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MATT MURPHY

CLIENT:	15Five
PROJECT:	Articles
OBJECTIVE:	Support an HR software developer's content-marketing strategy by ghostwriting articles for company executives
SUMMARY:	Deeper collaboration with 15Five's sales, marketing, and people ops teams came as a direct result of our editorial success, which included an article that generated the company's highest-ever web traffic to that point, one that stayed atop industry-leading news site Human Resources Today for two weeks, and one that was called "the best assignment I ever received" by marketing leadership *(Note: samples feature a variety of styles and structures to serve different purposes)*

TOPIC: Productivity and culture are two of the biggest priorities when
            considering remote work for employees

WEBSITE: Working Remotely: Ideal Work Environment or Threat to Culture and
            Employee Productivity?

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The [traditional office landscape](#) is changing and has been for quite some time, but the degree to which it *should* be shifting is subject to debate. Many employees consider their local coffee shop to be the ideal work environment, while traditional company leaders consider remote work to be a threat to their ability to manage employees. Perhaps Gallup CEO Jim Clifton said it best in the 2017 [State of the American Workforce Report](#): "The very practice of management no longer works."

Risky or not, increased telework seems to be the growing trend. Gallup reports that employees working remotely at least part-time grew from 39% in 2012 to 43% in 2016. The willingness to leave employers for others who offer this option is even larger. According to Softchoice's 2017 study [Collaboration Unleashed](#), 74% of workers would switch jobs for the opportunity to work off site more often.

Millennials are the usual suspects for so many global trends these days. With this demographic capturing the [largest share of today's employee base](#), a Gen Y disruption of workplace status quo is no exception. While remote work is neither new nor demo-specific, younger generations in particular are looking for more flexibility.

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If you're toying with offering remote-work opportunities, include these 3 productivity fundamentals in your consideration set:

1) Make sure critical technology is in place. When it comes to inter-office collaboration and remote work, there are literally dozens of proven platforms out there that can support your efforts. These include platforms for communication ([Slack](#)), project management ([Asana](#)), document sharing (Google Docs), and other business functions. All enable real-time collaboration, automate certain mundane tasks so employees can concentrate on meaningful work, and virtually eliminate the need for in-person project management.

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Pro tip for potential remote employers

As we've established, remote work is not the death knell for either employee productivity or organizational culture. When done well, you can attract and retain high-powered talent, foster positive morale through flexibility and trust, save everyone money, and even optimize employee performance.

But, if you're going to offer remote work options, be clear on expectations. Of those who participated in Softchoice's survey, 73% of workers "allowed to work from home on occasion" were still expected to be in the office. Unwritten rules or uncertainty about leadership's intent undermines the spirit of the benefit.

If you hire people you trust, then trust the people you hire. If someone gives you a reason to do otherwise, odds are it's really not a matter of whether that person's working down the hall or down the street. As long as remote work is a realistic option for your business and you put the right guardrails in place, you may just find the results are anything but a step backward.
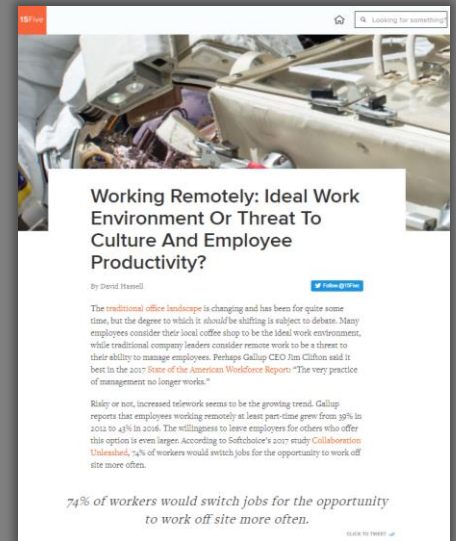
Outbound links boost credibility, SEO, and overall value to prospective customers
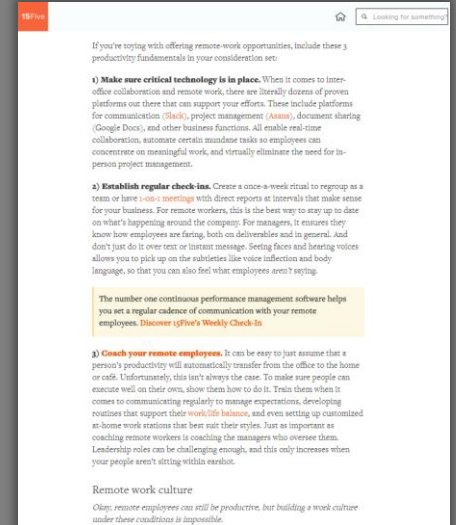
Categorizing and/or bulleting where possible strengthens readability and recall
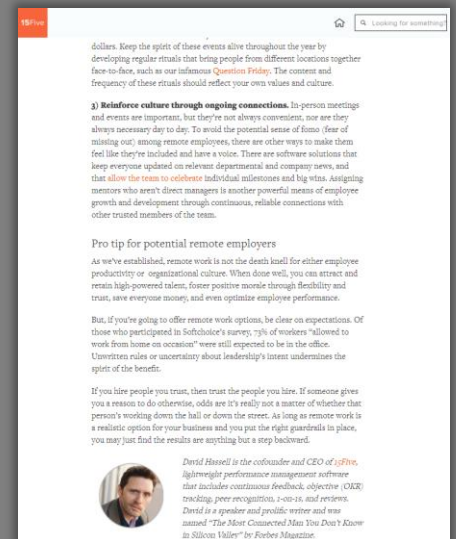
A powerful final message from senior leadership punctuates the post

TOPIC: Inspired by outdoor brand Patagonia, 15Five's core values can be conveyed through shared attributes with lofty outdoor pursuits

WEBSITE: How Our Core Organizational Values Elevate Our Team

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With a name like 15Five, our partners are often curious about the story behind it. And we understand. It's not exactly an intuitive signature for a software company to have, right?

"15Five" is based off of a practice invented by Esprit founder, Doug Tompkins, and made famous by Yvon Chouinard, founder of outdoor brand, Patagonia. An avid mountain climber and sportsman, Chouinard would spend much of his time adventuring away from the office. This led to implementing "5-15 reports" for more efficient communications with his team while he was off the grid.

To this day, Patagonia employees take 15 minutes to write reports for their managers, who then take five minutes to read and create similar reports for their own managers, and so on. Such leeway allows everyone to spend more time on execution without sacrificing engagement.

15Five is rooted in the idea that a culture of strong communication and trust can lead to a more committed and productive workforce. This is best articulated through our core values, which serve as a cultural compass for our entire team. Each of our 10 organizational values ladders back up to the type of experience we create for our employees and the level of service we provide for our customers.

Storytelling draws readers in while also setting up the ongoing thematic

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1) Find the Leverage

Everest. Its name alone inspires awe. Reaching the 29,029-foot summit under one's own power is considered an incredible accomplishment. Each year, hundreds of hopeful climbers undergo unimaginable physical and psychological challenges for the honor of entering the very exclusive club.
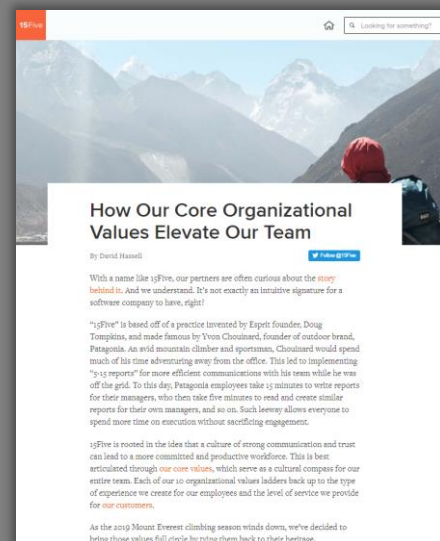
But, at the end of the day, Everest is as much a business as it is a trophy. While most of the newsworthy action takes place over the course of two to three months, the behind-the-scenes work for dozens of professional guiding services begins as far out as a year or more. Their teams manage various areas that are crucial for attracting clients and planning complex mountaineering trips, so no day goes by wasted.

Like these services, our team is constantly trying to hit milestones and achieve growth in a highly-competitive landscape. Therefore, we concentrate our limited time and energy on the right leverage points by being creative, resourceful, and efficient. We capitalize on the areas where we excel rather than trying to be all things to all people, thereby creating true separation from the pack.

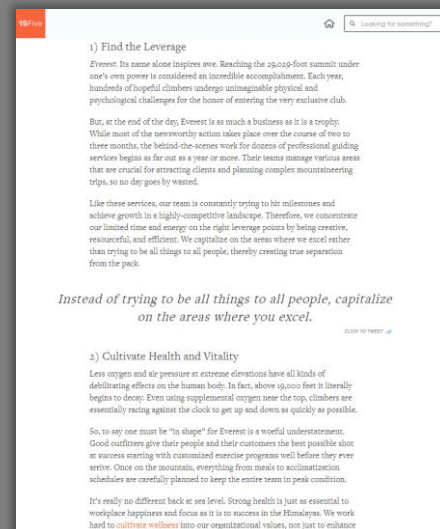Consistent section structure in a list-based article improves ease of reading

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A capable Everest expedition hinges on a team that can competently divide and conquer. Each person must play to his or her strengths and take ownership of a particular piece of the larger puzzle.
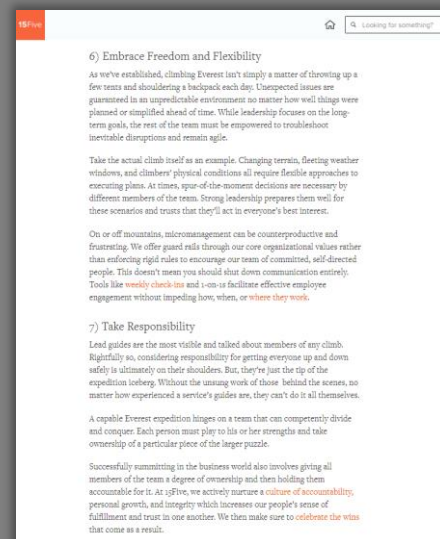
Successfully summitting in the business world also involves giving all members of the team a degree of ownership and then holding them accountable for it. At 15Five, we actively nurture a culture of accountability, personal growth, and integrity which increases our people's sense of fulfillment and trust in one another. We then make sure to celebrate the wins that come as a result.

Internal links create SEO-friendly site architecture and increase link equity

TOPIC: Listicle featuring notable HR conferences based on experience and research and how to make the most out of attending them

WEBSITE: [21 Top Talent Management, People Ops, and HR Conferences in 2019](#)

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Human Resource professionals understand more than most why learning and development opportunities are vital. [One study](#) found that a whopping two-thirds of employees actually changed jobs due to a lack of L&D.

Perhaps this is because many companies don't know how to create a learning and development program internally, or lack the resources to provide what they see as a perk, via external learning experiences like conferences and seminars. But [learning and development opportunities](#) are fast becoming necessary elements of an organization's retention strategy. People Operations teams and other people managers can model L&D by attending one of the HR conferences outlined below.

Inspiration and innovation often thrive through external influences like these. What better way to grow than by joining the brightest minds in a given field for the sharing of ideas, development of relevant skills, and exchange of proven tools and strategies?

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San Francisco / Bay Area

1. People Analytics and Future of Work (PAFOW)
Date: January 31 – February 1, 2019
Location: San Francisco, CA

PAFOW's mission is to serve as a central connector for all things people analytics. Each year it brings together global thought leaders in the space to share insights, trends, and best practices. In 2019, the [PAFOW Conference](#) will focus on how people measurement and analytics benefit the workforce, leadership, and overall organization of companies that use them.

Notable Speaker: Dawn Klinghoffer, Head of People Analytics, Microsoft

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Top 10 Tips for Making the Most out of Your 2019 HR Conferences

Whether you're a first-timer or a seasoned vet when it comes to HR industry events, you'll want to make each one a worthwhile investment—for you and the broader team. We want you to shine, too, which is why we've also compiled a checklist to help you best leverage your off-site opportunity.

Set objectives
As with any other initiative, establishing goals adds purpose to your participation. Are there must-attend breakouts that will benefit you the most? Is there a specific person or group you'd like to engage? Are you looking for a minimum number of leads? Creating objectives ahead of time helps keep you accountable for these things.

Follow on social media
There are tons of reasons to integrate your upcoming HR conferences into your SM routine. Meet and set up times to connect with new people, gain more info about the best sessions for you, and participate in conversations to stay informed are just a few such reasons to consider.
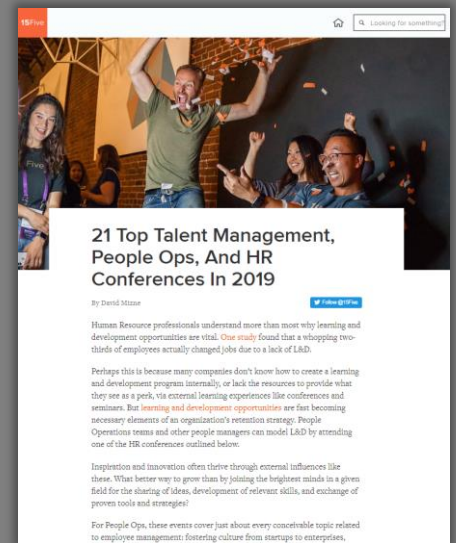
Links to external proof points underscore credibility and offer additional resources to add value
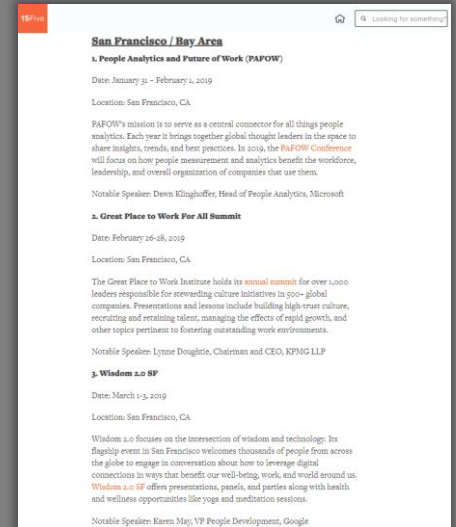
Consistent listicle-style format organizes events logically by date and location
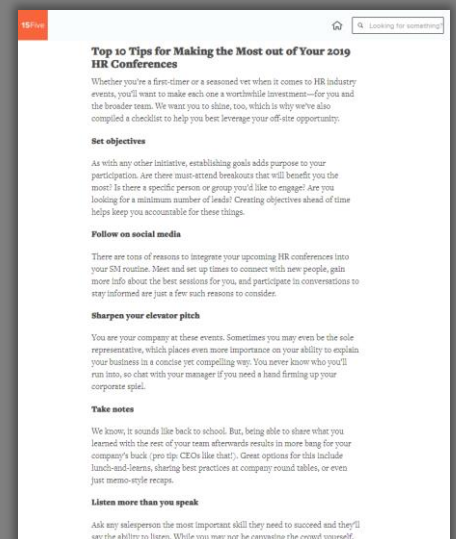
Tips on how to best leverage the events enhance the article's utility for readers

TOPIC: Part of a promotional strategy for a lead magnet, the article previews a white paper guide for choosing employee performance software

WEBSITE: New Guide: Choosing Employee Performance Software to Ease Common HR Pain Points

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If our collective experience has taught us nothing else, it's that modern Human Resources teams face increasingly complex challenges. On top of that, HR is disproportionately appreciated relative to the importance of their role, which is broader than many realize.

It's not all doom and gloom for People Ops, though! Yes, corporate roles like these can be tough, but if you approach them the right way you can simplify both short- and long-term tasks while gaining kudos from your peers in the process.

Twenty-first Century technology can be a boon to productivity no matter what your department. So let's use it! To get you started, we've compiled a comprehensive HR Buyer's Guide to help you search for and select continuous performance management software that fits your company philosophy and specific needs.

Our step-by-step guide examines various best practices that together can lead to a big win for your team. It also includes a walk-through of this process in action featuring one of the most experienced People Ops leaders in the game today.

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Step 1: Identify HR Pain Points

Doctors don't prescribe treatments until they diagnose symptoms, and you shouldn't either. In this case, your stethoscope takes the form of a *fundamental needs assessment*. This employee survey not only begins to uncover the roots of People Ops issues, it also shows employees that their opinions carry weight with leadership.

In our guide, we recommend inquiring into four key areas and include sample questions for each. Keep these areas in mind as you compile your own assessment:

· Communication
· Employee growth and development
· Productivity
· Employee Compensation and promotion

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Colleen McCreary has been revolutionizing People Ops since the days of the first iPod. A veteran of various HR departments at successful companies like Vevo, Climate Corporation, and Zynga, Colleen currently serves as the first-ever Chief People Officer at Credit Karma. When she took up this post, Credit Karma was experiencing internal growing pains as part of its expansion from startup to billion-dollar enterprise.

In short, Colleen became a force of positive disruption for the company. Our case study details how she approached modernizing People Ops processes, used internal findings and external research to build a compelling case for change, and secured C-level support ahead of successful implementation.
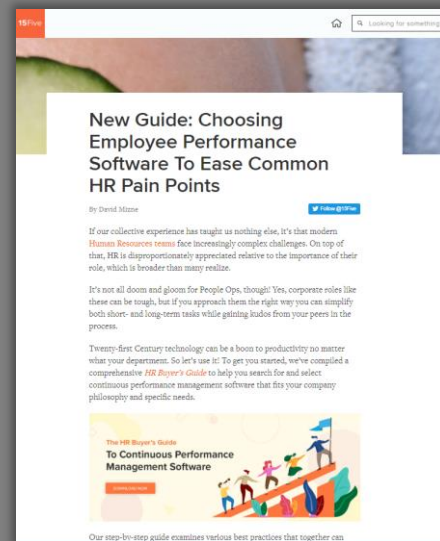
Introduction sets up a graphic link to the full HR Buyer's Guide within the article body
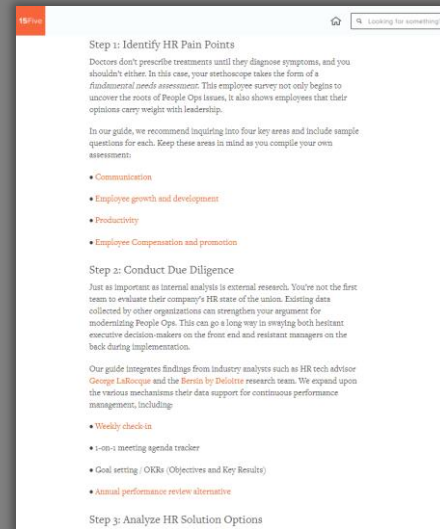
Internal links direct readers to learn more about key products and topics right away
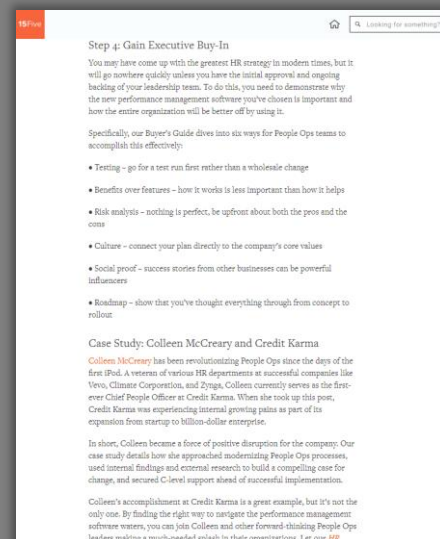
Conclusion previews the guide's client case study demonstrating the process in action

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In business, as in other facets of life, great leaders create environments where their people can bring the best versions of themselves to work. But it can be easy to forget that this applies to the leader first, which is why personal growth work is so important. After all, the role of CEO is just as much about being *Chief Emotional Officer* as it is being *Chief Executive Officer*.

Today's guest understands how company culture and performance are a reflection of its leader's state of mind, especially during times of crisis.

Max Yoder is the CEO and co-founder of [Lessonly], the training software company that helps teams change how they work so their people can live better lives. He's also the author of *Do Better Work*, which delves into the connection between personal growth and company success.

In this episode, Max discusses how emotions are key to high performance, an idea once foreign to the working world. As attitudes change, businesses that are integrating emotional safety into the workplace are seeing improved relationships, productivity, and accountability.

Opening clearly and concisely introduces both the episode theme and guest

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In this episode, we also discuss:

- What happens when you allow emotions to play a role in your company
- The most important thing for a leader to do in a time of crisis
- Modeling personal growth: Providing employees with an emotional-wellbeing toolbox
- Accountability: caring about both performance and people by setting clear agreements
- Recognizing that antifragility is a recipe for strength and growth

Show notes include a list of key discussion points and a compelling interview excerpt
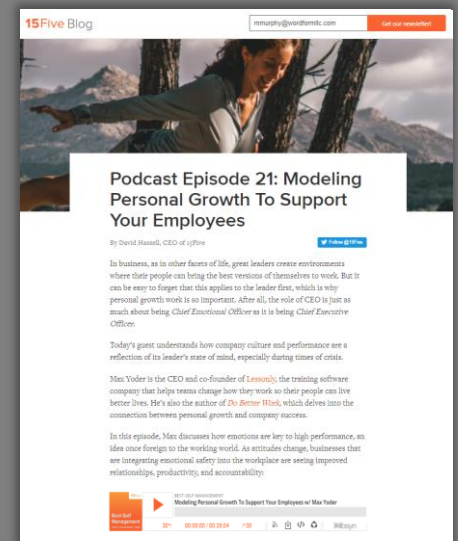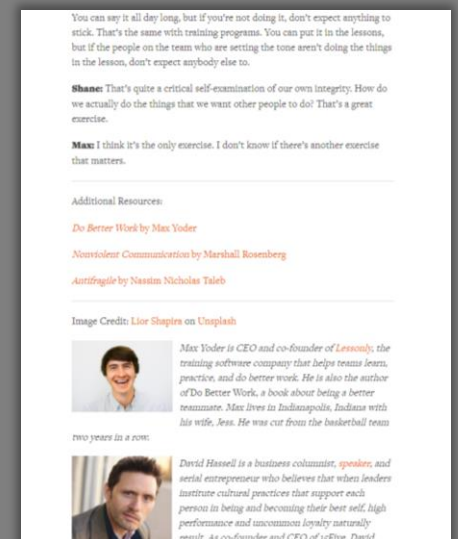
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Max: You've maybe heard the phrase "More is caught than taught," which is probably a controversial thing for somebody who makes training software to say! But, I don't think it in any way conflicts with what we do. "More is caught than taught" just means if you want the things that you're teaching people to stick, you do them because people will catch what you do, they will not catch what you say.

You can say it all day long, but if you're not doing it, don't expect anything to stick. That's the same with training programs. You can put it in the lessons, but if the people on the team who are setting the tone aren't doing the things in the lesson, don't expect anybody else to.

Shane: That's quite a critical self-examination of our own integrity. How do we actually do the things that we want other people to do? That's a great exercise.

Max: I think it's the only exercise. I don't know if there's another exercise that matters.

Conclusion features a compelling assertion, podcast bios, and links to relevant resources

TOPIC: 2-part series based on an interview with renowned business analyst and Altimeter Group founder Charlene Li
           ahead of her new book *The Disruption Mindset: Why Some Organizations Transform While Others Fail*

WEBSITE: [Part 1: Acts of Courageous Leadership](#) l [Part 2: Disruptive Growth Begins from Within](#)

Interview with Charlene Li, Part 1: Acts of Courageous Leadership

By David Mizne

In this two-part series, we sit down with Altimeter Group founder and Senior Fellow Charlene Li ahead of the release of her new book, The Disruption Mindset: Why Some Organizations Transform While Others Fail. ... as one of the 100 most creative people in business by Fast Company ... top 50 leadership innovator by Inc., Charlene is an expert on digital transformation and disruptive growth strategies.

"My happy place is on a ledge overlooking a quarry. When I'm about to go over the ledge is the scariest part. You're hanging, your palms are sweating, you get this weak feeling in your stomach and legs. I feel alive," says business leadership expert, Charlene Li.

It makes perfect sense for someone as open to risk as Charlene to speak knowledgeably about stepping outside one's comfort zone. After all, she's been doing it throughout her career. While at Forrester Research, Charlene excelled as an analyst, but found that her role insulated her from exploring newer disruptive technologies emerging at the time.

"Disruption doesn't know any boundaries by department, industry, or title. It impacts everybody across the organization."

With that mindset, she left the security offered by a place like Forrester at the start of the recession in 2008 to start her own firm, Altimeter Group. Charlene's company quickly made a splash in the space through its holistic, yet pragmatic approach to understanding the intersection of technology and talent. Her gamble paid off in 2015 when Prophet acquired Altimeter.

Interview with Charlene Li, Part 2: Disruptive Growth Begins from Within

By David Mizne

This is the second half of a two-part series based on our interview with Altimeter Group founder and Senior Fellow, Charlene Li ahead of the release ... book, The Disruption Mindset: Why Some Organizations ... While Others Fail. In Part 1, we discussed how courageous leaders ... in the face of uncertainty. Today, we look at how these leaders ... their people in order to bring their disruptive ideas to life.

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... strategy for breakfast." – Peter Drucker, renowned management ... whose principles shaped the way organizations have been run for ...

"There has to be a strategy for it to eat." – Charlene Li, renowned business analyst whose principles are reshaping the way organizations are run in the midst of modern digital revolution

Charlene's addendum to Drucker's quip is as savvy as it is witty. In this case, it relates to the type of environment we discussed in Part 1 of this series wherein courageous leaders encourage their people to move outside their comfort zones. This, in turn, leads to what she calls "aha moments" that blaze the trail toward disruptive growth.

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"'Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.' I have it on my mug. I push my team to go out of their comfort zone because that's how you grow. Not stressing yourself, but stretching."

"Culture eats strategy for breakfast." – Peter Drucker, renowned management consultant whose principles shaped the way organizations have been run for the past 75 years

"There has to be a strategy for it to eat." – Charlene Li, renowned business analyst whose principles are reshaping the way organizations are run in the midst of modern digital revolution

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Her point is that this sort of culture, while certainly important, doesn't move the ball downfield on its own. It's the connective tissue that sets the tone and guides how they conduct business, but it doesn't tell people what to do. That's where strategy comes in.

"Strategy says 'We could do anything, but we can't do everything,'" she explains. "Leadership then says 'Everybody go this way–not that way, go this way.'"