Strategic Leadership

Leading in All Directions

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Introductions

Mindy Bradford, **Speaker**

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- President, DLA Architects

Why are we here?

- Lead effectively *at any level*
- Improve **alignment** and **communication**
- Build **impact** without waiting for title
- Lead **up, down, and across teams**
- **Develop future leaders**

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When Leadership is Avoided

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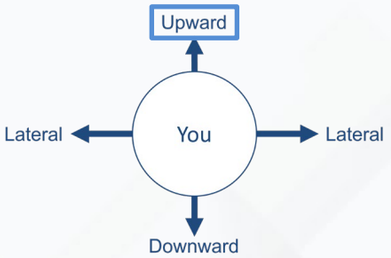
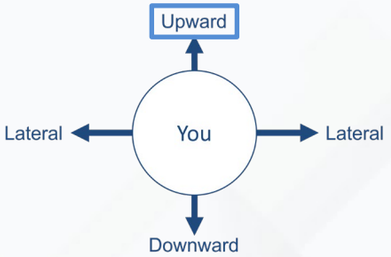
Why Do We Avoid Leadership?

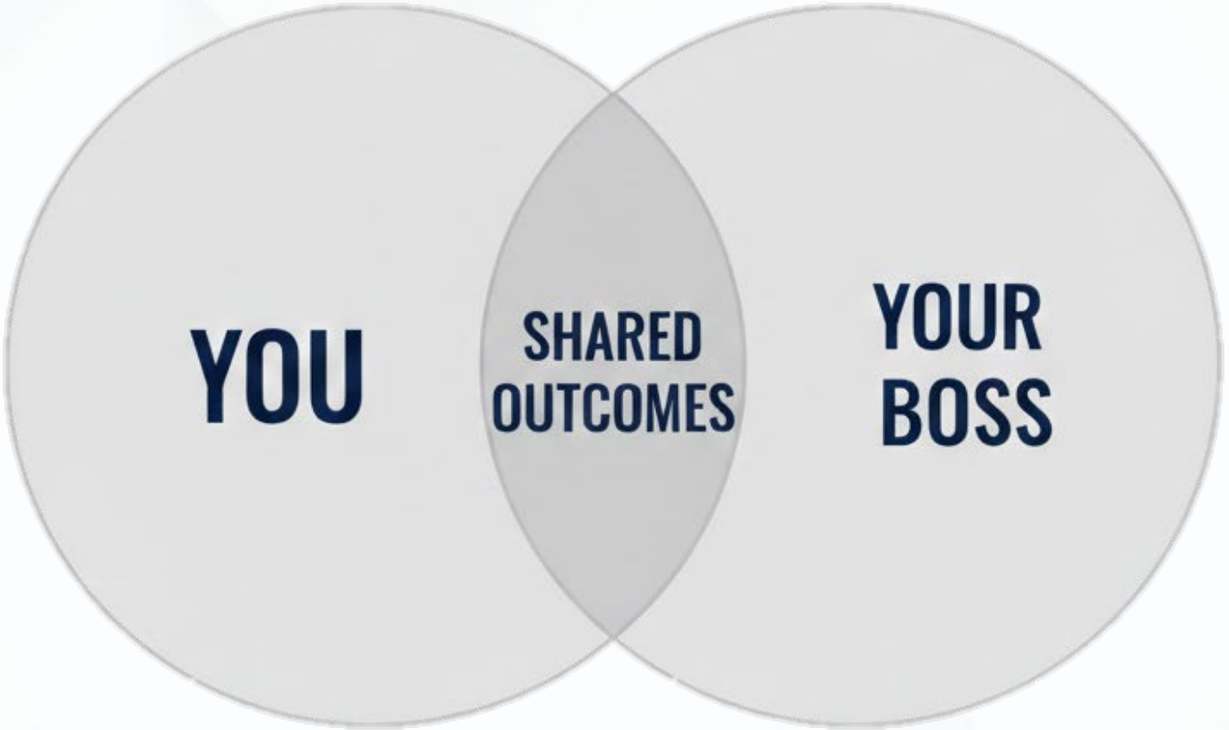
Your Directional Influence



Leading Up

Leading Up





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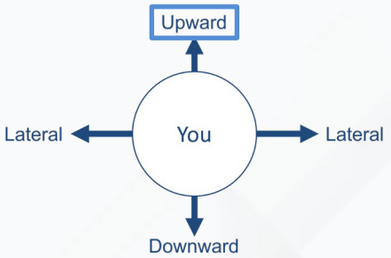
Meet in the Middle



Practical Alignment Requires Agreement On:

- How urgent issues are handled
- What can wait
- What must be escalated

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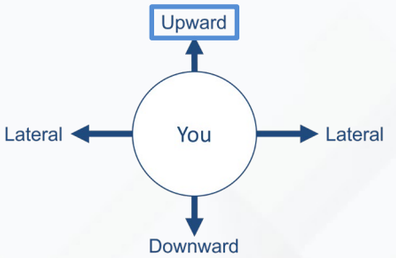
Timing Matters



Upward Leadership requires awareness.

- Your leader is human first
- Timing shapes reception
- The same message can build trust or tension

Before presenting issues, pause and ask:

- Is this the right moment?
- Is this the right setting?
- What might they be carrying today?

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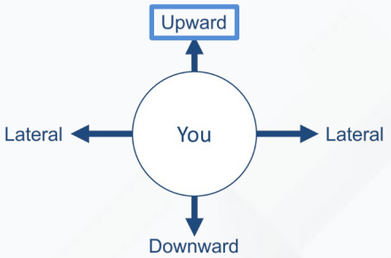
Giving Feedback



Check the Context

Focus on Outcomes

Use I-Statements & Curiosity

- "I'm seeing…"
- "I'm concerned about…"
- "Can we revisit ___? I'm feeling..."

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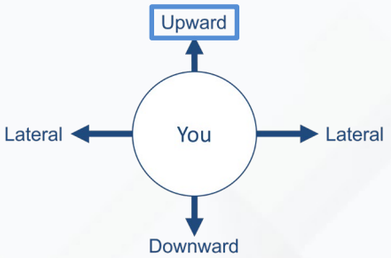
Giving Feedback



- “That’s not going to work.”
- “This is unrealistic.”
- “You didn’t communicate that clearly.”
- “We can’t do that.”
- “This timeline doesn’t make sense.”

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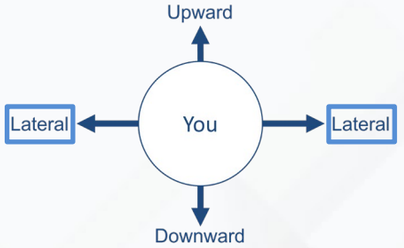

Leading Laterally

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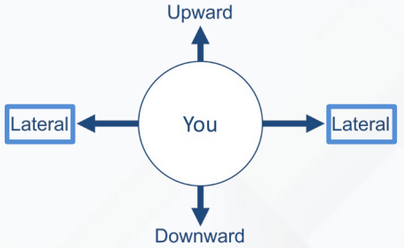
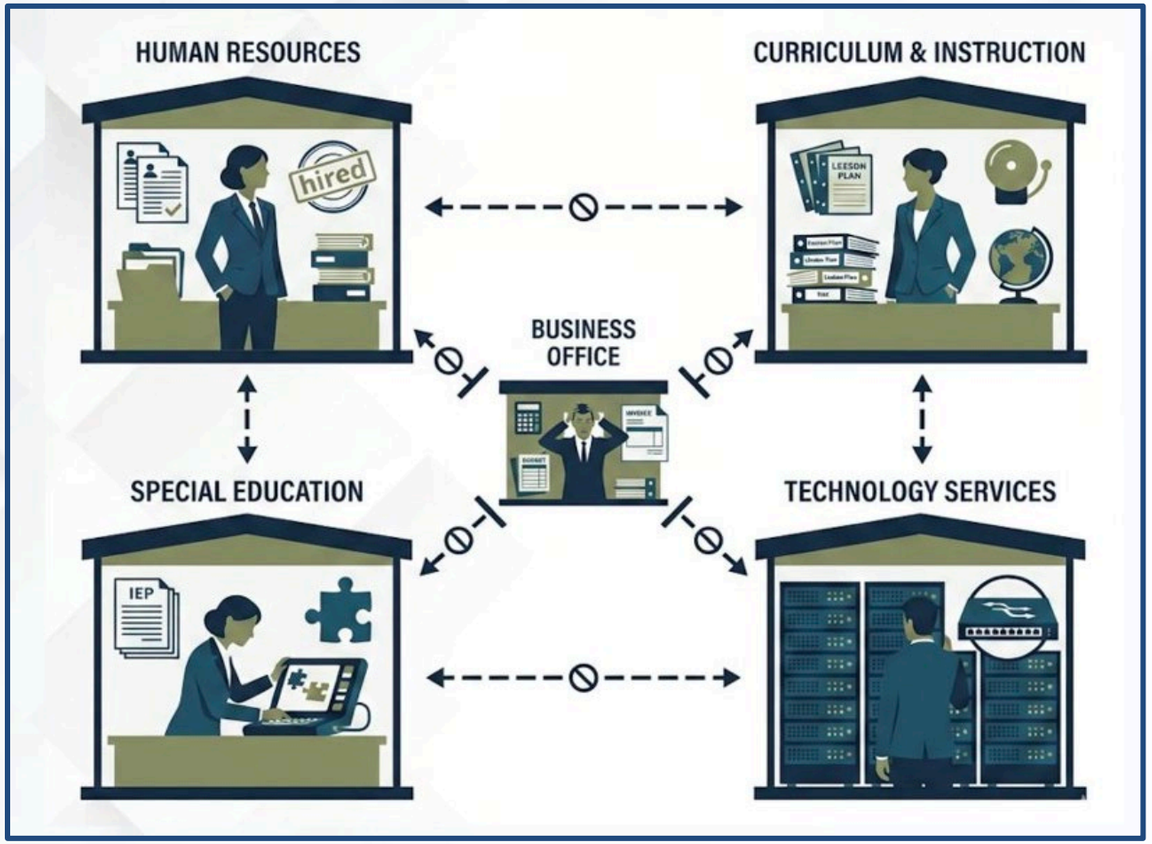
Challenges of Leading Laterally





- Needing to understand functions outside of your area of expertise
- Leading without formal authority
- Leading across siloed departments

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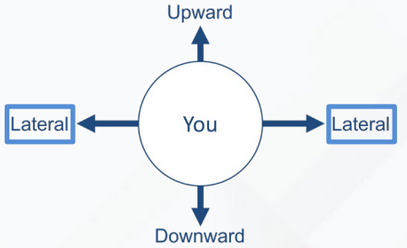
Tools to Help Lead Laterally



- **Reference Guides and How To Documents**

Information

Business & Operations Structure
- Organization Chart
- Responsibility-B&O Administrators
- Responsibility- B&O Support Staff *

Meetings Schedules - Board and Committees
- Schedule-Board Meetings
- Schedule-Finance Committee
- Schedule-Insurance Committee

Accounts Payable
- Purchasing Guidelines
- Form-Deposits
- Form-Food Expenditure
- Form-Gift and Contribution
- Form-Student Refund Request
- Form-Travel & Food
- Form-Lost P-Card Receipt
- Information-Reimbursement Memo
- Sales Tax Exemption Certificate
- PCard Procedures
- PCard Checkout
- PCard Reconciliation Log
- PCard User Agreement
- Schedule-PCard Due Dates
- Vendor Submission Deadlines
- End of Year Calendar - Buildings

Benefits
- Benefit Resource Site *

Payroll
- Timesheet Due Dates (School Staff)
- Additional/Overtime Timesheet for HESS Staff
- Payroll Flowchart
- Timesheets
- 2025-26 Stipend Schedule
- PlanConnect Guide (403b/457b)
- IMRF Voluntary Additional
- TRS Supplemental Savings Plan

Budgeting
- Accounting Manual
- Budget Workshop Memo - Buildings
- Budget Workshop Memo - Departments
- Chart of Accounts-Buildings
- Chart of Accounts-Departments
- Building Allotments
- Quarterly Meeting Schedule

Miscellaneous
- Form-Student Accident
- Form-Employee Accident
- Procedure-Professional Development
- Procedure-Contract/Agreement Application
- Schedule-Transportation
- Transportation 1-Page Summary
- School Fees
- Field Trip Fee Calculator
- Bus Accident Checklist
- Vendor Contact Information

Facilities
- B&G Hours
- Building Engineer and Head Custodian Checklist
- Facility Usage Agreement
- ML Schedules User Guide
- Form-Facility Use AED
- Form-Facility Use FAMP
- Form-Health Life/Safety Verification
- Individual School Safety Drill Report
- Schedule-Quarterly Meeting
- Schedule-Vendor Submission Deadlines
- School Phone Listing
- Snow and Ice Control Plan
- Mowing Schedule
- Daily Cleaning Maps

IVEE Portal Link

How To's

Purchase Orders (PO)
- How to enter a requisition to become a PO
- How to attach documents to a requisition/PO
- How to approve a Req in IVEE (Principals & Department leads)
- How to receive a PO
- How to enter a PO revision
- How to Print a PO
- How to Change the Font Size to Change the View when Entering in Reqs
- How to change DACs or Connection Group Years
- How to Use Amazon Reports for Reconciliation

Monitor your Budget/POs
- How to print budget: expenditure report
- How to print PO Pay History and Encumbrance report

Facilities
- Akita Box Service Request Information
- Facilities Usage System User Guide

Infinite Visions Employee Access
- How to log into iVisions Portal

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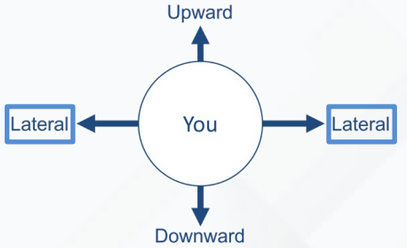
Tools to Help Lead Laterally



- **Interdepartmental Collaboration**
  - **Regular meetings across departments with all team members**

2/4/2026

Topic	Background	Notes
HESS Calculators	Wages: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Yl6v-sEAh6x_SovHYyNYcgCFT6mPLRkcnjEP0XiWoL4/edit?usp=sharing Benefits: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1jODrwKUnD3ZlHTRQ1ilAVlSks3vCmwWVarBtHr3c7C0/edit?usp=sharing • Need to add a calculator if we keep Tier 1.	
Red Rover		Need more information
HR/BO Hall Pass		Gina will put these on our calendars 11am - 1:30pm
FY27 Rollover	Typically occurs in March, just keep this in mind for now	• Work calendars and salaries for HESS will stay the same until the contract is ratified • Pay cycles can be done after work calendars • Catie will sit down with everyone to upload the HCHTA salary schedule
Positions		

  - **Collaborative visits to buildings with multiple departments (Hall Pass)**
    - **HR and Business Office Departments visit schools together**

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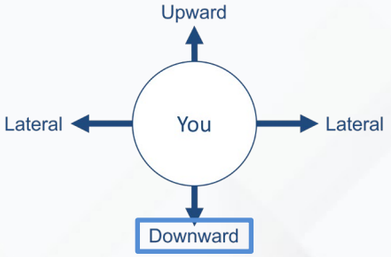

Leading Downward

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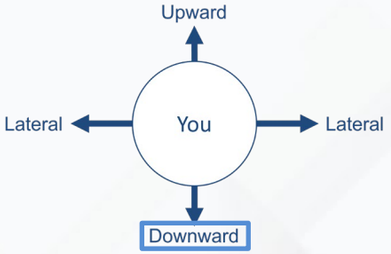
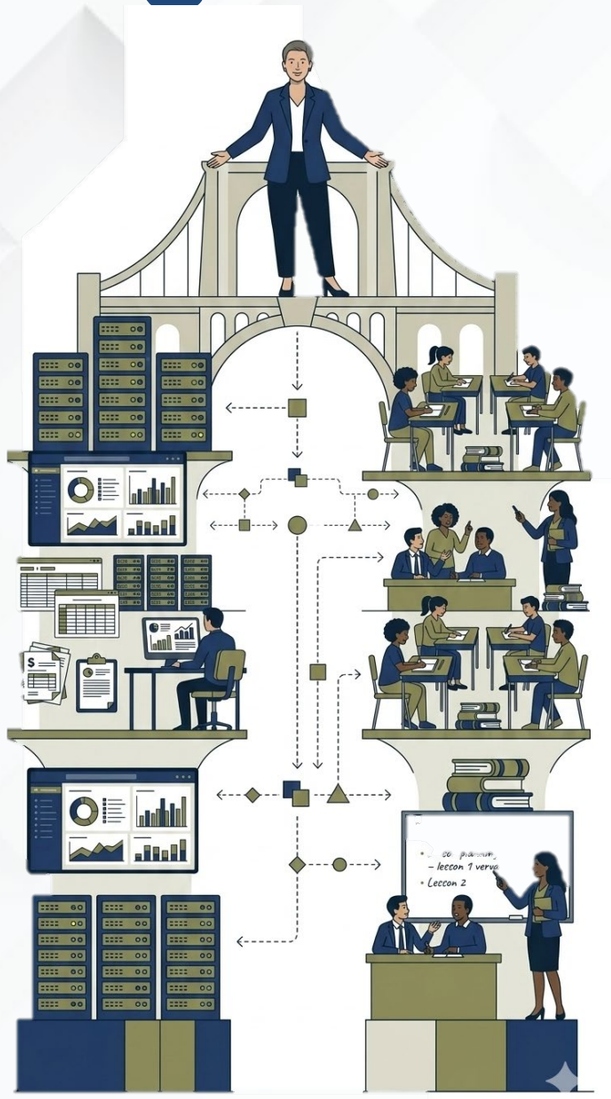
Challenges of Leading Downward





- Need to bridge the gap between technical "numbers" world and the "instructional" work of the district
- Staff often more comfortable with "doing the work" vs "leading others"
- Downward leaders need to be adaptable and flexible

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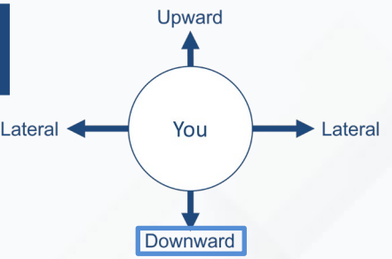
Strategies to Help Lead Downward



- **Establish Clear Protocols**

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

	Daily	Responsibility
	Maintain W-9 Vendor List	
	Monitor AP e-mail.	
	Process invoices in invoice processing that have been received by mail/ inter office mail	
	Printing & Distribution of District Purchase Orders	
	Open mail and process accordingly	
	Scan Invoices to Purchase Orders	
	Issue PO's	

	Weekly	Responsiblity
Thursday	Processing & Distribution Utility and Activity Account Checks	
As received	Process B & G PO's and enter invoices for Board Run	
NOTE**	Always pay Direct Energy on first Thursday of the month (this will avoid invoices reflect past due balances)	
Wednesday	Send utilites to Mike Duggan and Matt K. for approval prior to check run	
	Void Checks as needed	
	Maintain voucher files and payables	
	Maintain current Purchase order files	

Day	July	Responsibility
1-8	Processing Invoices & review invoice descrepancies	AP
1	Village of Hinsdale Parking Deck Payment	AP
6	Send out purchase card statements	
15	Purchase Card Log Due to Business Office	
	Distribution A/P Checks (bill list)	AP
	Research statments and request invoices from vendors	
1	Prepare first check run of month - will include all PO's from May and June	
Tuesday before Board Meeting	Bill List due	
Wed before Board Run	Cut Checks	
27	Purchase Card Voucher due	AP, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Finance
	Accounts Receivable	
	Assist in audit completion	

Day	August	Responsibility
1-8	Processing Invoices & review invoice descrepancies	
6	Send out purchase card statements	
15	Purchase Card Log Due to Business Office	
1-8	Research statments and request invoices from vendors	
Tuesday before Board Meeting	Bill List due	
Wed before Board Run	Cut Checks	
Day after board mtg	Distribution A/P Checks (bill list)	
27	Purchase Card Voucher due	AP, Assistant Superintendent and Director of Finance
	Accounts Receivable	
	Assist in audit completion	

- **Focus on Empowerment**

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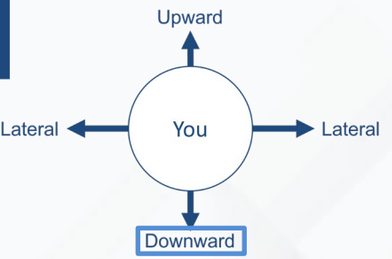
Strategies to Help Lead Downward



- **Coach for Growth**
  - Instead of just correcting technical errors, use them as a mentorship moment to explain the "why" behind specific procedures/processes
- **Celebrate "Quiet Wins"**
  - Since the work of the business office often goes unnoticed, find opportunities to praise tasks that were handled well to help build department/team morale
  - But find a way to do so that motivates the team (as many business office staff do not like huge celebrations)

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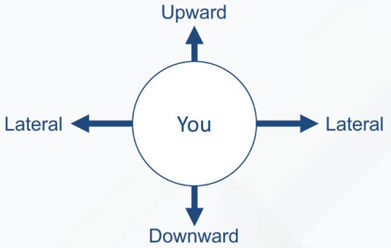

Leading the Next Generation

March 13, 2026 • Rolling Meadows

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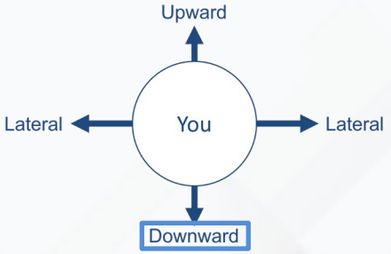
What's Different?



Latest Generations Grew Up With:

Constant Information

Willingness to Question Systems

Constant Feedback

Transparency About Stress

Constant Comparison

Value Driven Decision Making

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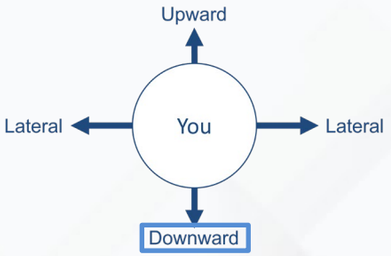
What They Expect from Leadership



Consistent Expectations:

- Clarity over positional authority
- Continuous feedback over silence
- Purpose over default programming

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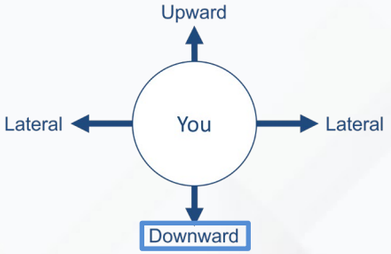
Develop Future Leaders Not Employees



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Scan to Watch Video!

Conclusion

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When Leadership is Accepted

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Questions and Answers

We thank you for your time!

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Presenters:

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