

In Conversation...

WITH GENERAL TOM BOSTICK

Resilient Execution: Leading When Plans Collide with Reality

DATE

Thursday, March 5, 2026

LOCATION

Park James Hotel, Menlo Park CA

FORMAT

Cocktail Reception + Program



LTG (Ret.) Thomas P. Bostick

PH.D., NAE, PE
GUEST SPEAKER

"What happens when an organization misses its goals? The answer isn't a better plan — it's a more resilient leader."

On March 5th, an intimate gathering of executives, investors, and operators convened at Park James Hotel for an unscripted evening of candid conversation. Former Chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers LTG (Ret.) Thomas P. Bostick joined moderator David Nour, Founder & CEO of Avnir, for an exchange on what separates organizations that endure from those that collapse under pressure.



HOSTED BY



Rob Swanson

*EVP/Managing Director -
Specialized Industries*



Andy Grosso

Founder & CEO



David Nour

Founder & CEO

ZIONS BANK
CALIFORNIA BANK & TRUST



The Human Capital Pyramid by David Nour

The talent in your organization and how in the age of AI, their roles and impact will get diminished or amplified!

David Nour opened the discussions with a glimpse into his latest thinking: The Human Capital Pyramid. In his work with global clients, he's uncovered five distinct types of individuals in every organization:

★ Superstars 1-2% Force Multipliers

Exponentially multiply value across the organization. They anticipate needs before they arise, attract other top talent, and create leverage that compounds over time. **AI amplifies their impact 10x** — making them the most critical tier to identify, retain, and give autonomy.

Systems Thinkers 3-6% The Architects

Redesign the systems that create problems by anticipating second and third-order effects. They promote agenda-setting over execution. **These are the people to promote** — reward those who frame problems, not just those who complete tasks.

Problem Solvers 7-10% The Catalysts

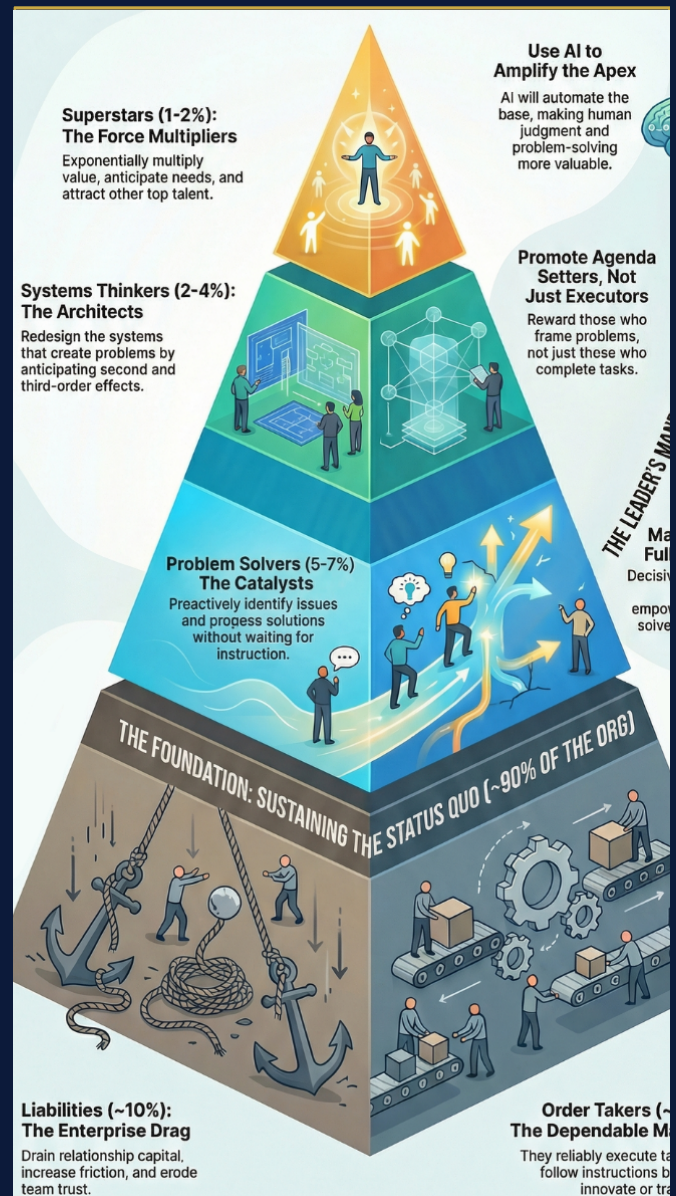
Proactively identify issues and propose solutions without waiting for instruction. They move the org forward. **Cultivate and empower** problem solvers — give them room to operate and they will grow into systems thinkers.

Order-Takers ~60-80% The Dependable Majority

Reliably execute tasks and follow instructions — but rarely innovate or transform. They sustain the status quo. **AI will automate the base** of this tier, forcing a workforce shift toward the tiers above. Organizations that don't cultivate upward will be left behind.

Liabilities ~10% Enterprise Drag

Drain relationship capital, increase friction, and erode team trust. **Decisively address** — their presence poisons culture far beyond their headcount. No high-performing team can afford to carry them.



"AI will all but eliminate the need for human Liabilities, and displace much of what Order Takers do today, particularly the mundane work. It will dramatically amplify the creativity, collaboration, and thus impact of Problem Solvers, Systems Thinkers, and Superstars, creating 10X talents."

— David Nour, Founder & CEO, Avnir

General Bostick on Resilient Execution



LTG (Ret.) Thomas P. Bostick, Ph.D.

GUEST SPEAKER

53rd Chief of Engineers & Commanding General, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers · Led global organization of 35,000 professionals · Board: CSX, Perma-Fix, HireVue, Fidelity Equity and High Income Funds, Allonnia · Member, National Academy of Engineering · Author, *Winning After Losing: Building Resilient Teams*

01

FOUR PHASES OF RESILIENCE

Drawn from commanding 35,000 personnel across global disaster response. True resilience means **reaching a higher performance level** after a crisis — not just returning to baseline. Most organizations only Plan and Recover. The game-changers Adapt.

PLAN

ABSORB

RECOVER

ADAPT ★

02

SYSTEMS VS. SILOED THINKING

The biggest leadership gap isn't missing strategy — it's failure to think in systems. Drawing on a large-scale transportation transformation, Bostick illustrated how designing an organization holistically — where every function works toward a unified mission — produces performance that fragmented, project-by-project management never could.

03

CRISIS LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

From Hurricane Sandy and the Mississippi River drought: **set clear boundaries immediately, over-communicate to eliminate ambiguity**, and adapt the mission to protect your people first. Bostick also stressed navigating the unavoidable political dynamics in any major crisis — denial costs lives and capital.

04

THE ONLY MEASURE THAT MATTERS

His work on the commission to study the repeal of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' crystallized a core conviction: the most elite units in the world judged their people on one thing only — performance. The strongest organizations do the same, leveraging every voice regardless of background.

05

TRUST. COMMUNICATION. ACCOUNTABILITY.

Three non-negotiables, rare in execution. **Culture of trust must be established by leadership first** — it doesn't emerge from the bottom up. Focus on a small number of critical priorities, communicate them relentlessly, and hold people accountable without exception. These are the foundations every great team is built on.

06

AI: AUGMENT, DON'T ABDICATE

AI adoption varies widely by industry — rapidly transforming biotech and life sciences, while more traditional sectors navigate cultural and operational complexity. But Bostick's concern cuts across all sectors: over-reliance on AI erodes independent thinking. The leaders who win will use AI as Iron Man's suit — amplifying human capability, not replacing the human inside it.



Images of the Evening

MARCH 5, 2026 | PARK JAMES HOTEL



"The quality of the thought leadership and the insightful conversations with other attendees — this is exactly the kind of gathering you clear your calendar for."

— Event Attendee, March 5, 2026

Connect & What's Next

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SPEAKERS & HOSTS



LTG (Ret.) Thomas P. Bostick

GUEST SPEAKER

53rd Chief of Engineers · Ph.D. Systems Engineering ·
Boards: CSX, Perma-Fix, HireVue, Fidelity Equity and High
Income Funds, Allonnia · Member, National Academy of
Engineering · Author, *Winning After Losing*



David Nour

MODERATOR

Founder & CEO, Avnir · Author of 12 books,
including *Relationship Economics*®, *Co-Create*,
and *Curve Benders*.



Rob Swanson

HOST

EVP & Managing Director, California Bank &
Trust / Zions Bancorporation

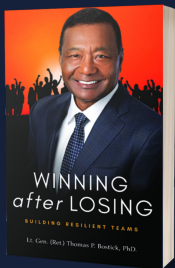


Andy Grosso

HOST

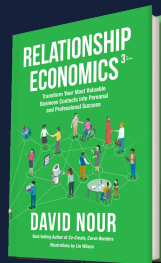
Founder, Fortra Executive Search

FROM THE SPEAKERS



Winning After Losing

LTG (Ret.) Thomas P. Bostick



Relationship Economics®

David Nour

SAVE THE DATE

AVNIR EXECUTIVE SERIES

In Conversation...
Wednesday
September 2, 2026

Park James Hotel · Menlo Park, CA

Cocktail Reception + Exclusive Program

Speaker TBA — You Help Choose

RESERVE YOUR SEAT TODAY

HELP SHAPE FUTURE EVENTS

Two questions to help amplify the impact of this
event for you:

- Q1** What topic would be most valuable at our next
executive conversation?
- Q2** What time of year works best for a mid-week
evening event?

→ [Click to take survey](#) or scan QR code



RSVP & INQUIRIES

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