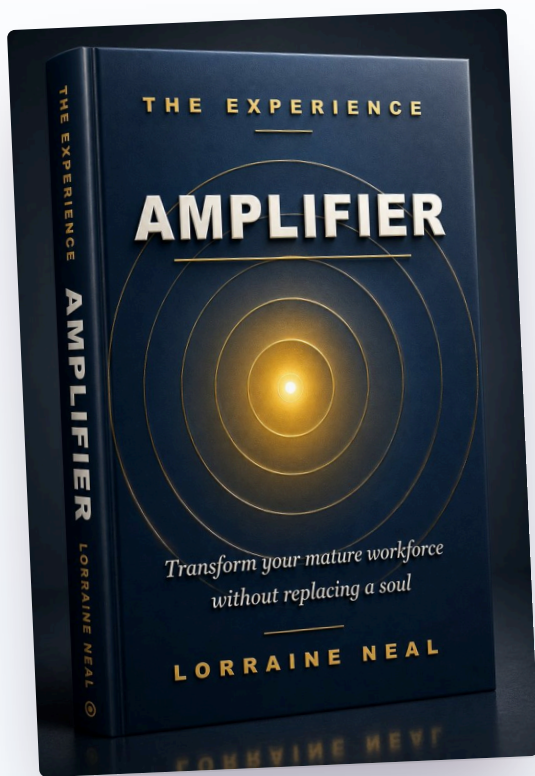


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Chapter One: *The Organization's Journey*

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"Your experience is your superpower."

— CHAPTER EXCERPT —

Chapter One

The Organization's *Journey*

Forty-five years of experience. Three paths forward — and why only one leads to lasting success.

Forty-five years of experience. Three paths forward — and why only one leads to lasting success.

The conference room on the 32nd floor had witnessed every major decision in GlobalTech Solutions' 45-year history. It was the same oak table where our founders signed our first enterprise contract in 1979. The same windows looked out over a city that had shifted from industrial to digital while we worked.

On this Tuesday morning in January 2023, the room felt different. A quiet tension had settled across the table — the kind that appears when everyone senses a turning point but no one is ready to call it out.

"DataDisrupt just landed Coca-Cola," our CEO Robert said quietly. "Our oldest client. Twenty-eight years."

The silence that followed was not surprise. We had all heard the rumors. Still, hearing the confirmation struck a nerve.

"Their entire platform is eighteen months old. Their oldest employee is thirty-two. They are offering real-time analytics at half our rate."

I glanced around the table. The average age in the room was 51. The average tenure was 16 years. More than 200 years of collective experience sat there, yet we were being compared to a company that had not existed when some of our core systems were built.

"What about our people?" I asked. As Director of People and Culture, the question mattered deeply. "Are we looking at restructuring?"

Robert's expression softened. "Everything is being considered, Lorraine. This is not about chasing trends. It is about survival."

The meeting continued for another hour, but my attention drifted after hearing that everything was on the table. Faces filled my mind. More than five hundred people had built their lives here. They had bought homes with our stability, raised families on our benefits, and chosen depth and mastery over the fast churn of startups.

Were we truly preparing to tell them they were no longer needed?

The Case for Experience

Two weeks later, standing before the board, I knew I had one chance to change their minds. They had entered the room expecting a reduction plan. I was about to propose the opposite.

"These are not isolated examples," I said, after walking them through three stories of veteran employees solving problems no AI system could touch. "They represent our true competitive advantage — not our technology, but the expertise of the people who wield it. The question is not whether we need to transform. We do. The question is whether we transform by abandoning our advantage — or by amplifying it."

The vote was closer than I had hoped — five to four. But we had eighteen months to prove that experience combined with AI could drive true transformation.

Lessons from Legacy

Looking back now, eighteen months after that pivotal board meeting, I can see lessons that were not obvious in the moment.

Legacy is an asset, not a liability. The 45-year history gave us advantages no startup could match: deep client relationships, hard-won expertise, and extensive data for AI training.

Transformation is evolution, not revolution. Successful transformation does not require destroying everything and starting over. It requires identifying what stays, what updates, and what must be replaced.

Culture changes through action, not declaration. We did not transform our culture by announcing new values or posting motivational posters. We transformed it by showing that experienced employees could master new tools, that failure was acceptable if learning occurred, and that the future had room for everyone willing to evolve.

Fear is the enemy, not age. The most significant barrier to transformation was not our employees' age or our systems' legacy status. It was fear — fear of failure, fear of obsolescence, fear of change. When we addressed fear directly and honestly, transformation became possible.

Experience + AI > AI alone. Not a hopeful slogan. A demonstrated reality. Experienced employees, equipped with AI tools, consistently outperformed competitors' younger, more technical teams. They knew which problems to solve, which patterns mattered, and which solutions would actually work in practice.

The GlobalTech story is not unique. Every organization with a history faces the same choice: abandon experience in pursuit of innovation, or amplify experience through innovation. The path you choose will determine not only your organization's future but also the futures of those who have built their careers contributing to your success.

Choose wisely. Choose courageously. Choose to amplify, not abandon.

— End of excerpt —

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