



Clear Career Professionals

HR's Role in Fixing What Pay Can't

Leadership, Culture, and
Retention in Government

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We don't have a pay
problem,
we have a **leadership
and culture problem** .



Recruitment & Retention are about
leadership, culture, and vision.
HR is the key to shifting all three.



What is 540 Leadership?

The 540 Model: ($360^\circ + 180^\circ$)

360° Awareness – Understanding what's happening all around you: staff dynamics, community perception, interdepartmental collaboration.

- $+180^\circ$ Awareness – The leadership edge:
 - Above – Awareness of influence from City Manager and executive team
 - Below – Awareness of frontline staff experience, operational limitations, and morale
 - Within – Self-awareness, personal values, mental & physical wellness, leadership practices





Why Employees Really Leave

- Lack of support from leadership
- Minimal opportunity to be heard
- Toxic culture
- No path forward

Key Statistics

Toxic Work Environment: SHRM reports that 32.4% of employees who quit cited a toxic or negative work environment as the primary reason for leaving.

Poor Leadership: SHRM reports that 30.3% left due to poor company leadership, and 27.7% were dissatisfied with their manager or supervisor.

Preventable Turnover: Gallup reports that 42% of employee turnover is preventable, often stemming from unaddressed organizational issues or inadequate management.





People don't leave jobs, they
leave **dysfunction**



HR as a Strategic Partner, Not a Compliance Enforcer



- Traditional View of HR: Policy, paperwork, problems
- Evolved View: Workforce architect, leadership advisor, culture strategist
- 540 Insight: HR has 360 ° awareness and operates at the center of influence





The Leadership Trap: When Ego Replaces Vision

What Failed Leadership Looks Like in Practice:

- Micromanagement
- Inconsistent follow-through
- Withholding information
- Overreacting to criticism
- Avoiding accountability

Ego is the silent killer of team trust and organizational credibility.

Ego-driven leaders:

- Prioritize being right over doing right
- Dismiss feedback as disloyalty
- Avoid transparency to maintain image

HR must coach leaders to shift from ego protection to culture protection.



When Culture Becomes the Problem

Characteristics of Unhealthy Cultures:

- Fear-based decision making
- Siloed departments
- Political finger - pointing

HR's Opportunity:

- Conduct culture assessments
- Lead realignment conversations
- Champion transparency

540 Insight: Organizational awareness and emotional regulation are essential HR leadership skills.



Emotional Regulation Assessment

"Fear builds compliance. Trust builds commitment."

– Anonymous

You Can't Recruit Your Way Out of Misalignment

Poor alignment = poor retention & recruitment

HR's Strategic Role:

- Identify leadership gaps
- Suggest org. structure improvements
- Build succession and mentoring plans

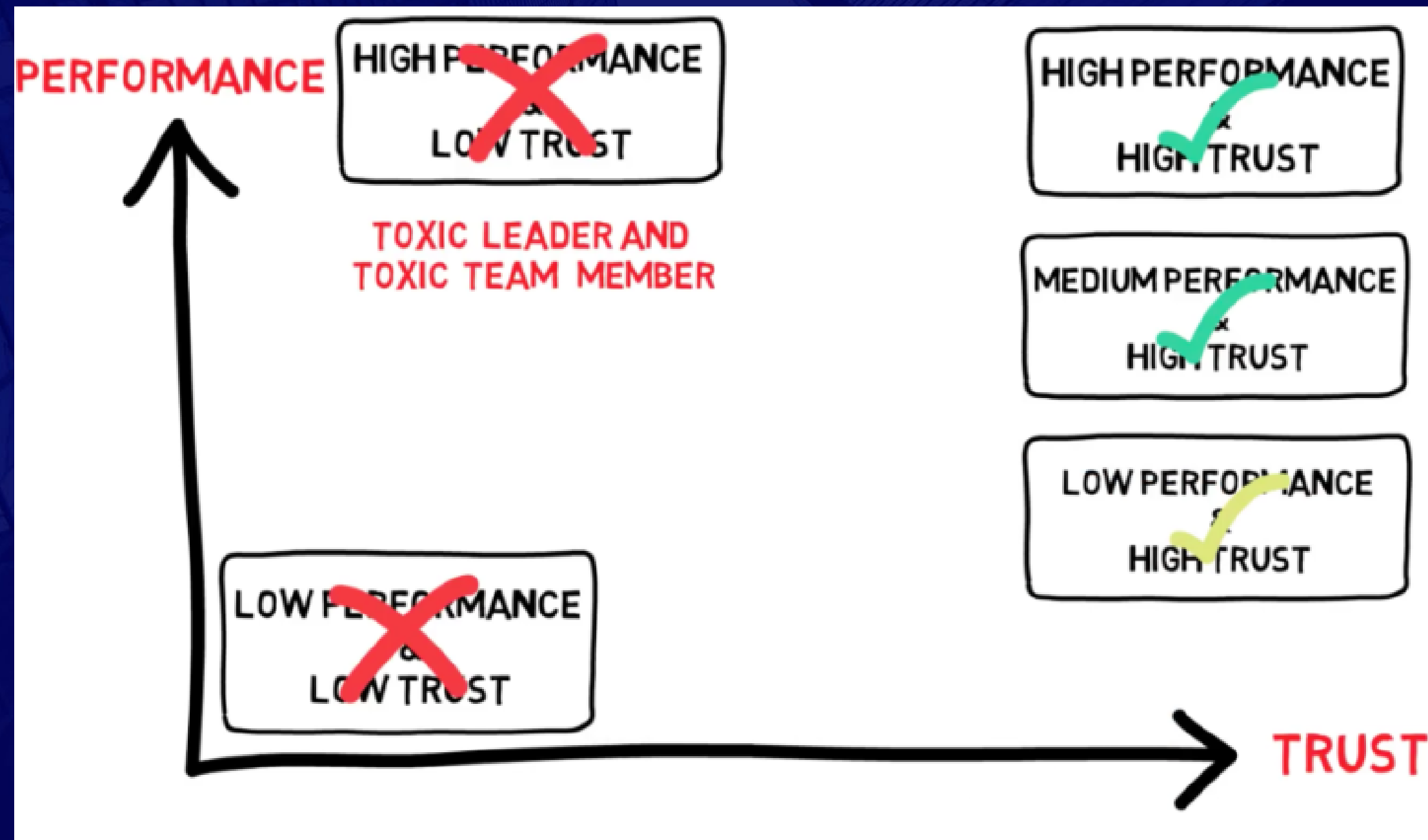
HR helps eliminate the micromanager and replaces them with a vision - builder.

The HP/HT Scale - Sinek



Performance vs trust

Teams vs toxicity



Practical HR Retention Strategies

“You don’t
build
culture
through
policy—you
build it
through
presence.”

- Quarterly stay interviews
- Leadership training for front - line supervisors
- Transparent pathways for growth and promotion
- Onboarding focused on values, not just rules



Becoming a 540 HRLeader

Don't wait for the fix —be the fix!

- Daily Practices:
 - Walk your workplace
 - Challenge outdated norms
 - Advocate for aligned leadership
- Draft your 540 HR Leadership Statement
 - What will I lead?
 - How will I lead?
 - Why does it matter?



QUESTIONS

Fixing culture isn't someone else's job - If you see it, you're meant to lead it.

- Where in your organization is culture quietly driving turnover, but no one is naming it?
- What would your workplace look like if leadership development was as prioritized as compliance?
- How can HR actively model the behaviors we want other leaders to adopt?



Thank You

FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP



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