



# Your Boss May Suck, But It's Probably Your Fault

Jim Rispin • [jrispin@fuller.edu](mailto:jrispin@fuller.edu)  
[@jimrispin](#) (slack/twitter)



HBR.ORG

# Harvard Business Review

 OCTOBER 2016

**The Truth Hurts**  
United Airlines CEO Tells  
Customers To Just F@#\$ing  
Deal With It

**The Numbers Don't Lie**  
New Gallup Poll Finds 40%  
Of Americans Probably  
Going To Skip Jim's Party

**And The Useless Award Goes To**  
Manager Achieves Full  
Mastery of Pointless  
Managerial Jargon

**WHAT  
MAKES  
A GREAT  
LEADER?**

Beats Me!  
Ask this guy,  
he might know

WHO THE HELL IS  
THIS GUY ANYWAY?!

SEE PAGE 49

**Why Are We Here?**

# Today we'll learn:

- What Managing Up Means & Doesn't Mean
- Why Managing Up Matters
- Know thy Boss/Know thy Self
- Different Types of Bosses that Suck
- Tips & Tactics for Managing Up

# Today we WON'T learn:

- Difference between Kissing up & Sucking up
- Managing up as a way to “eliminate” your boss
- How managing up is like training a monkey
- The proper way to remove brown nose stains
- Managing up to avoid doing any actual work

# Managing Up?!

“Wait! Isn’t that just doing my boss’ job for him?!”



HELLO

MY NAME IS...

SUCK UP!



ROBERT MOROZ MICHELE JEE RUDY VALLET

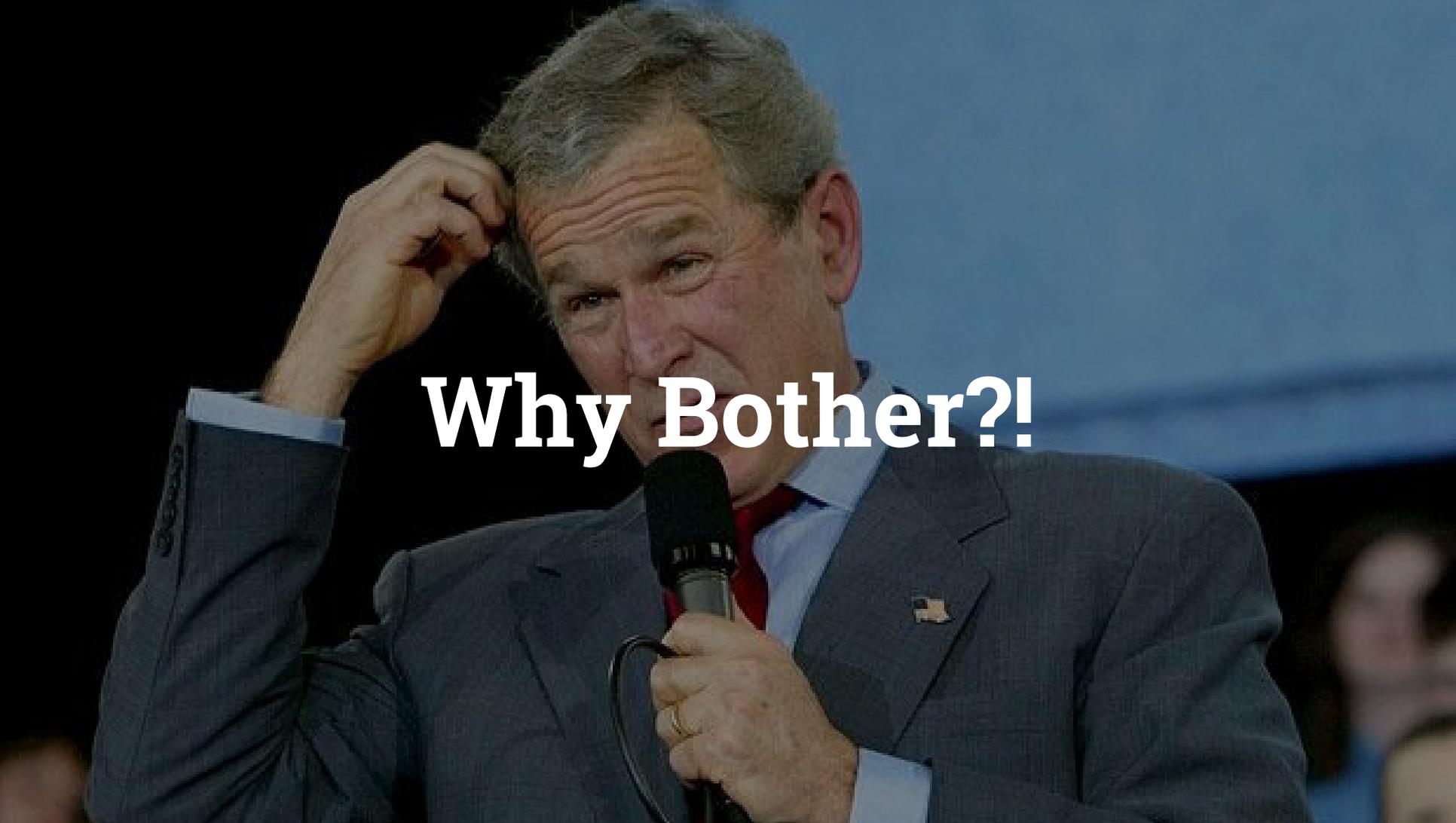
# HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING™



amazon  Prime instant video

# Managing Up:

“The act of cultivating a healthy relationship with your boss to achieve the best possible benefit for you, your boss, and your organization.”

A photograph of George W. Bush, the 43rd President of the United States, speaking at a podium. He is wearing a grey suit, a light blue shirt, and a red tie. He has his right hand raised to his forehead, scratching his hair, and is holding a black microphone in his left hand. The background is a blurred blue wall. The text "Why Bother?!" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

**Why Bother?!**

32%

32%

PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THEIR WORK

Gallup Poll - 2015 - [jimrisp.in/2trJJK7](http://jimrisp.in/2trJJK7)

1 in 2

# **Bad Bosses:** **#1 Cause of** **Unhappiness at Work**

Huffington Post- 2015 - [jimrisp.in/2uUJLrS](http://jimrisp.in/2uUJLrS)

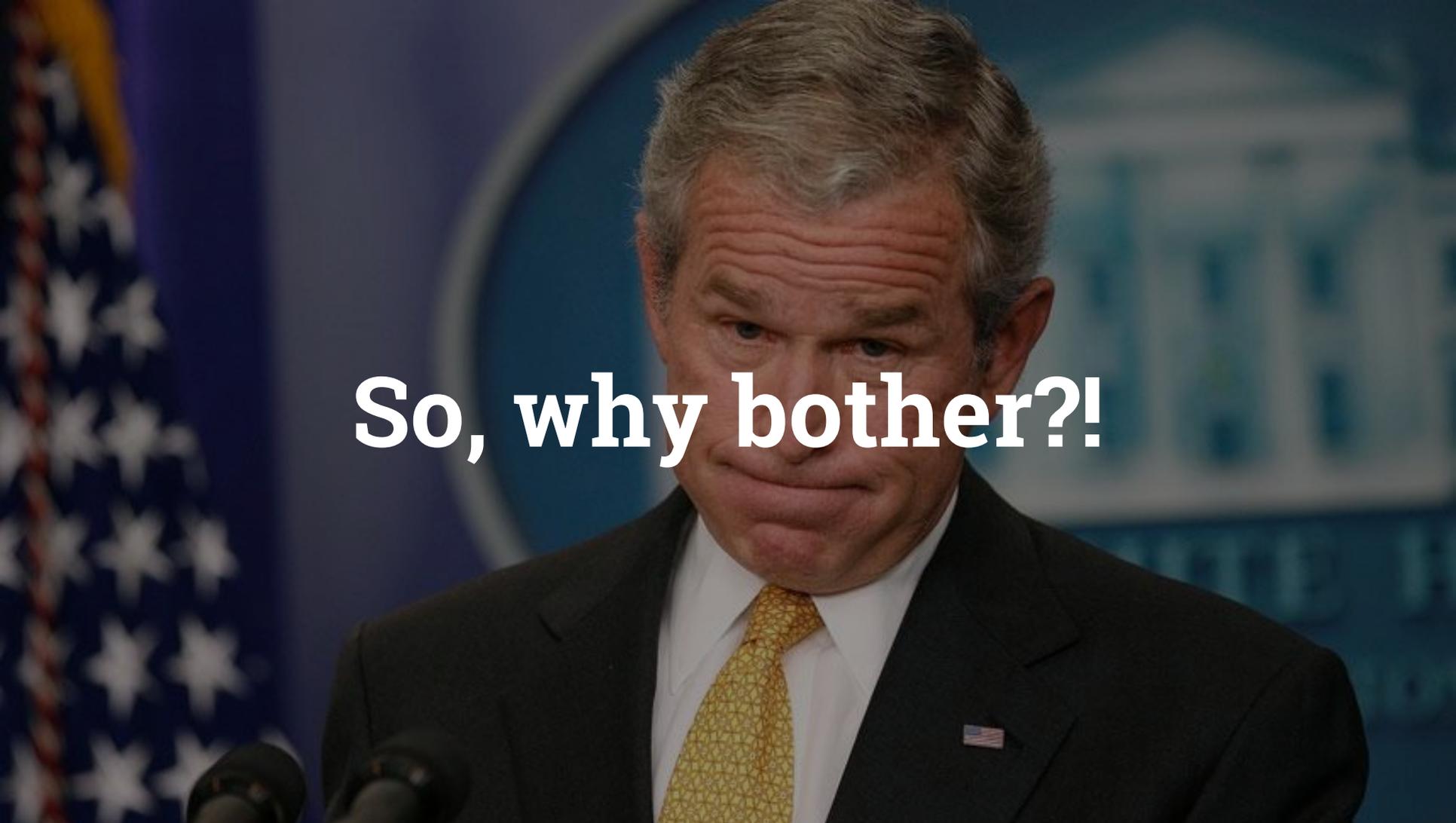
An aerial, high-angle view of a construction site at night. The scene is illuminated by bright work lights, creating long shadows on the concrete ground. In the upper left, a white van is parked. Several workers in high-visibility vests and hard hats are visible, some standing near orange traffic cones. The background shows a dark blue sky and the structure of a building under construction.

**NEWS FLASH:**  
**Your boss is fallible\*!**

\*but so are you

A man wearing a red cap, a green safety vest over a light-colored shirt, and blue jeans is kneeling on the side of a road. He is holding a shovel in his right hand and a small, scruffy dog in his left hand. The background shows a hazy landscape with a large, bright moon in the sky and a rusted pickup truck parked on the road.

Everybody needs somebody.

A close-up photograph of George W. Bush, the 43rd President of the United States. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a yellow patterned tie. He has a pouting or disgruntled expression on his face. The background is a blue wall with a circular seal and an American flag to the left. The text "So, why bother?!" is overlaid in white, bold font across the center of the image.

**So, why bother?!**



**I Wish My Boss Didn't  
Suck!**

**Round 1**

**“Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_,  
and I wish my boss would  
stop (start) \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Me: “Wow! That Sucks!”**

**You: “That Sucks Big Time!”**



**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
KNOW  
YOURSELF**



© CRISTIAN GIORI



© CRISTIAN GIORI



© CRISTIAN GIORI

THE #1 WALL STREET JOURNAL BESTSELLER



**DON CLIFTON**

Father of Strengths Psychology and  
Inventor of the Clifton StrengthsFinder

---

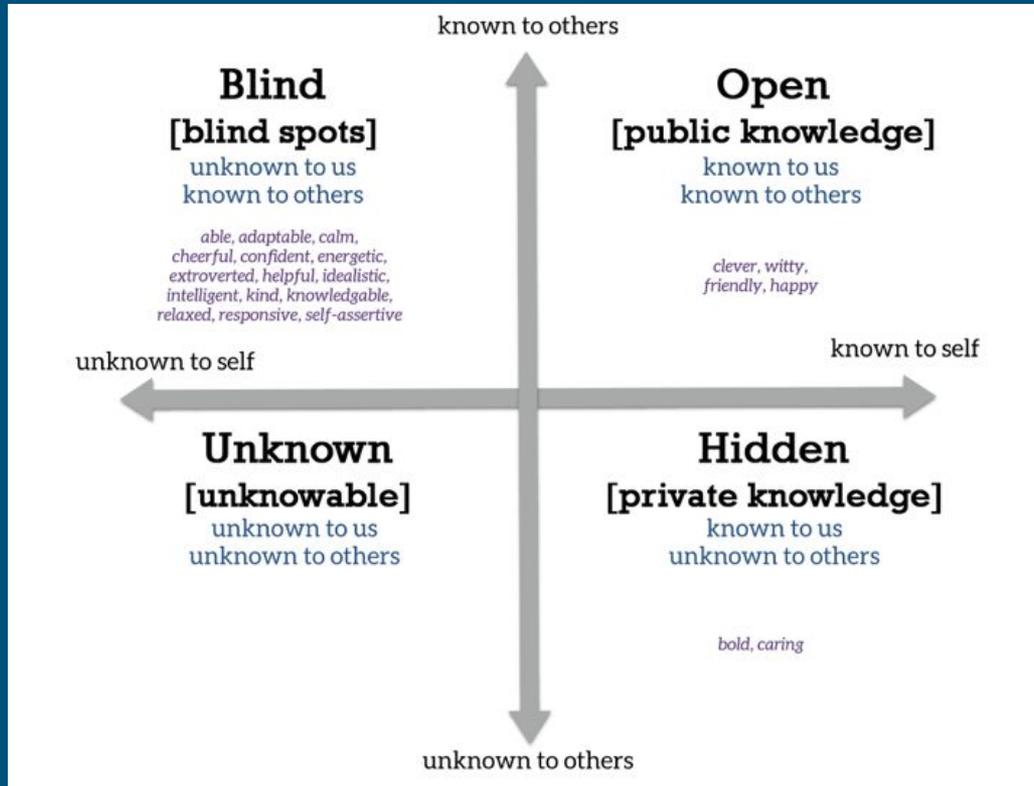
# STRENGTHS FINDER **2.0**

---

**FROM GALLUP**

*Tom Rath*

**Test Only Link: [jimrisp.in/2tJDAHP](https://jimrisp.in/2tJDAHP)**



# Johari Window Model



What's my **style?**

Work Style Assessment: [jimrisp.in/2tcP8RW](https://jimrisp.in/2tcP8RW)

A close-up photograph of a baby with light brown hair and blue eyes, looking directly at the camera with a serious, determined expression. The baby is wearing a green and white long-sleeved shirt and is holding a fistful of sand in their right hand. The background is a blurred beach scene with sand and a light sky.

**Success,**  
**Do you have it?!**

A man in a light blue shirt and dark vest is celebrating with his arms raised and a wide, shouting expression. He is standing over another man who is lying on a desk, grimacing in pain. The man on the desk is wearing a light purple shirt and a dark vest. The office background is blurred, showing a clock on the wall, a whiteboard with a colorful chart, and a ceiling vent. The text "Watch out for conflicts." is overlaid in the center, with "conflicts." in green.

Watch out for **conflicts.**

A close-up photograph of a man's face, looking upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression. The background is a solid blue color with several white, stylized question marks scattered around. The text "Ask the tough questions." is overlaid on the center of the image.

**Ask the tough questions.**

# Ask the tough **questions.**

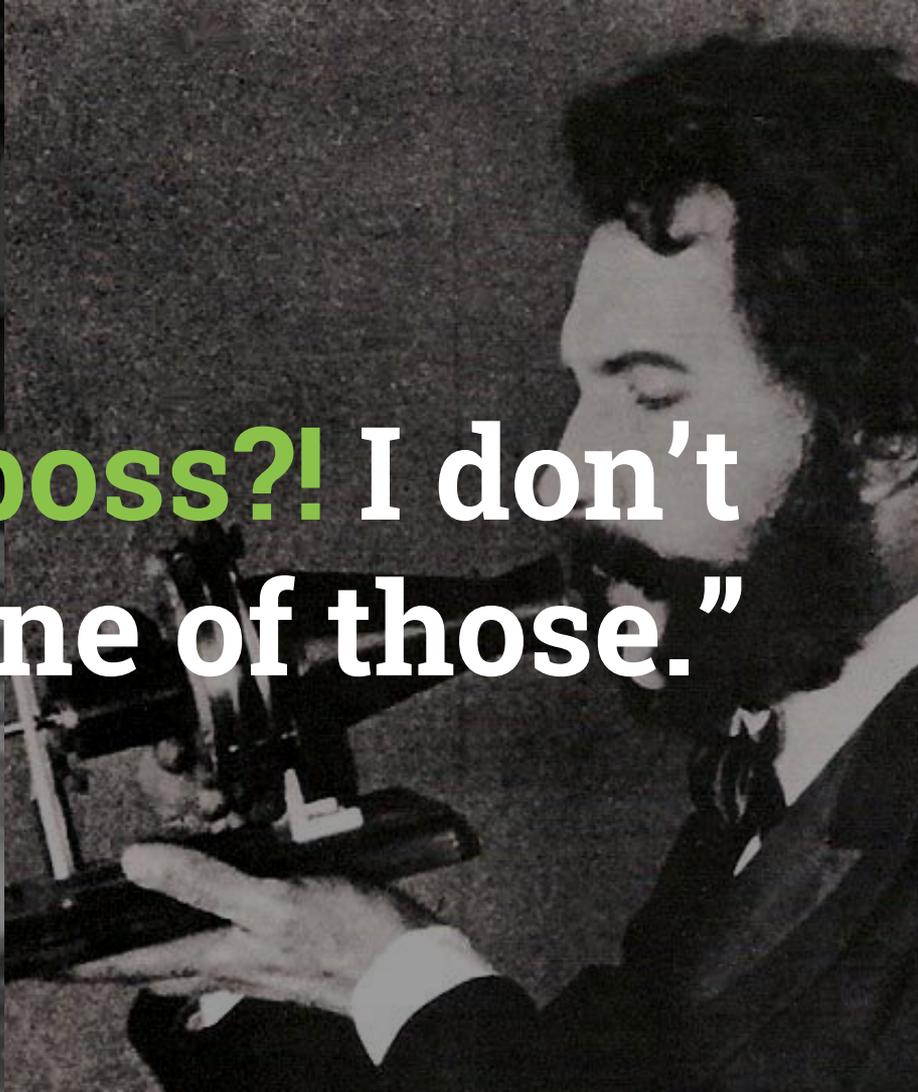
- Is my boss available?
- Does my boss trust me?
- Do I trust my boss?
- Is my boss threatened by me?
- Do I know what my boss wants?
- Should my boss and I be friends?



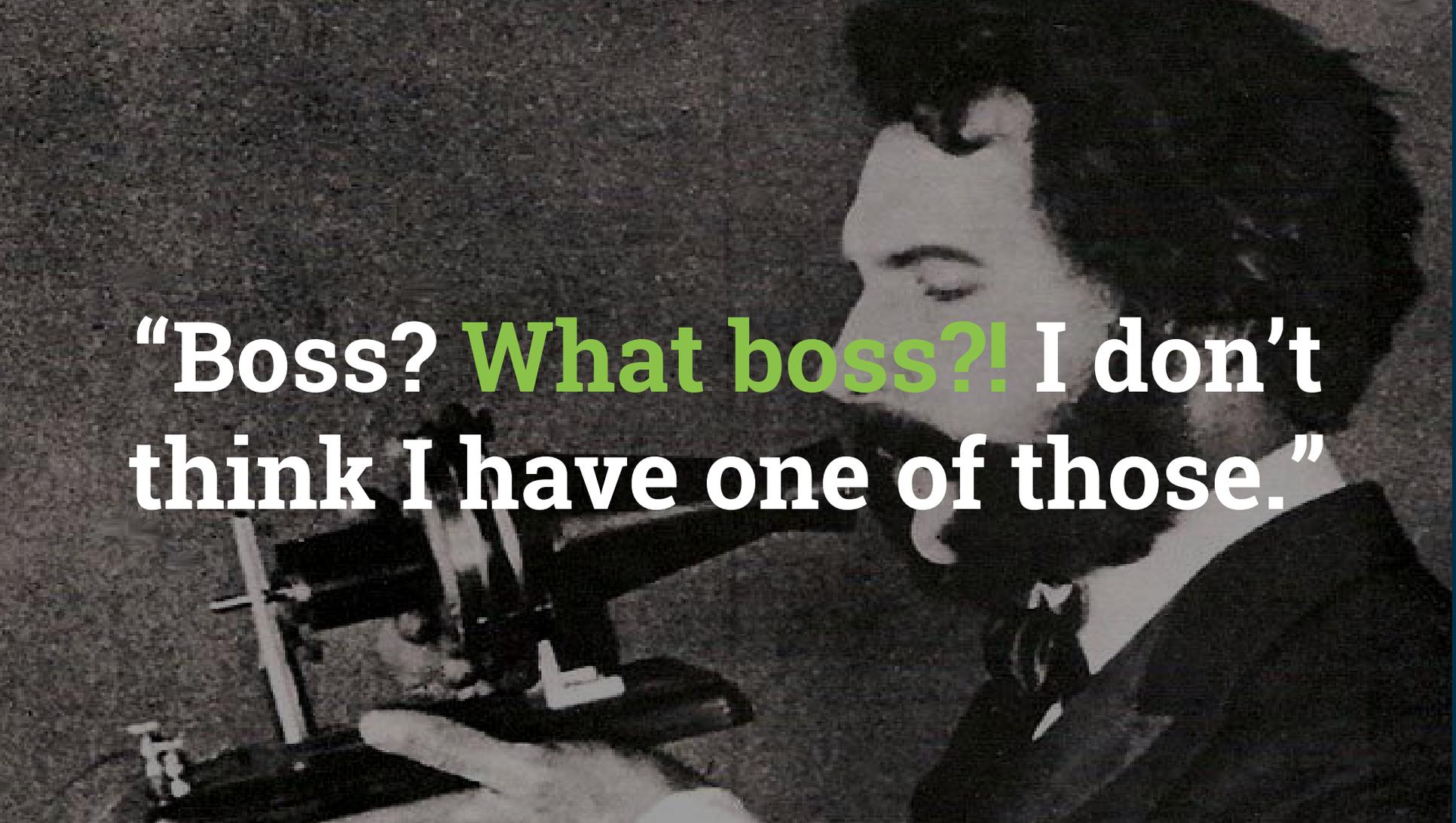
**KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
KNOW YOUR  
BOSS**

# Tough **questions** for your boss

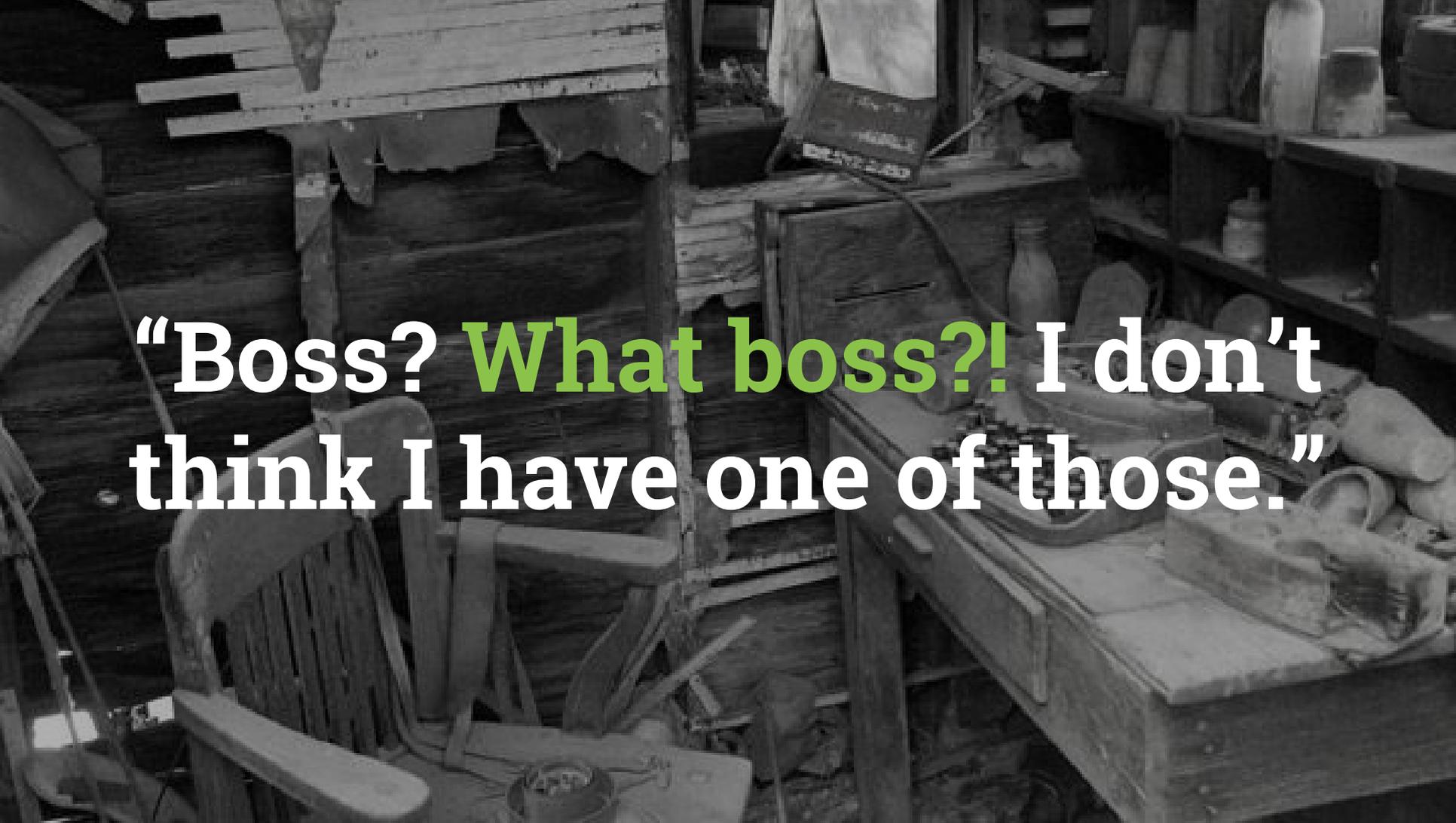
- What are their goals & objectives
- What kind of pressures are they under?
- What are the priorities they've been given?
- Who do they trust & listen to (or visa versa)?
- What is their preferred working style?
- How do they like to communicate?



**“Boss? **What boss?! I don’t think I have one of those.**”**



**“Boss? **What boss?!** I don’t think I have one of those.”**



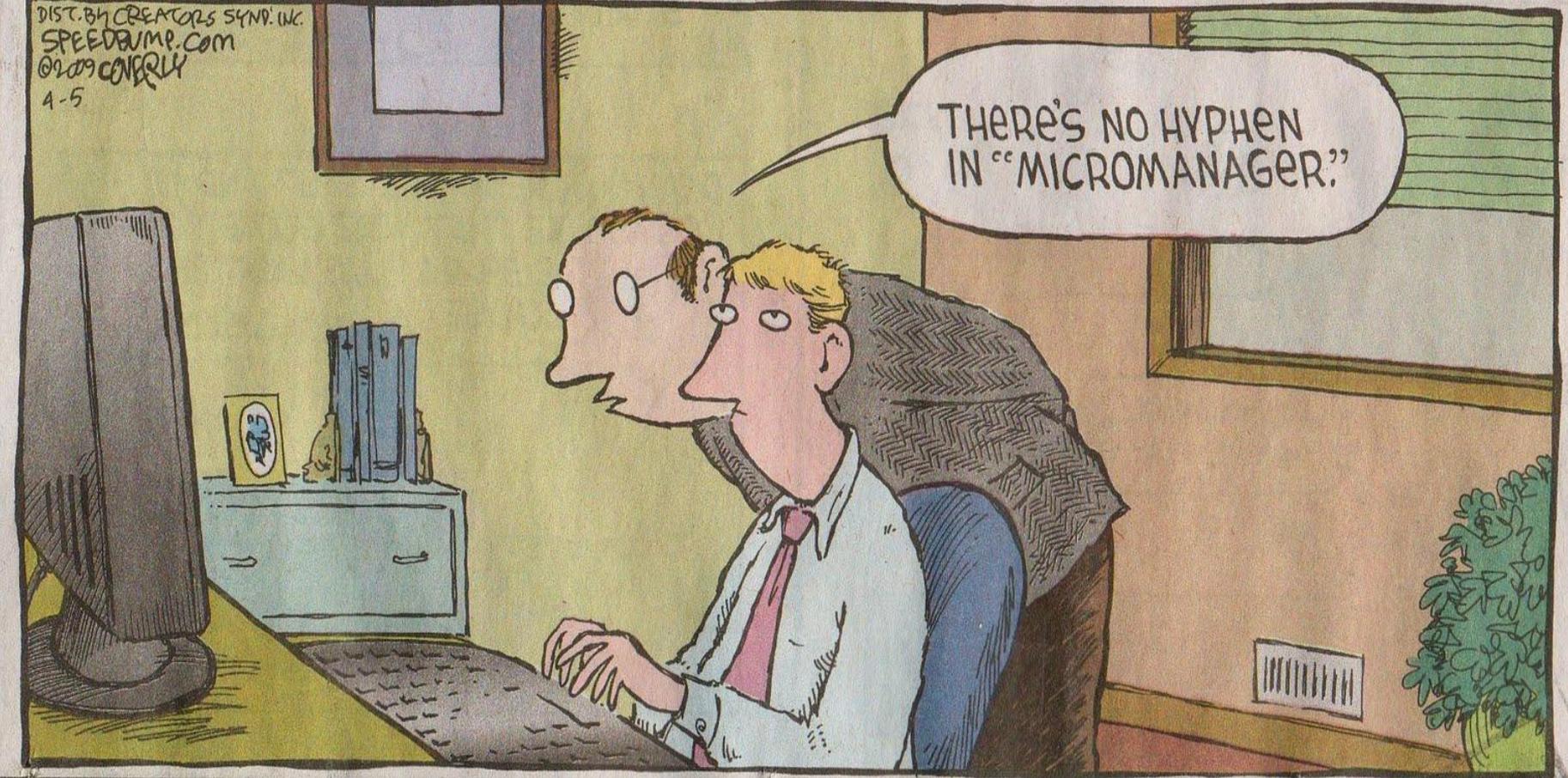
**“Boss? **What boss?!** I don’t  
think I have one of those.”**

A blurry, low-angle shot of a person's legs and feet walking on a sidewalk. The person is wearing dark pants and dark shoes. The background shows a building facade with a window. The overall image is out of focus, creating a sense of motion and anonymity.

**Don't wanna be...**  
**All by myself!**

# SPEED BUMP/ by Dave Coverly

DIST. BY CREATORS SYND. INC.  
SPEEDBUMP.COM  
©2009 COVERLY  
4-5



THERE'S NO HYPHEN  
IN "MICROMANAGER."

A high-angle, first-person perspective shot from a high-rise building. A person in a grey t-shirt and dark pants stands on the edge of a ledge, holding hands with another person whose arm is visible in the foreground. Below them, a city street with cars, buildings, and green spaces is visible. The text "Where's the trust man?!" is overlaid in the center.

Where's the **trust** man?!



Goals! Goals! Goals!



**Inform but Clarify**

A.K.A: CYA

A cartoon illustration of a grey koala character with a serious expression, wearing a dark grey sweater. The koala is standing in front of a city skyline at night, which is partially obscured by large, bright yellow flames and smoke. The background is a dark blue sky. The text "Don't forget to quit!" is overlaid on the image, with "quit!" in green.

Don't forget to **quit!**



A group of four young men are huddled together, smiling and laughing. The man on the left has a beard and is wearing a white t-shirt. The man in the center has dark hair and is wearing a white t-shirt. The man on the right is wearing a plaid shirt. A fourth man with glasses is partially visible behind the man in the center. The background is dark. The text "I Wish My Boss Didn't Suck!" is overlaid in white, and "Round 2" is overlaid in green below it.

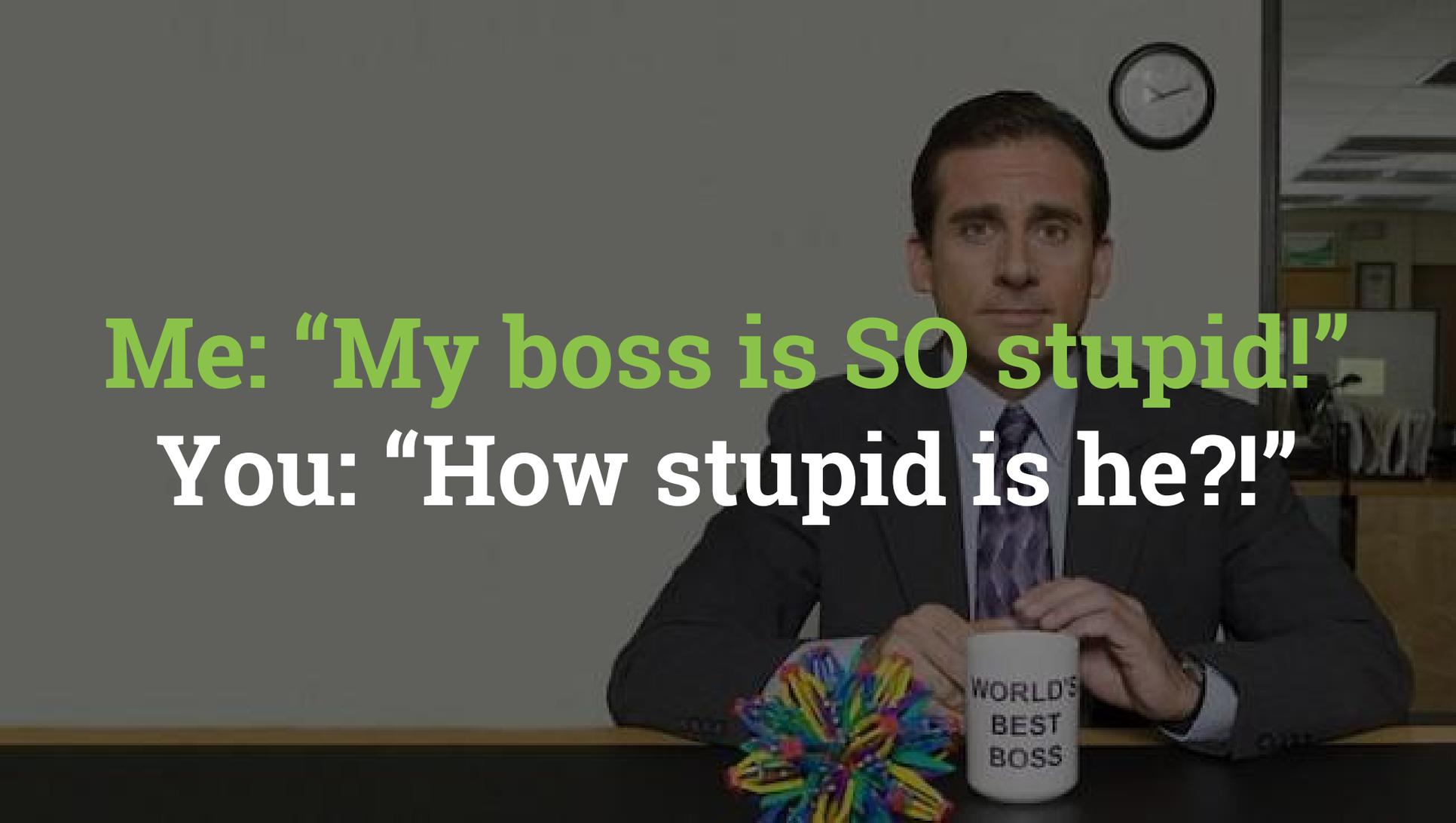
**I Wish My Boss Didn't  
Suck!**

**Round 2**

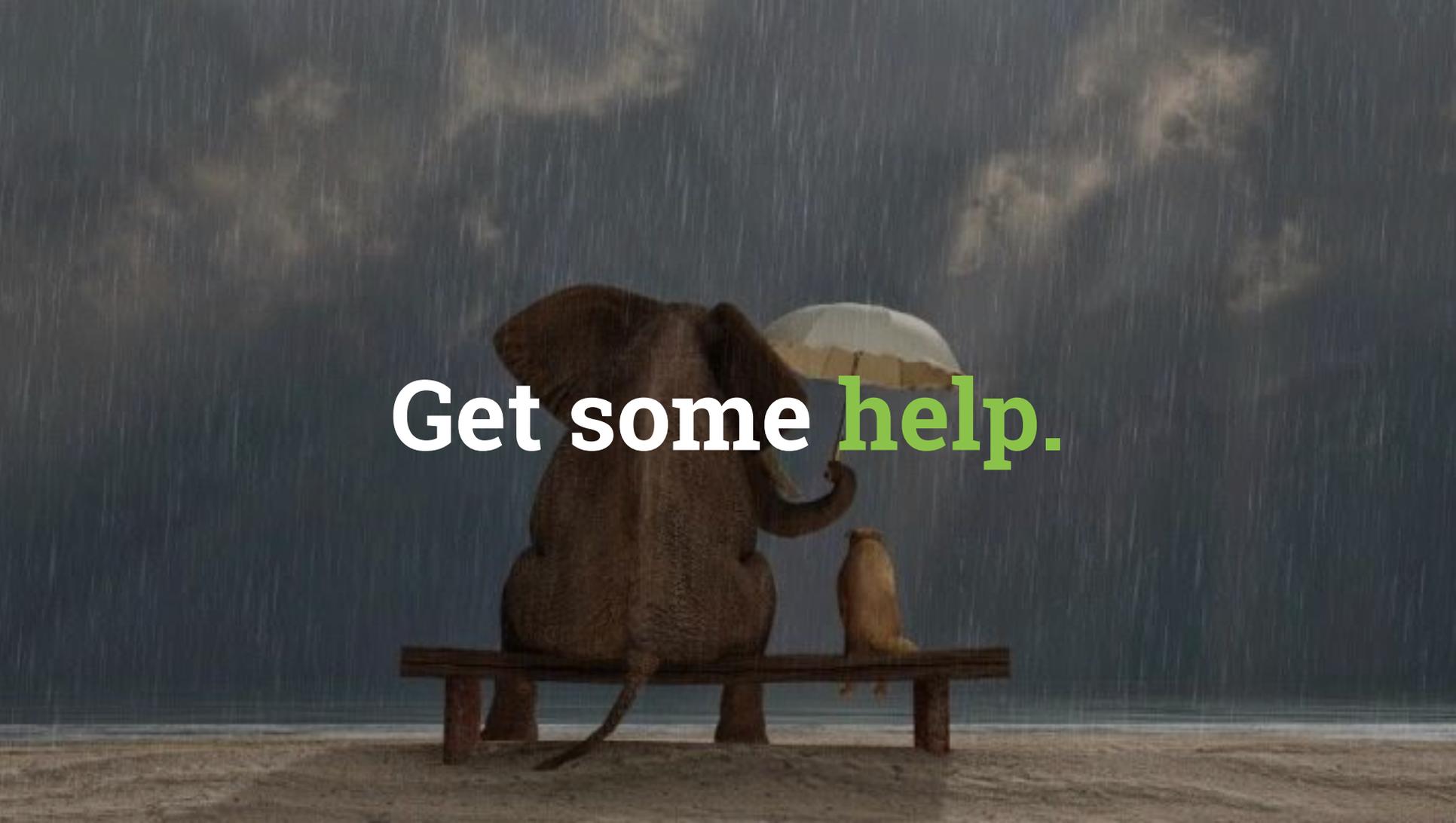
**“Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_,  
and I wish my boss would  
stop (start) \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Me: “Wow! That Sucks!”**

**You: “That Sucks Big Time!”**

A photograph of Steve Carell as Michael Scott from the TV show 'The Office'. He is sitting at a desk, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a dark suit, a light blue shirt, and a patterned tie. On the desk in front of him is a white mug with the text 'WORLD'S BEST BOSS' and a colorful, multi-colored starburst object. In the background, there is a white wall with a round clock and a window showing an office interior.

**Me: "My boss is SO stupid!"**  
**You: "How stupid is he?!"**

An elephant and a dog are sitting on a wooden bench in the rain. The elephant is on the left, and the dog is on the right. The elephant is holding a white umbrella over both of them. The background is a dark, rainy sky with some clouds. The text "Get some help." is overlaid on the image, with "Get some" in white and "help." in green.

Get some help.

A man with a surprised and happy expression is pointing both hands towards himself. He is wearing a dark suit jacket over a light-colored striped shirt. The background is dark and filled with numerous white arrows pointing in various directions, many of which are directed towards the man. The text "Make it all about You!" is overlaid on the image, with "You!" in a bright green color.

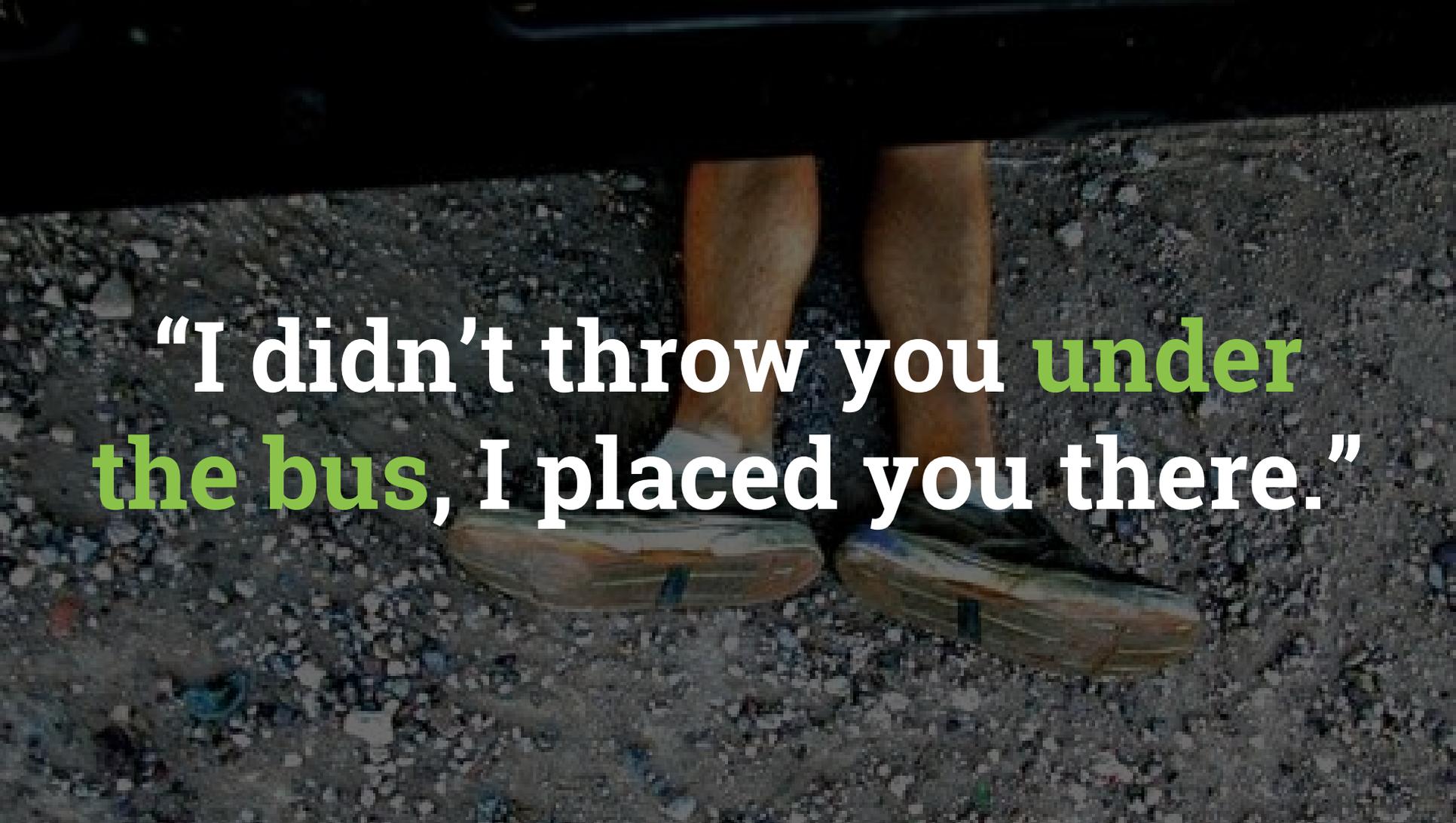
**Make it all about You!**

A close-up, cinematic shot of two men in a dimly lit setting. The man on the right, wearing a dark suit, is holding the face of the man on the left, who is wearing a white suit. The man in the dark suit has a serious, intense expression, while the man in the white suit looks slightly away with a somber or distressed expression. The background is blurred, showing other people in a crowd.

**Don't be a rat!**



**Again, don't forget to quit!**

A photograph showing a person's legs and feet from a low angle. The person is wearing light-colored sandals with dark straps. They are standing on a surface of grey gravel. Above the person, a dark, possibly black, structure is visible, which appears to be the underside of a vehicle or a large piece of machinery. The lighting is somewhat dim, creating a somber or serious atmosphere.

**“I didn’t throw you **under**  
**the bus**, I placed you there.”**



Take in the **big picture.**



**Be transparent.**



A close-up photograph of two hands, one from the left and one from the right, framing a landscape. The hands are positioned to create a rectangular frame. The landscape inside the frame features a bright yellow field with several hay bales, a blue sky with scattered white clouds, and a dark horizon line. The background outside the frame is a dark, overcast sky and a field of dark, textured ground.

**Frame** suggestions well.

A man with a prominent mustache, wearing a red tank top, is lifting a large black kettlebell overhead with his right arm. He is standing in an urban environment with buildings in the background, including one with a "Hilton" sign. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text "Acknowledge their strengths." is overlaid on the image, with "strengths." in green.

Acknowledge their **strengths.**

A man and a woman are sitting on a wooden park bench in an autumn setting. The woman, on the left, is wearing a dark coat and looking towards the man. The man, on the right, is wearing a dark coat, a hat, and has his hands clasped, looking off to the side. The background shows trees with colorful autumn foliage and a few people walking in the distance. The text "Challenge privately." is overlaid on the image, with "Challenge" in white and "privately." in green.

**Challenge** privately.

“The road of life is paved  
with **flat squirrels** who  
couldn't make a decision.”

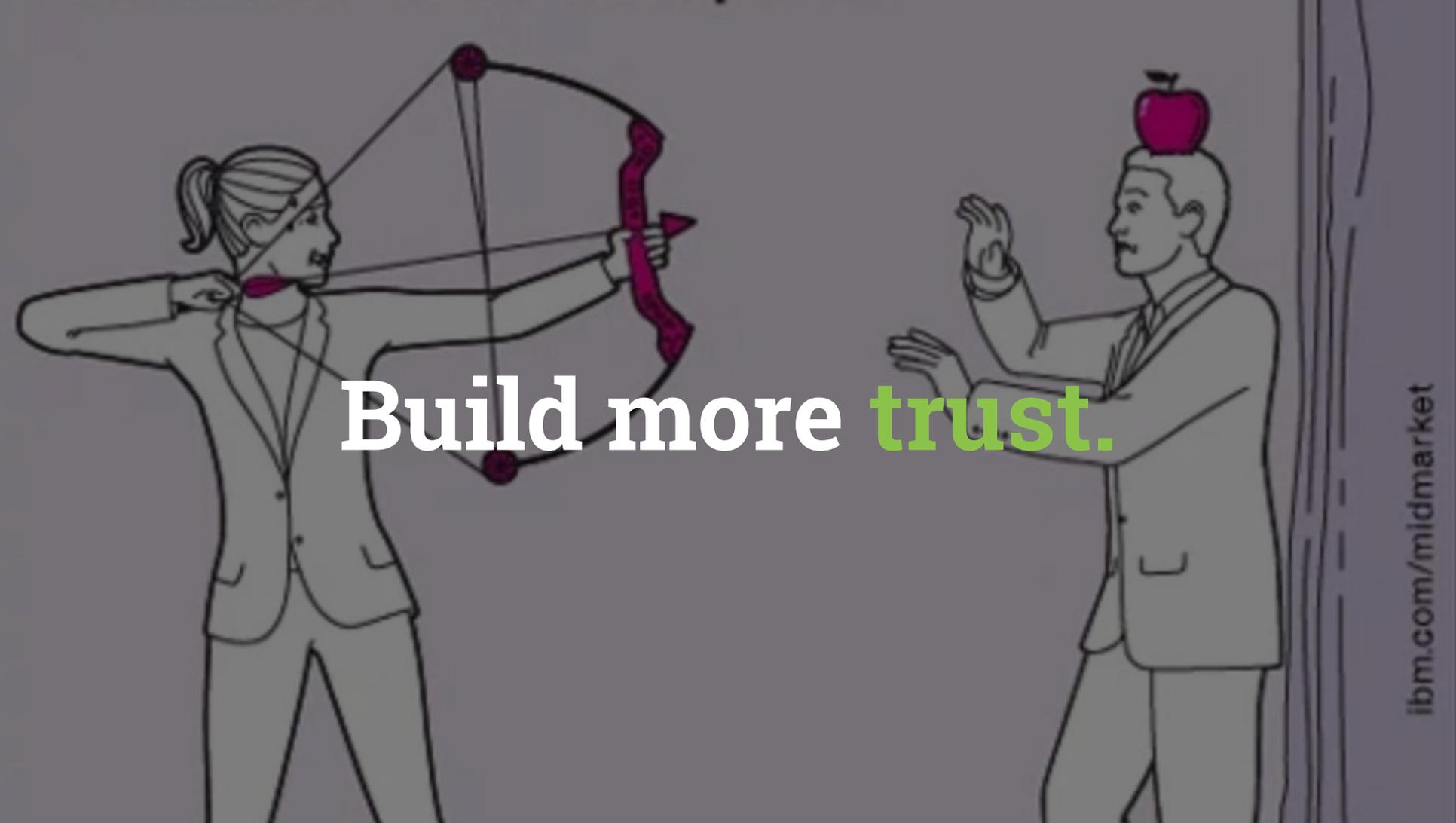


A group of five people (three women and two men) are shown in a state of intense stress or conflict. They are all wearing white long-sleeved shirts. The woman on the far left has her mouth wide open in a shout. The man in the center has his hands clasped together in a fist, looking distressed. The woman on the far right is also shouting. The overall atmosphere is one of chaos and frustration. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Bring them in  
to work the problem.**



Make **bite-sized** decisions.

A line drawing illustration on a grey background. On the left, a woman in a business suit is shown in profile, aiming a bow and arrow towards the right. On the right, a man in a business suit is shown in profile, with his hands raised in a gesture of surprise or concern. A red apple is balanced on top of his head. The text 'Build more trust.' is overlaid in the center, with 'Build more' in white and 'trust.' in green.

**Build more trust.**

# INTERVENTION





**“My boss is my Best Friend!  
What could go wrong?!”**

Two young girls are sitting side-by-side on a brick wall. They are both wearing matching red t-shirts with the word 'BRING' printed on them. The girl on the left has blonde hair in pigtails with a large pink bow and is wearing white heart-shaped sunglasses. The girl on the right has dark hair in pigtails with a large pink bow and is also wearing white heart-shaped sunglasses. The text 'Been friends long?' is overlaid in the center of the image, with 'Been' and 'long?' in white and 'friends' in green.

Been friends long?

A photograph of Taylor Swift and a friend. Taylor Swift is on the right, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. Her friend is on the left, leaning in and kissing Taylor on the cheek. The background is dark and out of focus.

**Are you really friends?**



**What will your  
coworkers think?**



Home

Find Friends

## Friend Requests

Find Friends · Settings



**Bill Lumburgh**

1 mutual friend

**Add Friend**

**Ignore**



**Pointy-Haired Boss**

1 mutual friend

**Add Friend**

**Ignore**



A scene from the movie 'The Sandlot' featuring George Clooney and Tim Allen. Both are dressed in white suits. George Clooney is on the left, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. Tim Allen is on the right, looking towards Clooney with a slightly skeptical or listening expression. They are standing on a grassy area with a dense line of palm trees in the background under a cloudy sky. The text 'Best friends for life?' is overlaid on the image, with 'Best friends' in white and 'for life?' in green.

Best friends for life?



**I Wish My Boss Didn't  
Suck!**

**Round 3**

**“Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_,  
and I wish my boss would  
stop (start) \_\_\_\_\_.”**

**Me: “Wow! That Sucks!”**

**You: “That Sucks Big Time!”**

A man in a military uniform, likely a general, is saluting with his right hand raised to his forehead. He is wearing a dark jacket with numerous medals and a blue sash. The background is a large American flag with stars and stripes. The text "Screw the specifics! Let's get general!" is overlaid on the image in white and green font.

**Screw** the specifics!  
Let's get **general**!

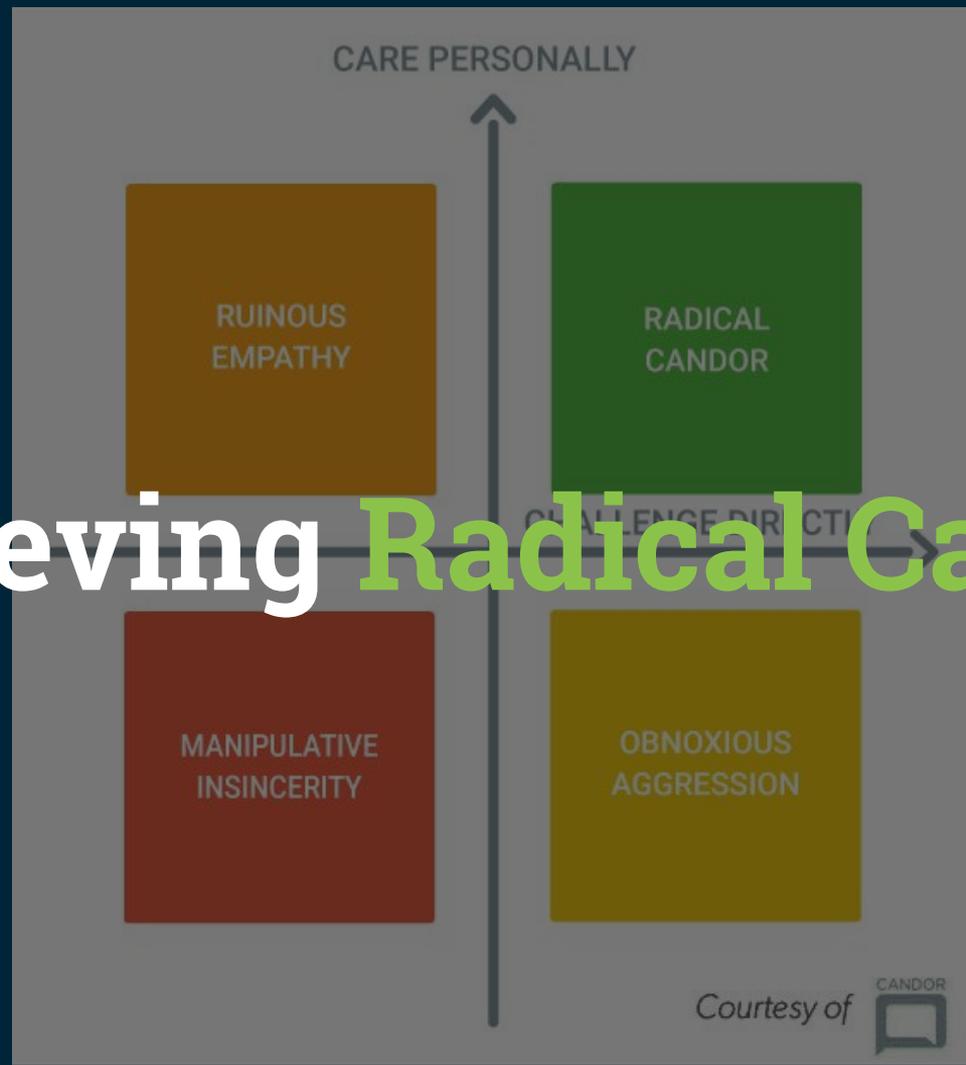
A photograph of two young boys in a gymnasium. The boy on the left has light hair and is wearing a blue and white striped shirt, holding a standard orange basketball. The boy on the right has dark hair and is wearing a red jersey, holding a pink and yellow basketball. They are both smiling and have their arms around each other's shoulders. The background is a dark gymnasium with some people visible in the distance.

Own your **One-on-One**

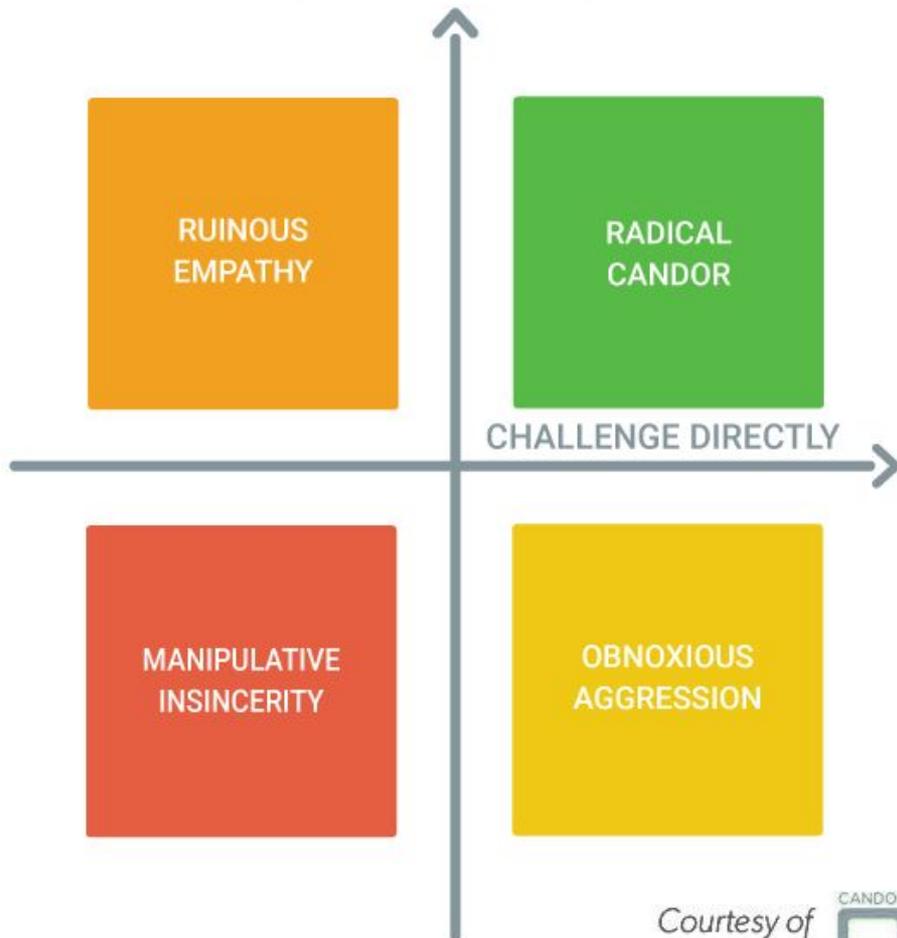
**Feedback! Get Some!**  
**Give Some!**



# Achieving Radical Candor

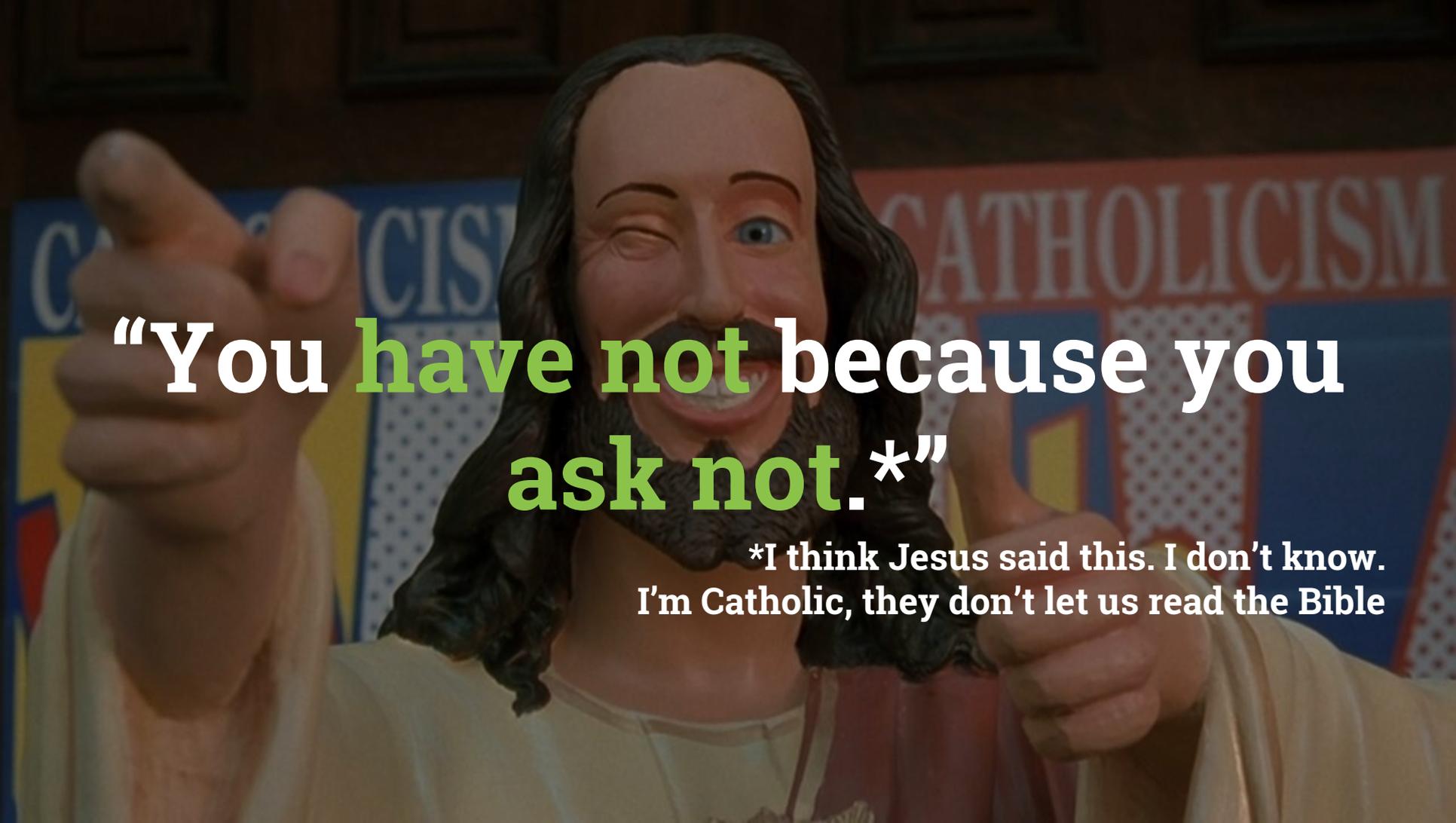


CARE PERSONALLY



Courtesy of





**“You **have not** because you  
**ask not.\***”**

**\*I think Jesus said this. I don't know.  
I'm Catholic, they don't let us read the Bible**

A scene from the movie 'The Sandlot' featuring an elderly man with white hair and a colorful patterned shirt on the left, and a young man in a white Boston Red Sox jersey on the right. They are standing on a rocky path with a crowd of people in the background. The text 'Remember, you asked for it!' is overlaid in white, with the word 'asked' in green.

Remember, you asked for it!

A comic book illustration of Batman slapping Robin. Batman, in his blue and grey suit with a black mask, is shown from the chest up, slapping Robin on the cheek with his right hand. Robin, in his blue and yellow suit, is shown from the back, with his head turned slightly. The background is a solid red color with some white motion lines. The text "What if the feedback is wrong?" is overlaid on the image.

What if the feedback  
is wrong?

A man with dark hair, wearing a brown leather jacket over a white t-shirt, is sitting and giving two thumbs up. He has a slight smile and is looking towards the camera. The background is slightly blurred, showing a table with a green tablecloth and a chair. The text is overlaid on the center of the image.

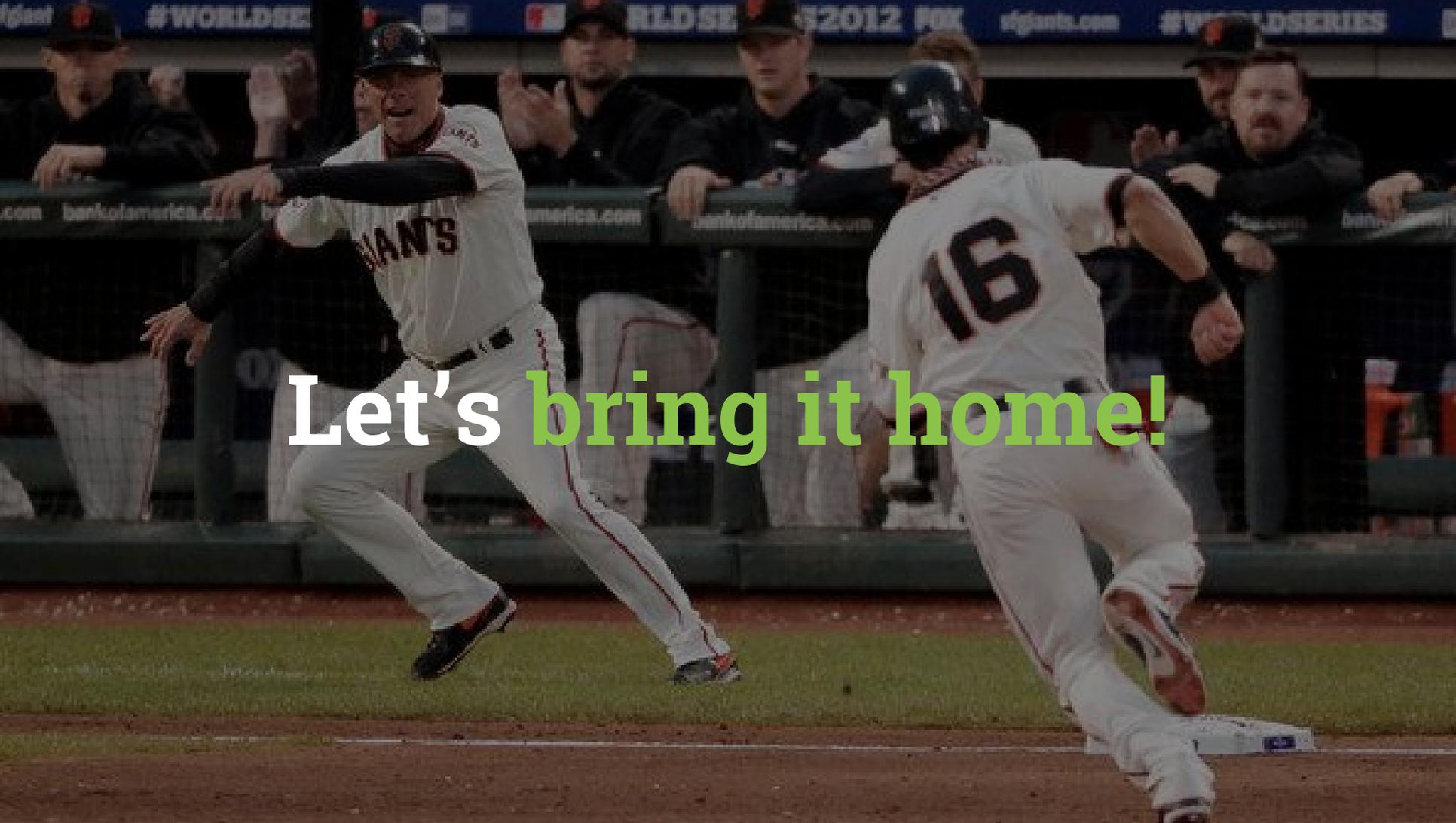
**Don't just sit there!**  
**Do something!**

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's face wearing dark sunglasses. The lenses of the sunglasses reflect a clear, vibrant cityscape with tall buildings and a street. The background is out of focus, showing more of the person's face and hair.

**Clarity.** Do you have it?

A still from the movie The Matrix showing Keanu Reeves as Neo. He is wearing his signature black trench coat and sunglasses, standing in a room with a large, ornate window. He has his right hand raised, palm facing forward, and a dense stream of bullets is suspended in mid-air around him, demonstrating his 'bullet time' power. The scene is lit with a greenish-yellow hue.

**Hold on a tic!**



Let's **bring it home!**



# Thanks for Listening

## Q&A

---

Jim Rispin • [jrispin@fuller.edu](mailto:jrispin@fuller.edu)  
[@jimrispin](#) (twitter/slack)  
feedback: [bit.ly/psumac2017-199](https://bit.ly/psumac2017-199)

