



Gartner®

Top 5 Priorities for HR Leaders in 2024

Actionable insights to tackle
challenges and plan for success

Top 5 Priorities for HR Leaders in 2024

Gartner surveyed more than 500 HR leaders across 40 countries and all major industries to identify their priorities and challenges for 2024. The largest share of respondents put leader and manager development on their list, but many HR leaders will also prioritize organizational culture, HR technology, change management and career management and internal mobility.

01
Leader and
Manager
Development

02
Organizational
Culture

03
HR
Technology

04
Change
Management

05
Career
Management
and Internal
Mobility

Note: Percentages represent the share of respondents naming the priority.
n = 520 HR leaders
Source: Gartner 2024 HR Priorities Survey

What is driving these priorities?

01

“Unsettled” employee-employer relationship

CHROs are grappling with:



Flexibility controversy

Only 26% of organizations report that their employees fully comply with on-site attendance requirements.



Productivity anxiety

Nearly 50% of employees view their current performance as unsustainable.



Mutual mistrust

Only about 50% of employees trust their organization.

02

Persistent skills shortage

26% of CEOs rank talent shortage as the top damaging factor to business outlook.



03

Rising impact of AI on organization and workforce

68% of executives agree benefits of AI outweigh the risks.

.....
But only 22% of HR leaders are highly engaged in enterprisewide discussions on GenAI.



04

Pressure for operational efficiency

Executives and investors/owners are focused on productivity, efficiency and margin as profitability drivers.

Most prevalent efficiency-related keywords from S&P earnings calls 3Q23:

- 1 Productivity
- 2 Efficiency
- 3 Reduction



Source: Gartner

01

Leader and Manager Development

Common challenges for HR leaders:

75% of HR leaders say their managers are overwhelmed by the growth of their job responsibilities.

73% of HR leaders confirmed their organization's leaders and managers aren't equipped to lead change.

 **PROBLEM TODAY**





Managers are cracking — and more training won't help

Most organizations try to support managers by providing better skill development programs, new tools and technologies to boost productivity, and more robust well-being programs. Despite these considerable investments, 50% of employees are not confident in their manager's ability to lead their team to success in the next two years.

 **What skills can help with**

 **What skills can't help with**

Building expertise at must-have skills required for the job

	Reducing the load of the job	←	An average manager has 51% more responsibilities than they can effectively manage.
	Driving motivation for the job	←	1 in 5 managers would prefer not being people managers , given a choice.
	Always driving long-term behavioral change required for the job	←	Only 1 in 2 employees say that their managers treat them with empathy and fairness .
	Changing processes around the job	←	59% of managers report spending a significant amount of time on “work to do work.”

Source: 2023 Gartner Building an Organization of Great Managers Manager Survey; 2022 Gartner Building an Organization of Great Managers Employee Survey



Evolve the job itself

The best organizations have realized that investing in traditional manager development programs alone is not enough. Building manager expertise in “must-have” skills doesn’t address the foundational issue — the manager job is no longer manageable.



Tool to get started:

[12-month action plan to improve manager effectiveness](#)

Top organizations instead are evolving the job itself by taking 4 critical actions:



1. Reset role expectations

Empower managers to connect employees with others for coaching and development, and rescope the role to focus on tasks that managers are uniquely positioned to execute.



Impact:

Managers are **1.4x more likely** to find their jobs manageable when their organizations focus on resetting role expectations.



2. Rebuild manager pipeline

Encourage aspiring managers to self-discover if management is right for them by exposing them to the toughest parts of the role early and normalizing opting out of management.



Letting managers self-discover their fit for role increases their likelihood of finding **their jobs manageable by 2.3x**.



3. Rewire manager habits

Equip managers to build strong people management habits through intentional cues, maintainable routines and focused reflection.



Investing in habit building pays off — organizations focusing on habit building **improve job manageability by 71%**.



4. Remove process hurdles

Enable HR leaders to eliminate low-value rules that burden managers and employees.



Managers are **1.4x more likely** to find their jobs manageable when their organizations take steps to simplify managerial tasks.

Source: Gartner

02 Organizational Culture

Common challenges for HR leaders:

41% of HR leaders say employees' connection to culture is compromised by hybrid work.

47% of HR leaders don't know how to drive change to achieve the desired culture.

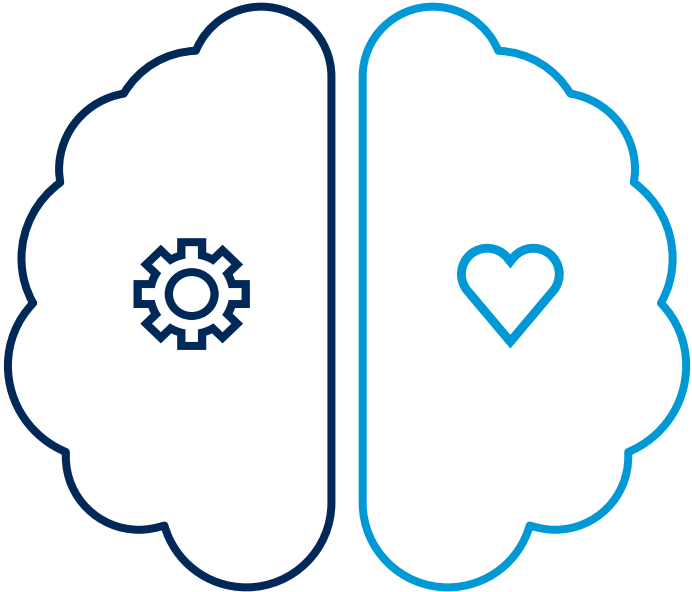
 **PROBLEM TODAY**

Uncertainty about how to reshape culture for the hybrid workplace

Fewer in-person interactions, less time in offices and shrinking employee ecosystems have rocked the traditional cultural experience. For culture to succeed in a hybrid world, leaders must work intentionally to align and connect employees to it. Alignment and connectedness operate like the left and right sides of your brain — rational and emotional. Both contribute to culture’s impact on outcomes, such as performance and retention. Connectedness suffers in a hybrid world, however, without intentional efforts to cultivate it.


Alignment

- 1. I know what the culture is.
- 2. I believe the culture is right for us.
- 3. I demonstrate our cultural behaviors.



Connectedness

- 1. I identify with the culture.
- 2. I care about the culture.
- 3. I belong within the culture.



Culture connectedness is in crisis and must be accounted for in the hybrid workplace.

Source: Gartner



Facilitate connectedness by intention

The best organizations prioritize culture connectedness by enabling employees to engage with the culture wherever they work, establishing an emotional connection and equipping teams to create vibrant and healthy microcultures. By prioritizing these elements, organizations can create a strong culture that drives employee engagement, enhances productivity and fosters a sense of belonging and purpose.

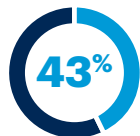


Tool to get started:

[Evolve Culture & Leadership for the Hybrid Workplace](#)

Traditional Approach “Connectedness by Osmosis”	Hybrid Disruption	Hybrid Opportunity	Connectedness by Intention
Diffuse culture in the office	→ Less time in the office	→ More time with work	Diffuse culture through work
Connect through physical proximity	→ Fewer moments of being seen	→ Greater need to feel seen	Connect through emotional proximity
Optimize macro- (large-group) experiences	→ Shrinking ecosystems	→ Intensified relationships	Optimize micro- (small-group) experiences

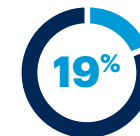
Impact



Employee culture connectedness can increase by up to 43% when culture is diffused through work.



Employee culture connectedness can increase by up to 27% when employees experience emotional proximity.



Employee culture connectedness can increase by up to 19% when achieved through micro-based experiences.

Source: Gartner

03 HR Technology

Common challenges for HR leaders:

60% of HR leaders are uncertain about the impact of evolving technology trends, such as generative AI, on HR and talent.

56% of HR leaders confirmed their HR technology solutions and strategy do not match their current and future business needs, such as digital transformation.

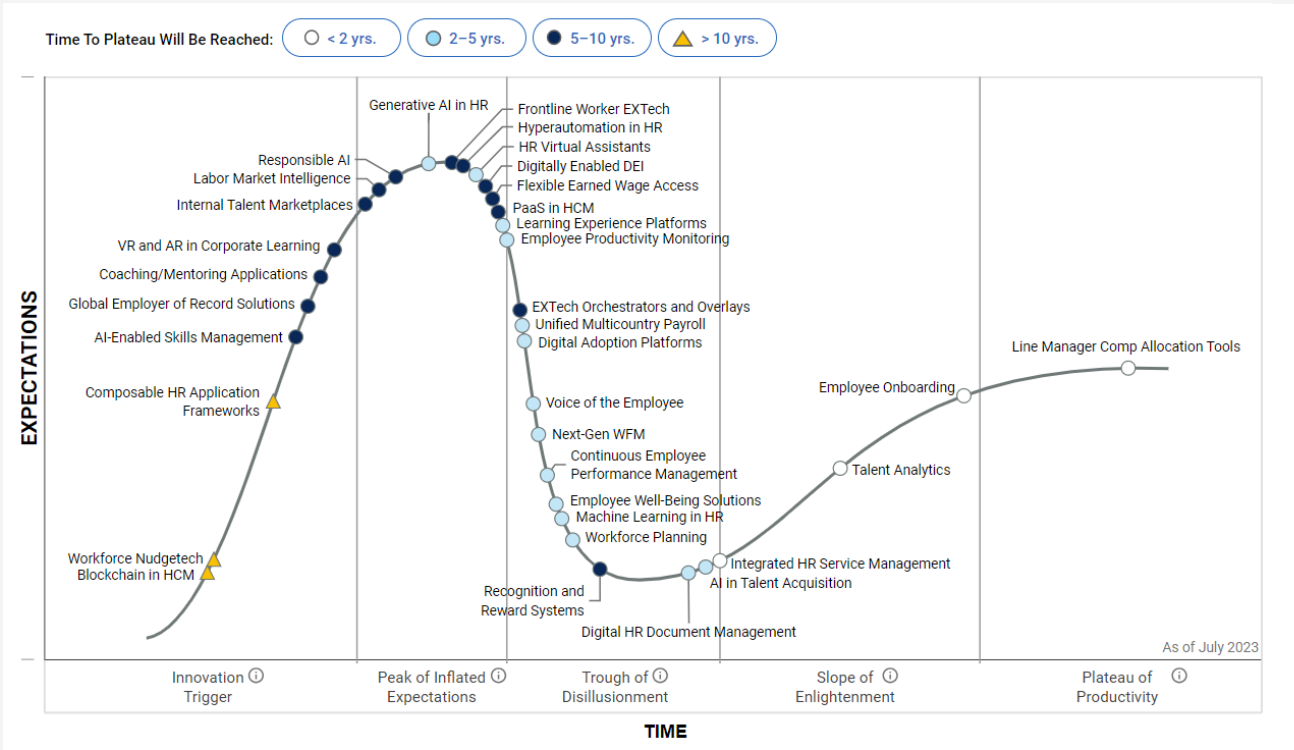
! PROBLEM TODAY

HR technology leaders are uncertain about which technologies to adopt

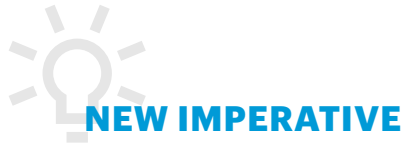
HR leaders must manage an increasingly complex technology portfolio amid a continued need from HR and business leaders for greater agility and flexibility to address a constantly changing environment. There is increased hype around AI — especially generative AI — to drive productivity, but HR functions are unprepared to implement it. Uncertain labor and economic conditions add another layer of urgency to embrace innovations that support flexible HR strategy. Meanwhile, the demand for enhanced employee experience and human-centric work design continues. With many options to choose from, HR leaders need an evaluation framework to assess which HR technology to adopt.

76% of HR leaders agree they will be lagging in organizational success if they don't adopt and implement generative AI in the next 12 to 24 months.

Hype Cycle for HR Technology



Source: Gartner



Evaluate the impact and adoption of emerging HR technology

HR leaders can create a future-ready HR technology stack using a framework for assessing technology adoption and answering key questions to guide the adoption strategy and roadmap.



Tool to get started:
[Checklist to Review Your HR Technology Roadmap](#)

Framework to assess technology adoption in HR



Balance impact across 4 key criteria — Key questions to consider and measure against



Governance

- Who will own, maintain and manage the technology?
- Can we easily identify key trigger points of negative consequences that would warrant directly intervening to amend or cancel the technology?



Workforce Readiness

- How will this impact current versus future ways of working?
- What is the impact on skills, roles, responsibilities and digital dexterity?



Risks and Ethics

- Can we tolerate any risks that are associated with it?
- Are the ethical risks easily mitigated?
- Should we keep in beta, educate, embrace regulation?



Vendor Landscape

- What is happening in the vendor landscape? Can we wait, or should we build our own solution?
- Can similar benefits be achieved with preexisting technology?

Source: Gartner

04 Change Management

Common challenges for HR leaders:

77% of HR leaders say their employees are feeling fatigued.

82% of HR leaders share their managers aren't equipped to lead change.

PROBLEM TODAY

Employees feel disempowered and skeptical due to continuous change

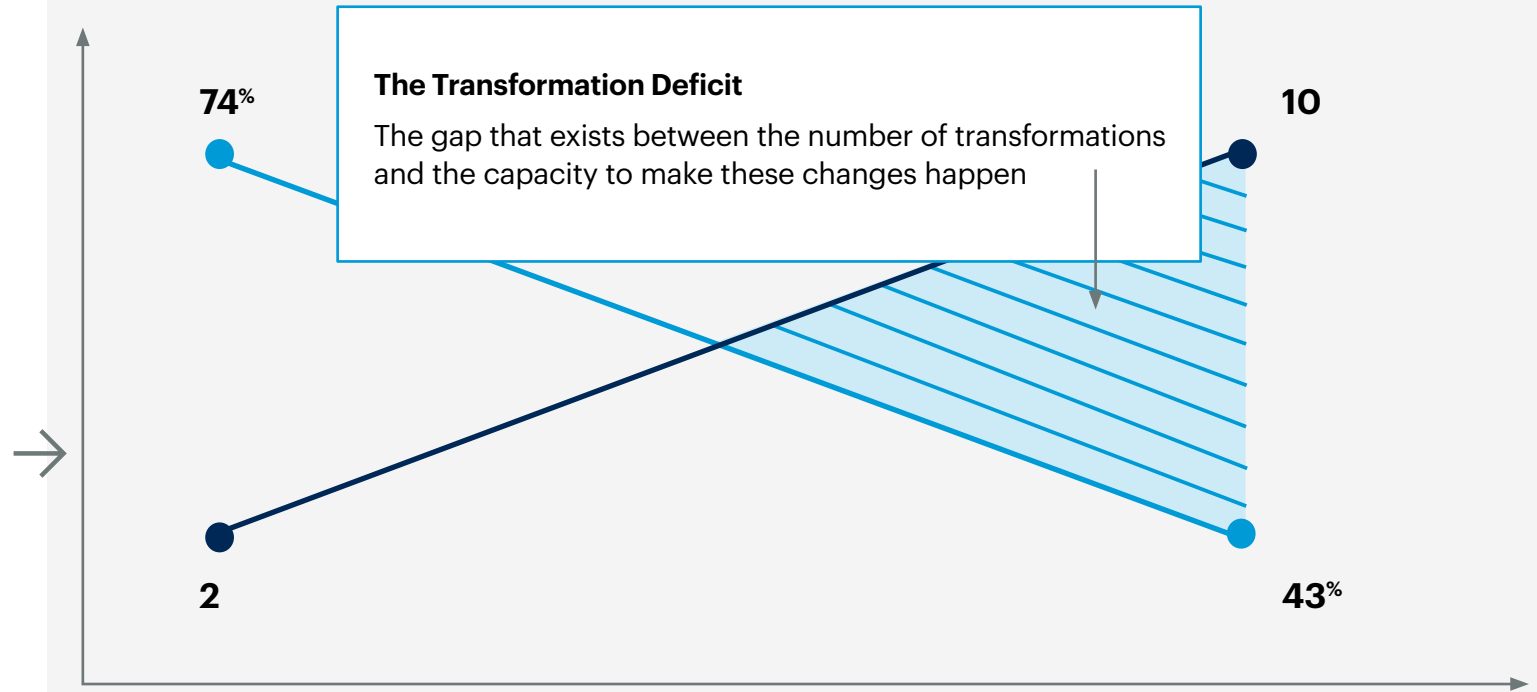
The volume and pace of change is overwhelming for employees as changes are both stacked and continuous. Despite the detrimental effects of change fatigue on employee well-being and productivity, only 8% of are confident in a plan to actively manage it. Unaddressed — change fatigue harms employee well-being and can have devastating impacts on key organizational outcomes.

Change fatigue corrodes employee outcomes. Employees experiencing change fatigue report:

- 42% less intent to stay
- 17% less enterprise contribution
- 30% lower levels of trust
- 22% less discretionary effort
- 27% less sustainable performance
- 27% less responsiveness

Employees are tired of all the change

● Change volume ● Change willingness



Source: Gartner



Ensure change fatigue strategies become an inherent part of change plans

Data shows that only half of organizational transformations are successful. While the traditional change management formula of “communication x training” is still essential, it fails to account for change fatigue management. Organizations must plan ahead for change fatigue risks and build fatigue management into their plan to drive successful transformation.



Tool to get started:

[On-Demand Webinar: How to Identify, Fix and Prevent Change Fatigue](#)

Updated formula for organizational transformation success



3 pillars of change fatigue management

Identify	1 Educate workforce on fatigue drivers	2 Equip managers to identify hotspots	3 Escalate turning points
Fix	1 Exercise actionable empathy	2 Facilitate open change conversations	3 Employees own implementation plans
Prevent	1 Employees co-create chain strategy	2 Build psychological safety into teams	3 Normalize proactive rest

Source: Gartner

05

Career Management and Internal Mobility

Common challenges for HR leaders:

89% of HR leaders believe career paths at their organizations are unclear for many employees.

66% of HR leaders agree career paths within their organizations are not compelling for many employees.

 **PROBLEM TODAY**

Traditional career maps aren't working

Due to rapidly changing business and employee needs, traditional career maps no longer fulfill business requirements or employee expectations. Outdated career paths leave employees needing help with how to proceed with their careers at their current organizations. Add mounting turnover rates to an already hypercompetitive labor market and the uncertainty increases for HR leaders trying to figure out how to support employee career growth.

Employee confusion around career paths






Less than **one in three** employees know how to progress their careers over the next five years.






One in four employees is confident about their career at their organization.

Stop traditional career pathing to a fixed destination

-  Designing static career paths
-  Defining careers with job descriptions
-  Building on organizational structures

Source: Gartner

Start agile career pathing to a changing destination

-  Designing iterative careers that facilitate career growth by aligning business needs with employee's larger goals, interests and skills
-  Framing employees' professional journeys through searchable career portfolios to promote ease of movement
-  Building roles based on experiences that enable employees to expand variety of expertise

Design adaptive career paths to offer career-option experience

Dynamic organizations approach career pathing in an adaptive way by dividing work into short cycles and frequent iterations. Adaptive career designs also provide tools to help employees build experience rather than just providing information about careers. This allows employees to gain more confidence about their career choices, which leads to better talent outcomes.

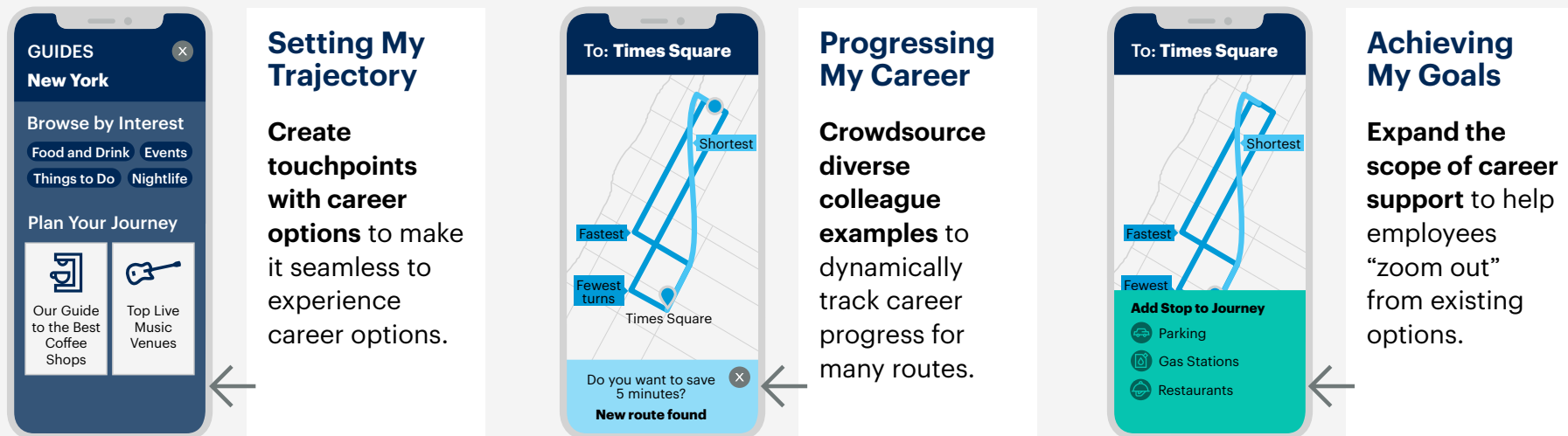


Tool to get started:

Career Pathing Should Be Like Satellite Navigation, Not a Map

HR leaders can use satellite navigation to model career growth support

3 career growth moments



Source: Gartner

About Gartner Top 5 Priorities for HR Leaders in 2024

The top priorities are derived from the 2024 Gartner HR Priorities Survey, which polled HR leaders about their priorities and expected challenges in 2024.

Respondents

500+
HR leaders*



All major
industries



34%
CHROs



40
countries



*HR leaders include heads of enterprise HR (CHRO or head of HR), and heads of a functional/regional/business HR subfunction.
Source: Gartner

How Gartner is helping HR leaders adapt and stay ahead

The decisions HR leaders make today can impact their organization’s business outcomes and brand for years to come. It’s critical to have trusted support. With our insights, actionable tools and advice, we help HR leaders adapt their strategies across a variety of mission-critical priorities to set up their organizations for success.



Diagnostics and benchmarks



Guides and toolkits



Expert inquiry



Expert research



In-person events



Peer connections



Case studies and best practices



Live webinars and online learning events






Document reviews




Illustrative key initiative support you receive as a Gartner client:

For Gartner clients only




Diagnose current state

-  Identify emerging HR technologies and potential use cases via the [Hype Cycle for HR Technology](#).
-  Leverage [HR Score for Talent Management](#) to assess the current maturity level of career and mobility at your organization with objective, peer-based performance standards.
-  Talk with a Gartner expert to review obstacles and opportunities of team-owned change, and discuss the implications for your organization.

Develop your plan

-  Explore potential development approaches using our [Guide for Building a Leadership Development Program](#).
-  Meet with a Gartner Executive Partner to review obstacles and opportunities on how to improve manager effectiveness.
-  Use our [CHRO Resource Guide for Organizational Culture](#) to overcome complex challenges and integrate best practices that span multiple areas of expertise.

Execute and drive change

-  Review your manager enablement strategy and communication plan with a Gartner expert to check alignment.
-  Attend [Managers’ Role Leading Their Teams Through Change](#) to unlock the best change leadership from your frontline managers.
-  Use our [Toolkit: Build and Support Connector Managers](#) to reinforce the Connector approach for all managers and improve sustainable employee performance by up to 45%.

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for HR leaders:

Guide 

Managers Are Cracking — And More Training Won't Help

Explore actionable insights for CHROs to evolve the manager job for success.

[Download Guide](#)

Webinar 

The Top 5 Priorities for HR Leaders in 2024

Get insights and recommended actions for HR priorities in 2024.


[Watch Webinar](#)

Roadmap 

Evolve Culture and Leadership for a Hybrid World

Learn how HR leaders can reshape culture and leadership for a sustainable hybrid workplace.

[Download Roadmap](#)

Virtual Series 

Unbreakable HR Series

Gain insight into how your HR organization can be resilient, and deliver value and the tools you need to become “unbreakable.”

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