEC professionals to other AEC firms.	38.0%
We can't find qualified AEC professionals for jobs in specific geographic locations.	28.7%
We have had to delay or turn down projects because we could not hire qualified AEC professionals to run them.	16.7%

Source: BD+C Study of AEC Talent Recruitment, Nov. 2015. To receive the Executive Highlights, go to: www.BDCnetwork.com/TalentSurvey2015.

24.2%

challenged to find

6-10 yrs exp.

- Construction Dive

54.6%

**It's taking us longer
than ever to fill
positions for qualified
AEC professionals.**

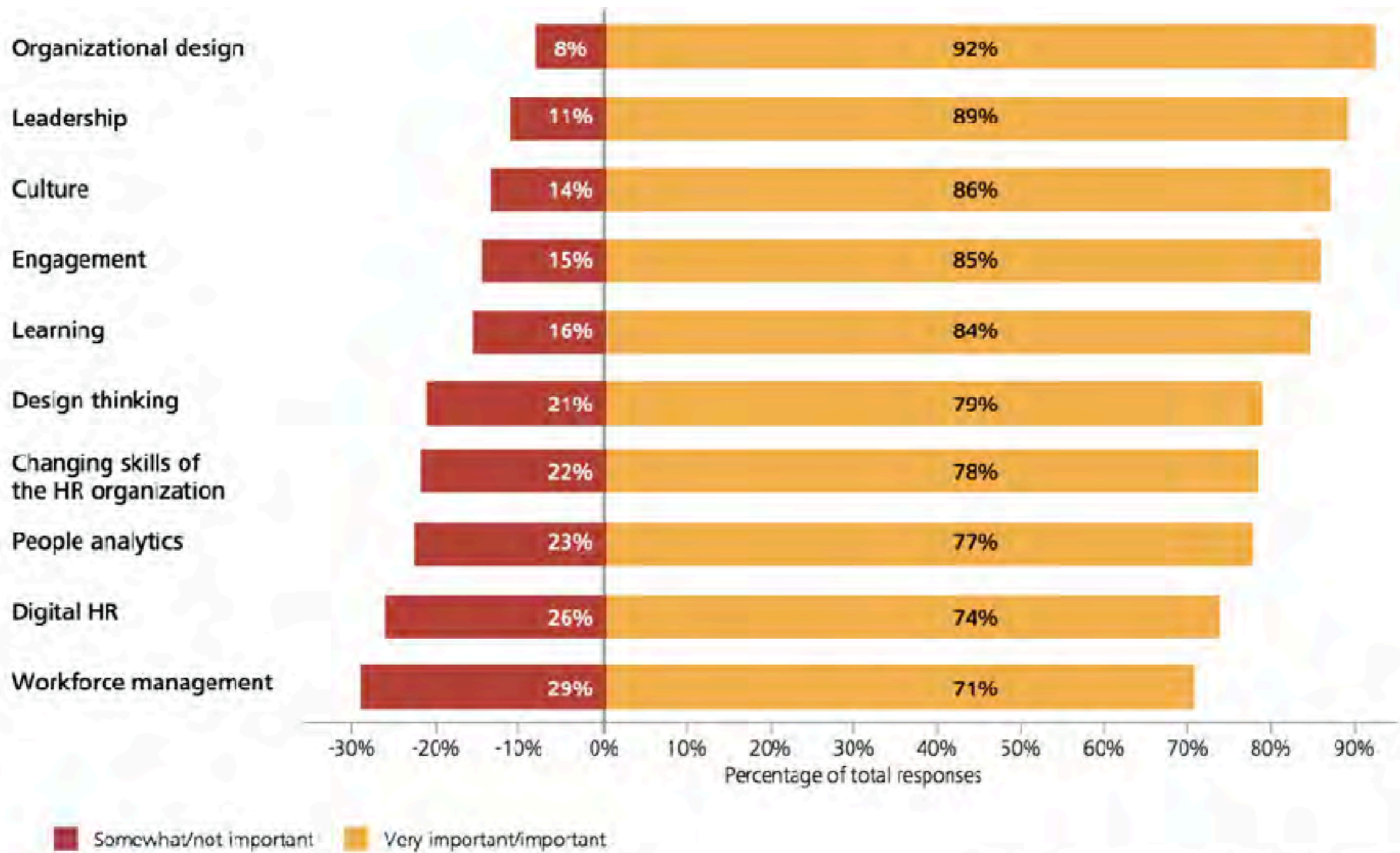
- Construction Dive

16.3%
had to delay or
completely turn
down a project.

- Construction Dive

One firm noted:

“There are not many young people entering the profession, and there is an extreme lack of talented people in the 10+ years’ level of experience,” a survey respondent said. “We have no problem hiring college graduates, but keeping them after five years is difficult, and then we start over with a new hire.”



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

**In the war for
talent, the stakes
are high.**

Cost of losing an employee:

20%+

of their salary

HuffPo:

*The costs of replacing
a highly skilled employee:*

16-213%!

what if...

HR + Marketing?

Mystery Marketer:

***“I’d love to help you out...
but when it comes to talent,
HR is rarely involved unless
it has to do with benefits.”***



INTERFACE
ENGINEERING

“Now it’s more of a collaboration... We’ve already got some of those assets, so let’s bring it together. We’re going to be marketing this, so you should push that position at the same time.”



INTERFACE
ENGINEERING

“(HR) is almost an extension of the marketing communications group.”

**Attract & retain.
Culture.
Reputation.
Future growth.**

Five strategies:



S - Strategy

W - Weapons

O - Onboarding

R - Recognition

D - Differentiation

**Master this art
& win the war.**

Who's with me!?

But first...

BoldBrand.com/war
slides, links, videos, and more...

Sun Tzu said:

“The art of war is of vital importance to the state.”

WORKSHOP

Breakout #1:

*How could marketing help
your firm with talent?*

Strategies for winning:

S.W.O.R.D.
Strategy



Sun Tzu said:

“Attack by strategy.”

Josh Miles said:

“Right on, Sun Tzu.”

What is strategy?

- ✔ The talent war problem Apologies and credits to Kristina Halvorson @Halvorson
- ✔ Strategy is not your business goal
- ✔ Strategy is not your tactic
- ✔ Strategy is your plan to connect the tactics to the goal

STRATEGY

“A good strategy includes a set of coherent actions.”



STRATEGY

TACTIC

GOAL



@joshmiles



@joshmiles

**How does your
strategy shape
culture?**

What is culture?

From SHRM's blog:

“Company culture is not about being cool or even being a “best place to work.” It’s about being more successful. Period.”



@joshmiles

Rita Barreto Craig:

“A culture is created by the practices that you have... something so unique and special and different makes people want to come work for you.”

Culture vs. Tradition



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Rita Barreto Craig:

***“It’s not a tradition if it’s
not practiced over time.***

***If it’s not creating
positivity, it’s time to
get rid of it.”***

Figure 3. The relationship between culture and engagement



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

From SHRM:

“How you run meetings internally, how you share information across departments, and how you do the basics of project management —these can all be low hanging fruit that you can address in order start clarifying and reinforcing a culture that drives your success. People need to see the changes happening in real ways for the new culture to take root.”



***“What the company stands
for means so much more
than it ever did before.”***

**Those pesky
millennials**

appeal to
**How to ~~coddle~~
millennials**

From Indeed:

“...job seekers aged 16-24 rank workplace flexibility as their top priority in a job, placing it above even compensation and benefits.”



INTERFACE
ENGINEERING

“The big thing is life flexibility—remote, from anywhere job-seekers are looking for the ability to do that.”

From the SHRM blog:

- ✓ **Embrace technology**
- ✓ **Trust your employees**
- ✓ **Let the mission lead the way**
- ✓ **Let them take time off (unlimited?)**
- ✓ **Don't be afraid to ask**

case study:

Interface

Portland, OR



OPTIMAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR LIFE.

Interface job applicant:

***“Your marketing materials
are really strong.”***

*Interface Engineering's 2014 Winter Party*

WORK WITH US

We're always looking for skilled, high performance team members – individuals with a passion for challenging work and a thirst for innovative and complex projects. In return, you'll find a workplace with expansive personal development opportunities, great relationships, and superior benefits. You'll also have access to MEP





INTERFACE
ENGINEERING

***“They’re recruiting
their friends.”***

WORKSHOP

Breakout #2:

How would a new recruit describe your company culture?

S.W.O.R.D.

Weapons



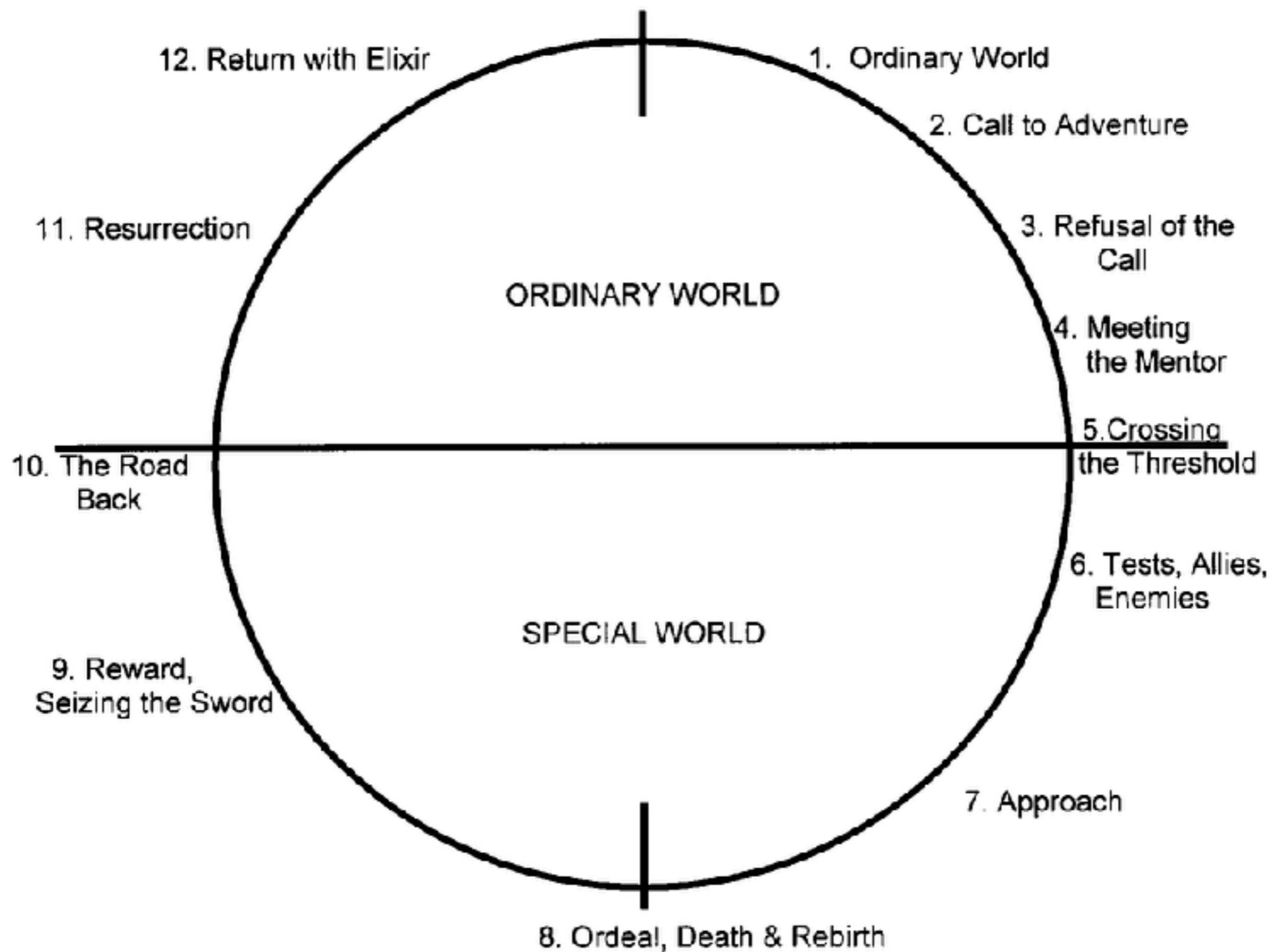


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**Weapons:
Your key assets.**

Story

THE HERO'S JOURNEY







@joshmiles



@joshmiles



@joshmiles

Sun Tzu said:

“The spoken word does not carry enough, thus... The institution of gongs and drums... banners & flags, forming a single united body.”

Brand Positioning & Messaging

Brand weapons:

- ✓ **Positioning: who are we / who we're not**
- ✓ **Brand voice, tone & essence**
- ✓ **Consistency**
- ✓ **Communications**
- ✓ **Social media**
- ✓ **And...**

Sun Tzu said:

***“If you know your enemy
and know yourself,
you will not fear the
outcomes of 100 battles.”***

Josh says:

“If your firm hasn’t built a strong brand platform and brand position (who you are, how you’re different, and why the world should care), good luck attracting and retaining the best talent.”

Your Website

Website as weapon

- ✓ **#1 Validation tool**
- ✓ **Easy to post new opportunities**
- ✓ **Integrated HR software (I have recommendations)**
- ✓ **What's it like to work there?**
- ✓ **Is there enough evidence?**

case study:

Primera
Engineers
Chicago, IL

problem:

**We need to attract
more applicants.**

(duh.)

strategy:

**Reposition who
we are, modernize
our story & look.**

Results:



“We had 653 submissions in the first three months after the site launched... Since then, we’ve averaged between more than 125 per month until we switched to (new HR software)...

That’s compared to 2 per month from our old site.”

- Matt Dvorak,

Director of Marketing + Communications

Primera Engineers, Ltd.

WORKSHOP

Breakout #3:

Who are you?

What makes you different?

S.W.O.R.D.

Onboarding



Wikipedia:

“...also known as organizational socialization, refers to the mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors to become effective organizational members and insiders.”

**Doesn't the
employee
experience start
from the first
message?**

From SHRM:

“From there, organizations doing this kind of thinking about culture almost always start to focus on deeper changes related to human resources—hiring, **onboarding**, firing, and performance management.”

(It's not *just* onboarding...)

Documenting Benefits

**Everything in
one place**

Welcome packets

Automating key dates

Job descriptions & expectations



*“CH2M uses the buddy system
—new staff are assigned
someone to be sure everything
starts smoothly and can
answer any questions.”*

HR Professional Tips:

From the SHRM blog:

- ✔ **Talk to employees.**
- ✔ **Observe behavior and performance changes.**
- ✔ **Survey employees.**
- ✔ **Conduct exit interviews.**

SHRM said:

***“High morale makes
good business and
economic sense.”***

S.W.O.R.D.

Recognition



Exposure:
in a good way

**Creative ways to
recognize your
people**

Social Media

Contribute to content marketing

Submitting for personal awards:

ENR, BD+C, SMPS, etc.

**Encourage
engagement:**
SMPS, local boards, etc.

Ongoing education

**Events, outings,
fund raisers &
conferences**

S.W.O.R.D.

Differentiation



Internal vs. external perception

case study:

Dyer Brown

Boston, MA

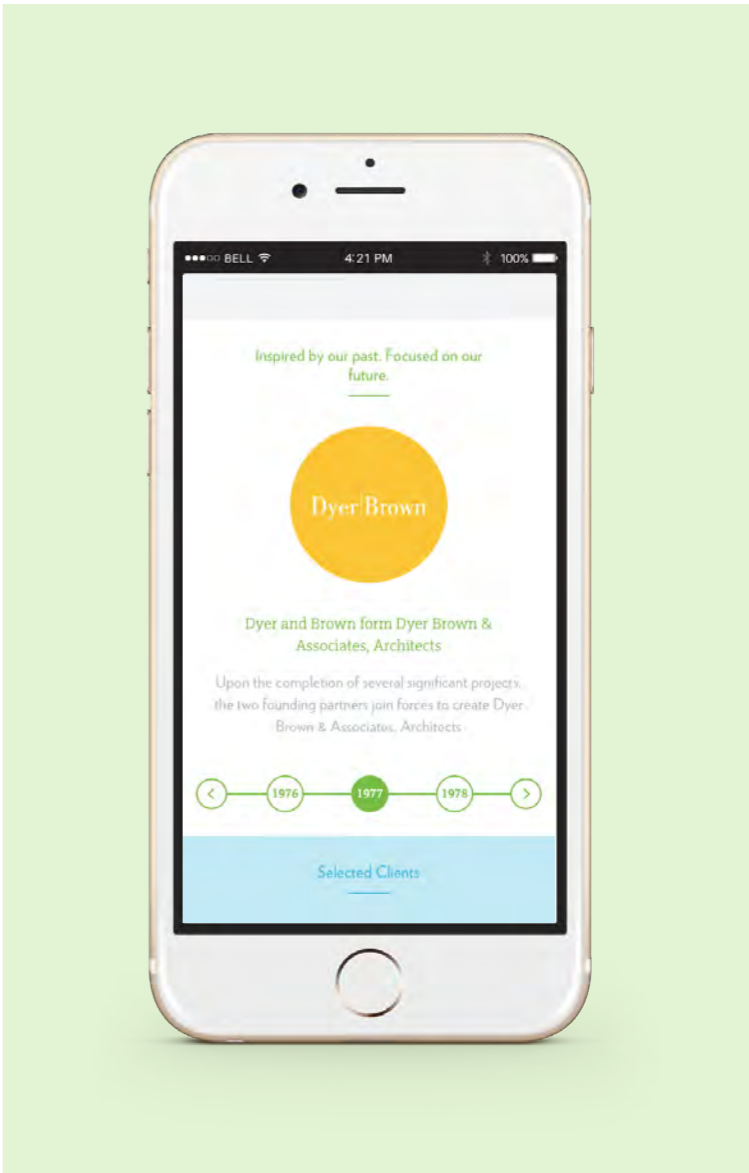
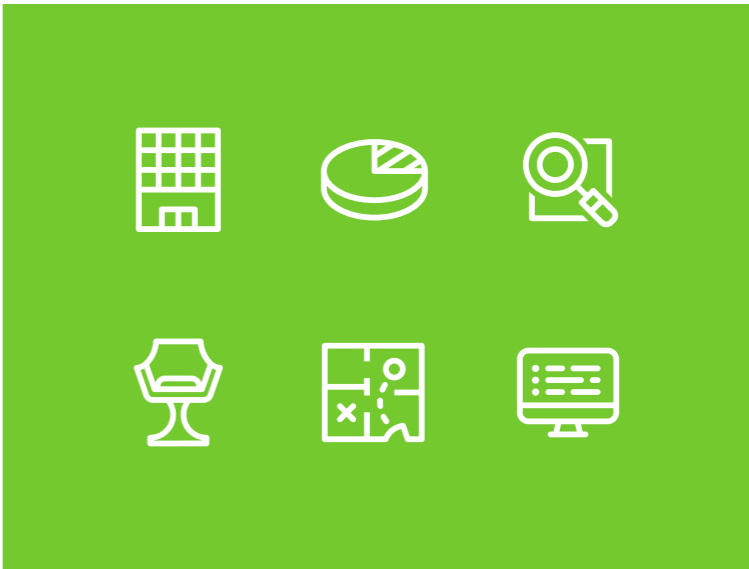
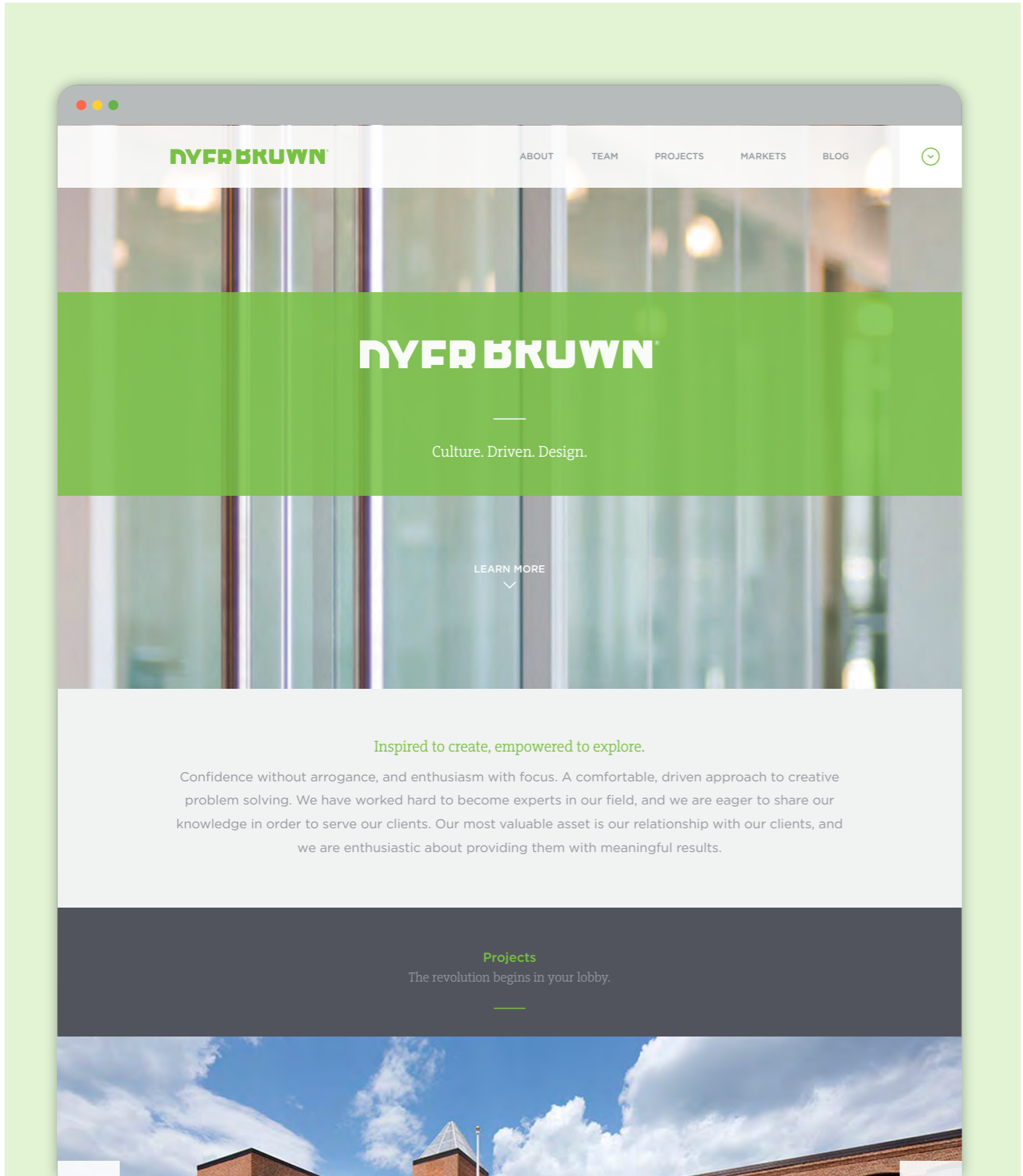
Dyer Brown staff:

***“After checking out
the (old) website, I
almost didn’t come to
the interview.”***

Dyer Brown staff:

***“There’s more going
on here than you get
from the outside.”***

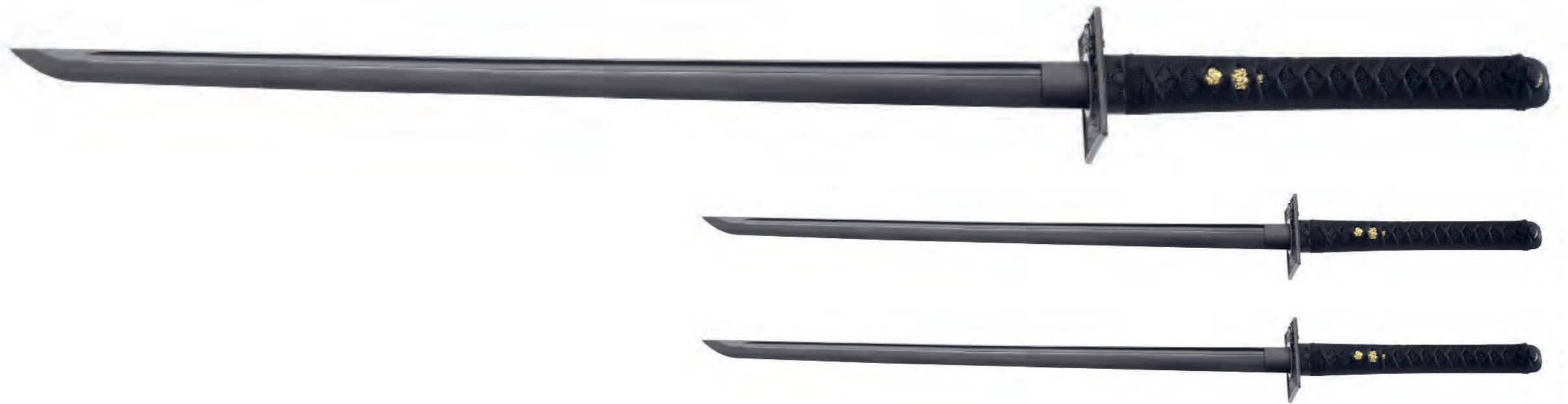




A few crazy ideas...

- ✓ Unlimited remote policy
- ✓ Unlimited PTO
- ✓ BYOD
- ✓ Virtual team
- ✓ Flexible, standing stations
- ✓ Refresh your space

Bonus



Sun Tzu said:

***“The general is the
bulwark of the state.”***

Find a mentor

Value of EQ

Internships as feeder-system

***“Your company
did this for me?”***

Employee Retention

5 key things that keep EE's:

- ✓ Supervisors make or break retention
- ✓ Colleagues have a lot of power
- ✓ Culture matters a lot
- ✓ Don't forget R&R
- ✓ Your team wants to grow, or they'll leave

- CBS News

Suggestions:

Harvard / TinyPulse

- ✓ Pick the right managers and leaders
- ✓ Hire for cultural fit
- ✓ Embrace opportunities for socialization
- ✓ Openly discuss workload and expectations
- ✓ Keep in mind your employees' desire to grow professionally

Breakout #4:

What did you learn today?

What will you apply?

What we discussed:

- ✓ The talent war problem
- ✓ Stats & research from HR pros
- ✓ Five strategies for winning
- ✓ Case studies highlights
- ✓ Worksheets
- ✓ Q&A

Q&A
Thank you!



BoldBrand.com/war
slides, links, videos, and more...

Links:

- ✓ <http://www.constructiondive.com/news/survey-aec-firms-stymied-by-shortage-of-experienced-professionals/410460/>
- ✓ Bamboo HR >> http://www.bamboohr.com?utm_source=Par-MilesH-Ref
- ✓ <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/human-capital/articles/introduction-human-capital-trends.html>
- ✓ <https://www.bdcnetwork.com/AECTalentWars2015>
- ✓ <https://youtu.be/oVDSzNzas3w>
- ✓ <https://gocanvas.io/>
- ✓ <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/how-much-does-it-cost-companies-to-lose-employees/>
- ✓ http://www.huffingtonpost.com/julie-kantor/high-turnover-costs-way-more-than-you-think_b_9197238.html

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