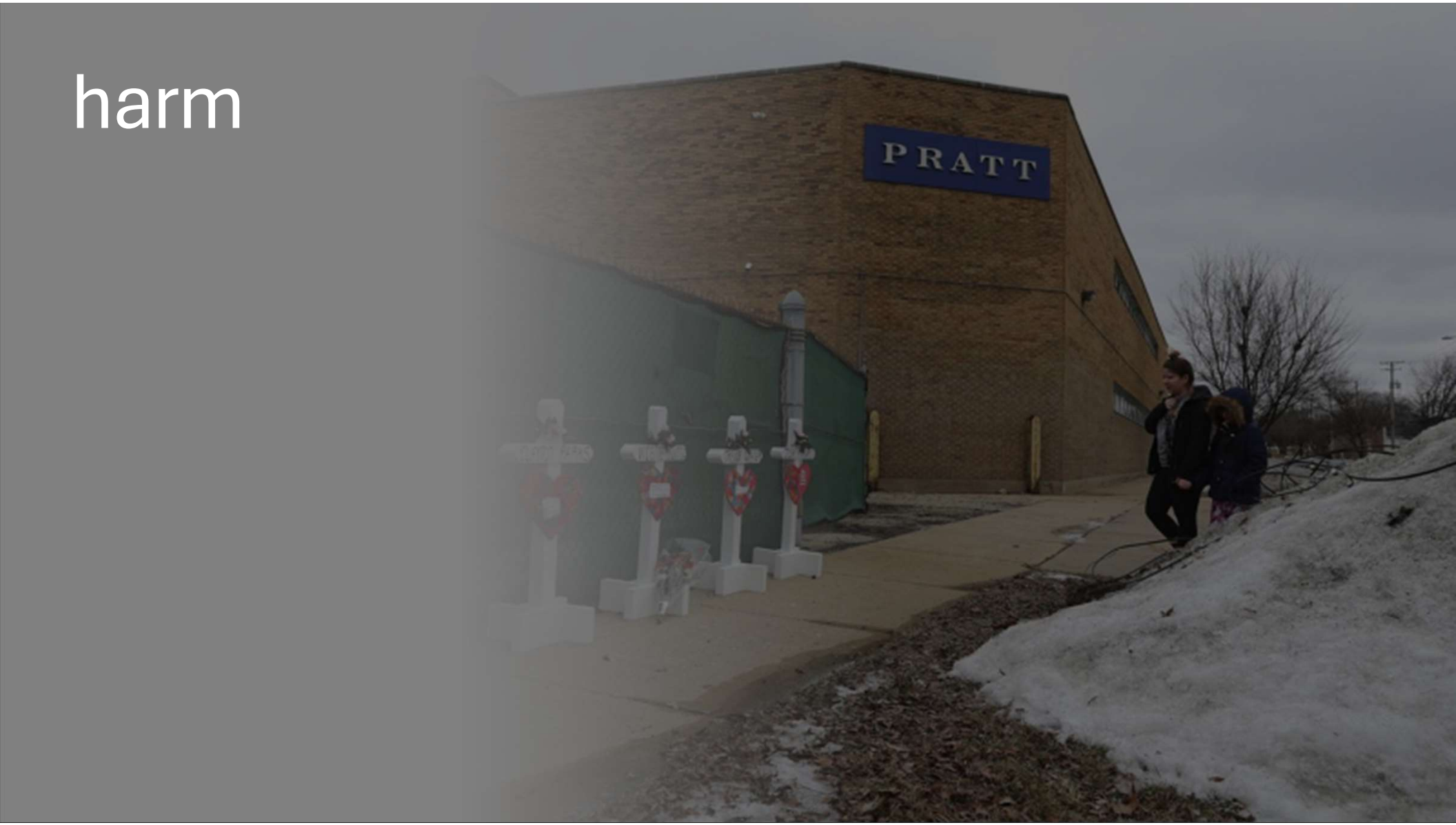
breaking up is hard to do

melissa.muir@pinkerton.com
June 2024

www.involuntaryseparation.com
- Sean Ahrens

harm



why do I care?

- Bullying
- Harassment
- Toxicity
- Disengagement
- Violence to the Spirit

2024

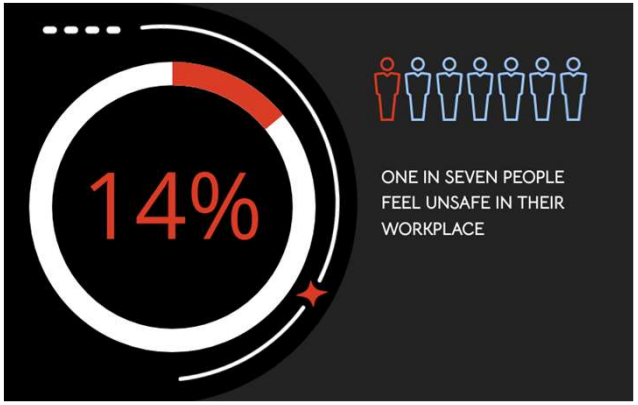
Why do I care?

400,000

2,000,000

million billion

500,000



The Two COSTS Roads

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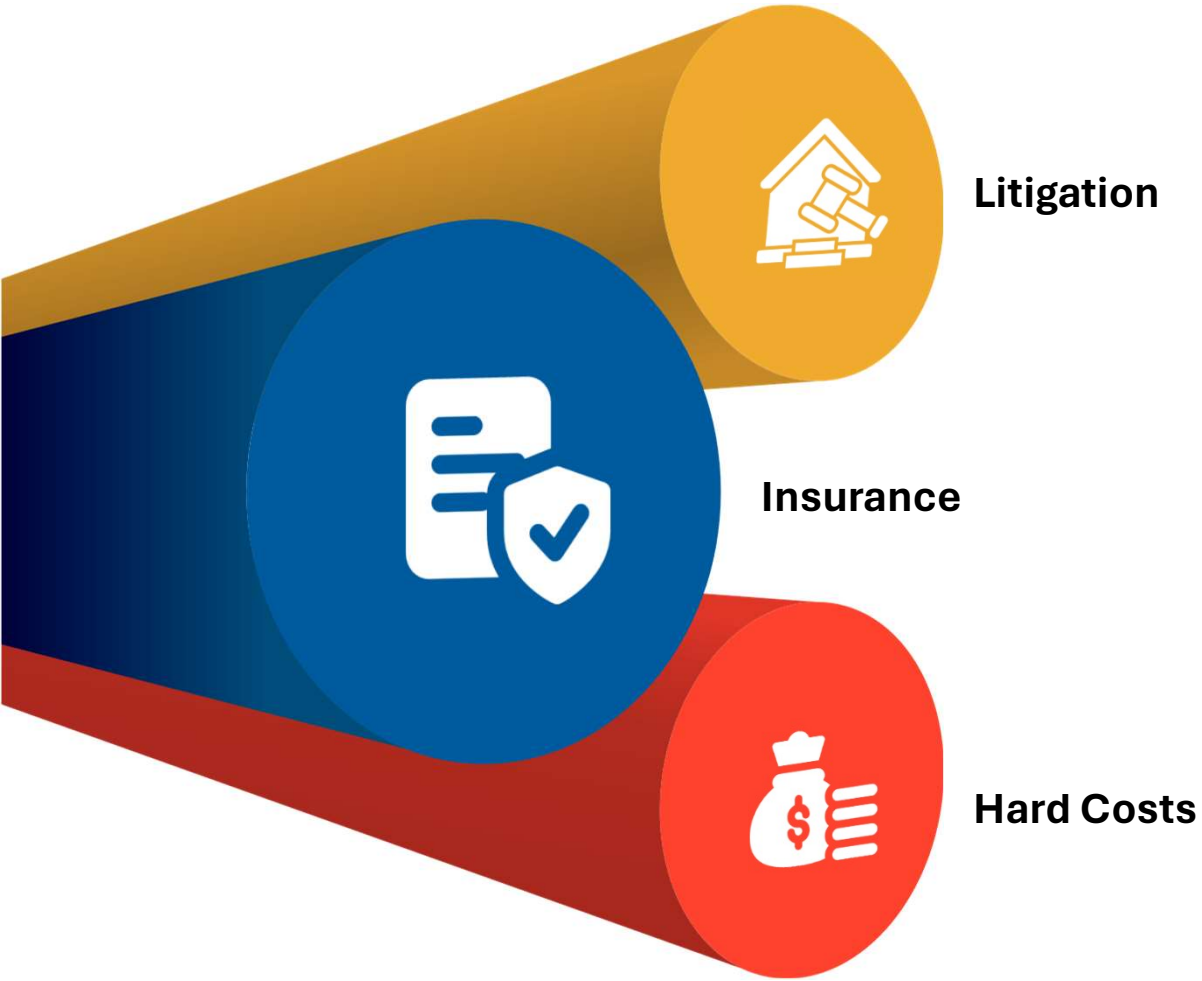


Direct Costs

2 million

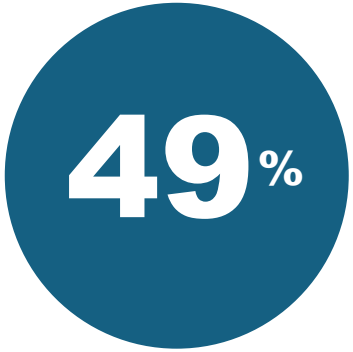
people affected by workplace violence every year

OSHA

connection to work

of stressors work-related

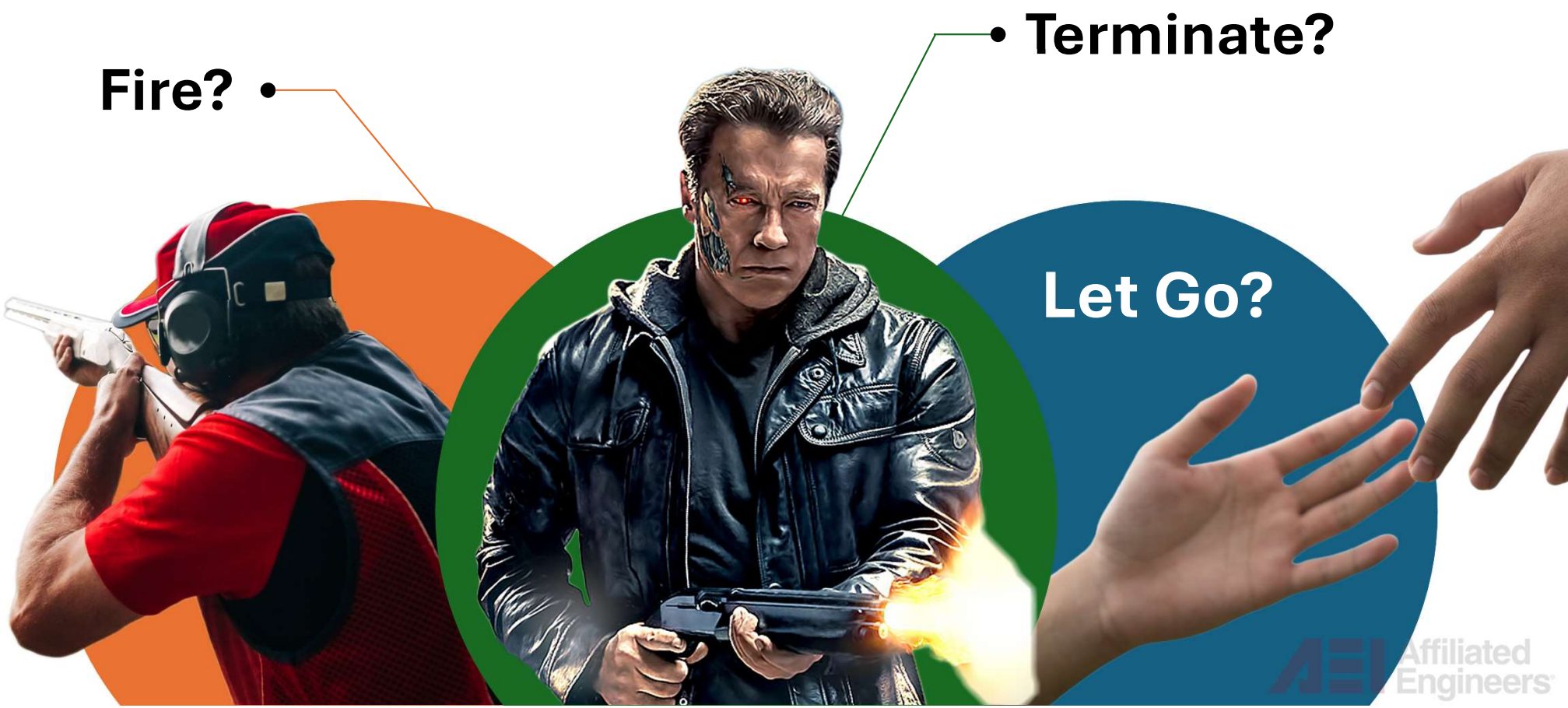
IT sabotage following negative work-related event



of grievances are adverse interpersonal or employment action

FBI: Study of Pre-Attack Behaviors of Active Shooters, 2018; CERT, 2018

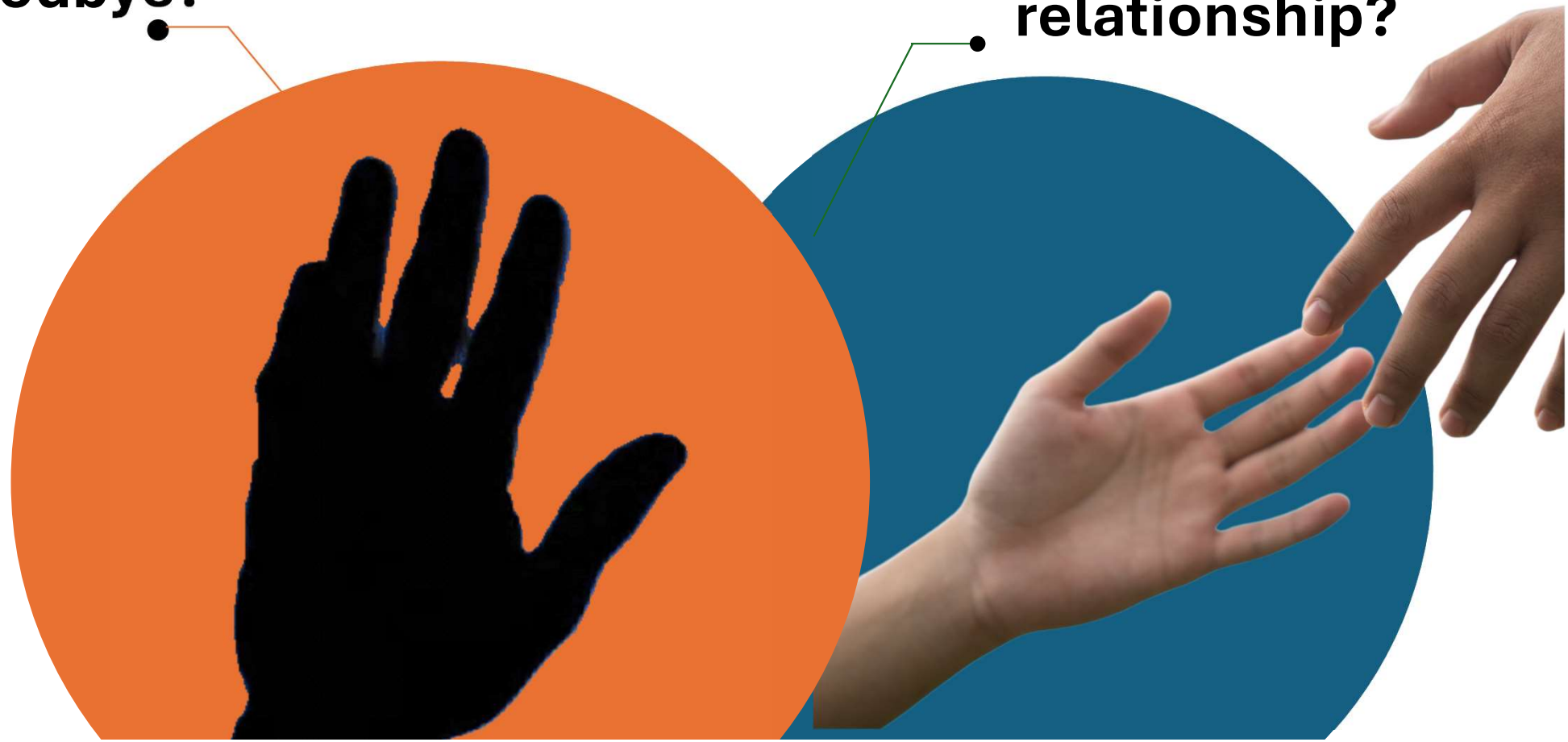
Will You?



Will You?

say goodbye?

make an alumni relationship?



Ralph - Public works

Before

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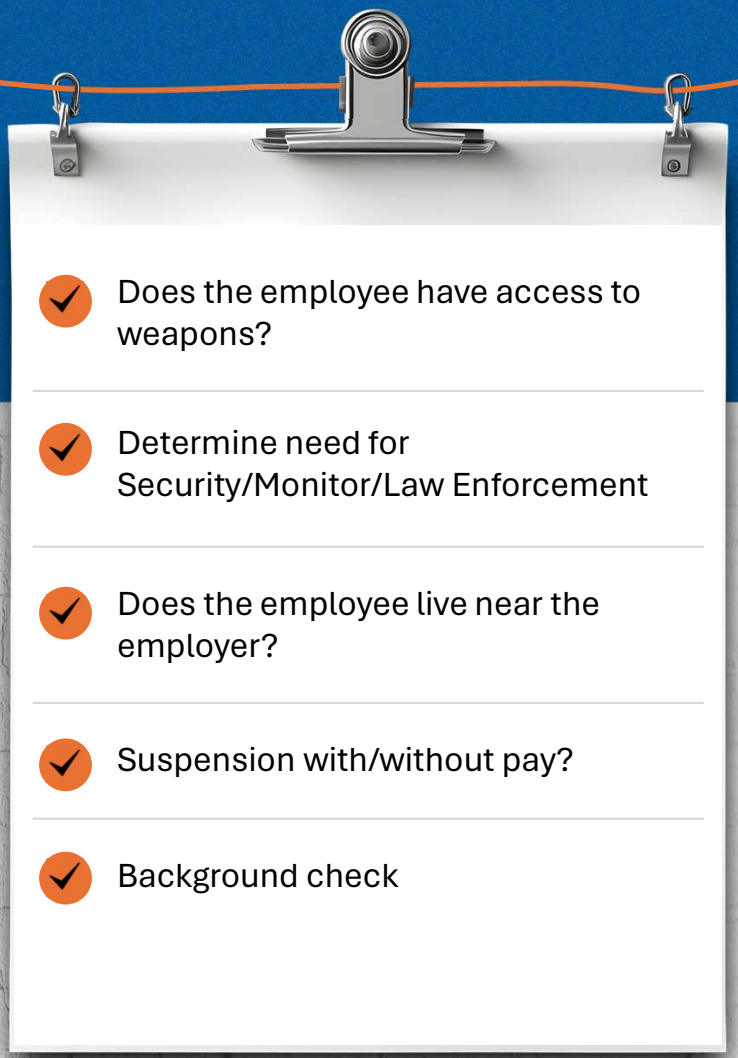
before – checklist

- Has the employee reacted negatively before?
- Has the employee shown other concerning behavioral changes?
- Does the employee have known personal stressors?
- Is the employee without personal support?
- Are there other workplace concerns?

before – checklist



- Does the employee have access to weapons?
- Determine need for Security/Monitor/Law Enforcement
- Does the employee live near the employer?
- Suspension with/without pay?
- Background check

During – Script

1

Be Direct & Brief

Consider two-part meetings

2

Be Complete

The decision is final

3

Do Not Negotiate

This is not the time to revisit the past; it's time to focus on the future

Day of…

Identify location

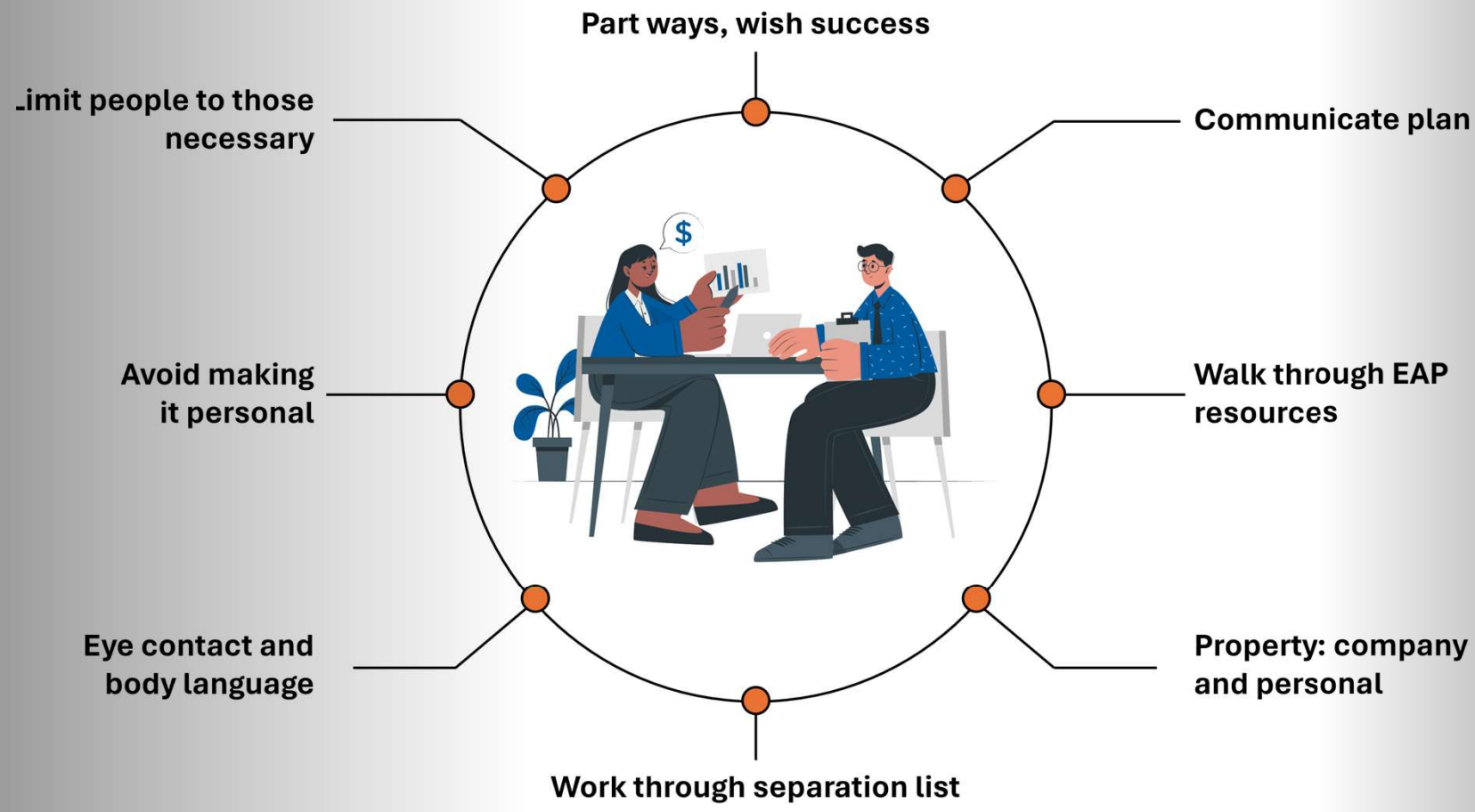
Identify the day & time

Set up the meeting room

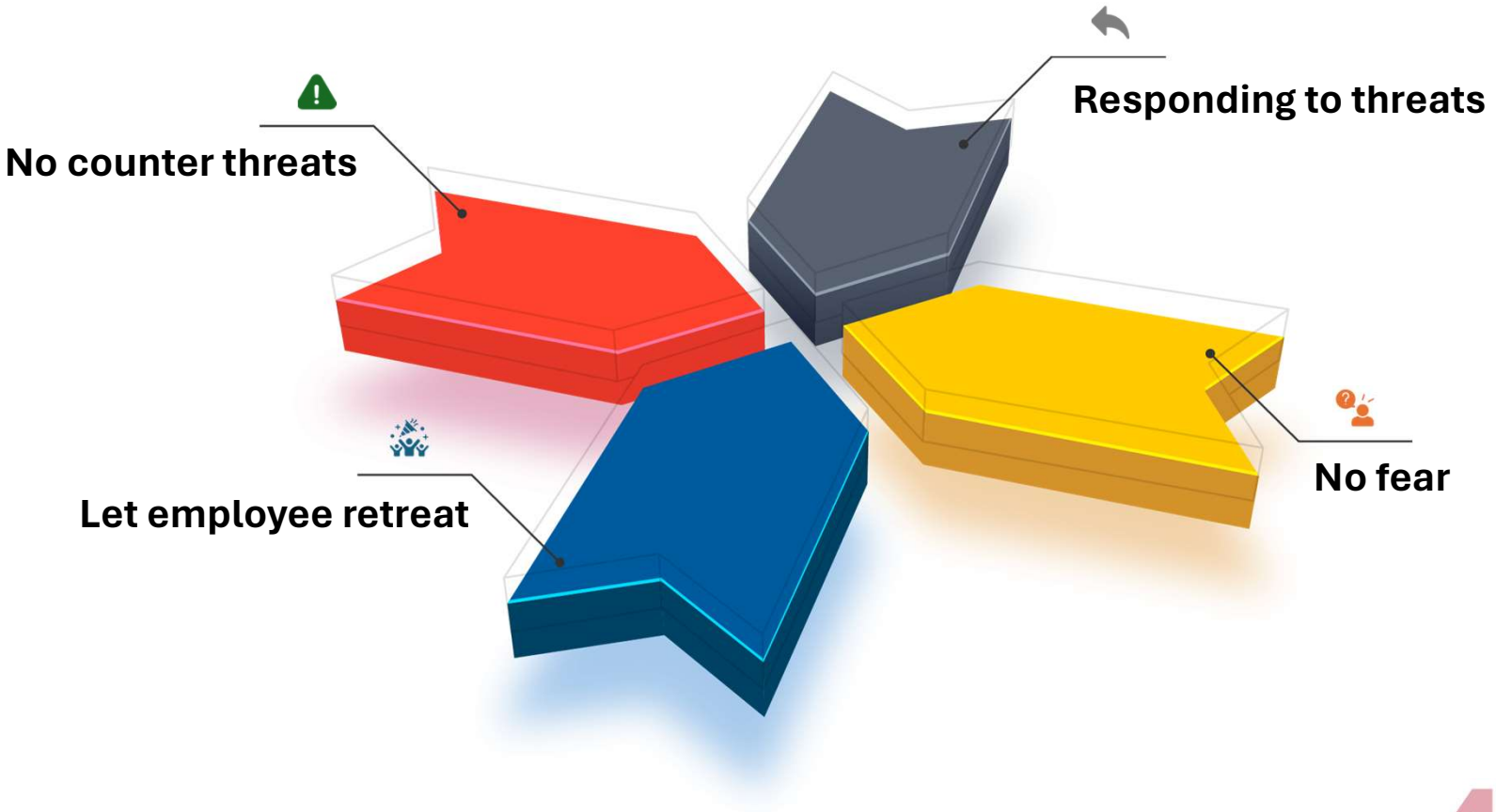
Look for “leakage”

dignity
domino
Stay general
Stay future-focused
Maintain respect & dignity

meeting


Part ways, wish success
Limit people to those necessary
Communicate plan
Avoid making it personal
Walk through EAP resources
Eye contact and body language
Property: company and personal
Work through separation list

Responding to Threats



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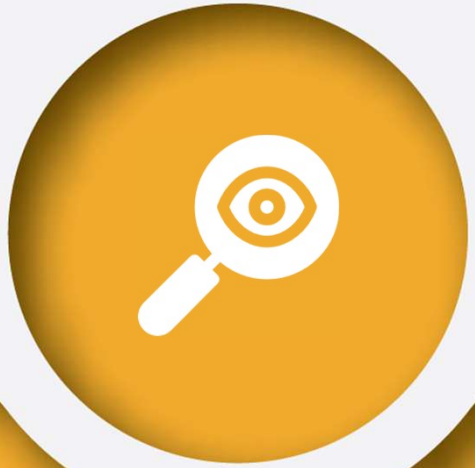
After – Monitoring



Note immediate observations

Consider monitoring

Review & enhance security

Reasons to stay connected

Many American employers hire the wrong people and don't bother to find out a thing about them

- Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear*

Then employees are supervised in ways likely to bring out their worst characteristics

- Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear*

Finally, the way they are fired influences events as much as the fact that they were hired

- Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear*

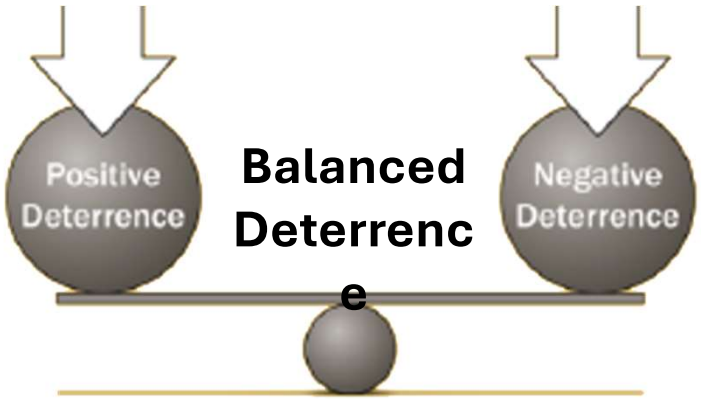
Balanced deterrence

Security through Positive Incentives

- Engagement
- Connection
- Organizational support

Traditional – Negative Deterrence

- Restriction
- Monitoring
- Sanctions

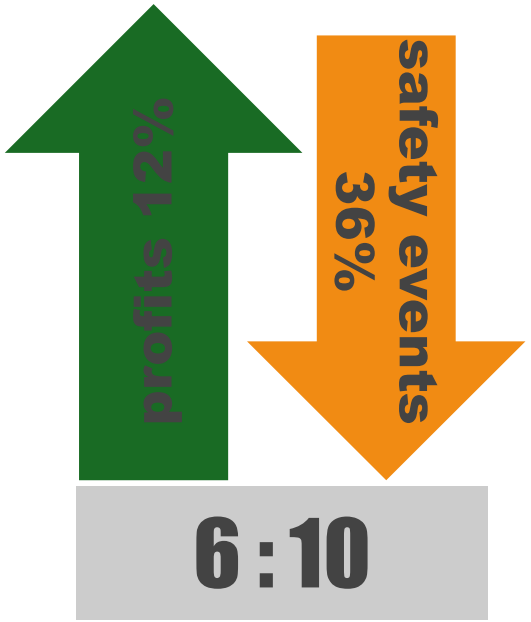


CERT, Critical Role of Positive Incentives in Reducing Insider Threats

I am connected...

69% with friends… are “highly engaged”

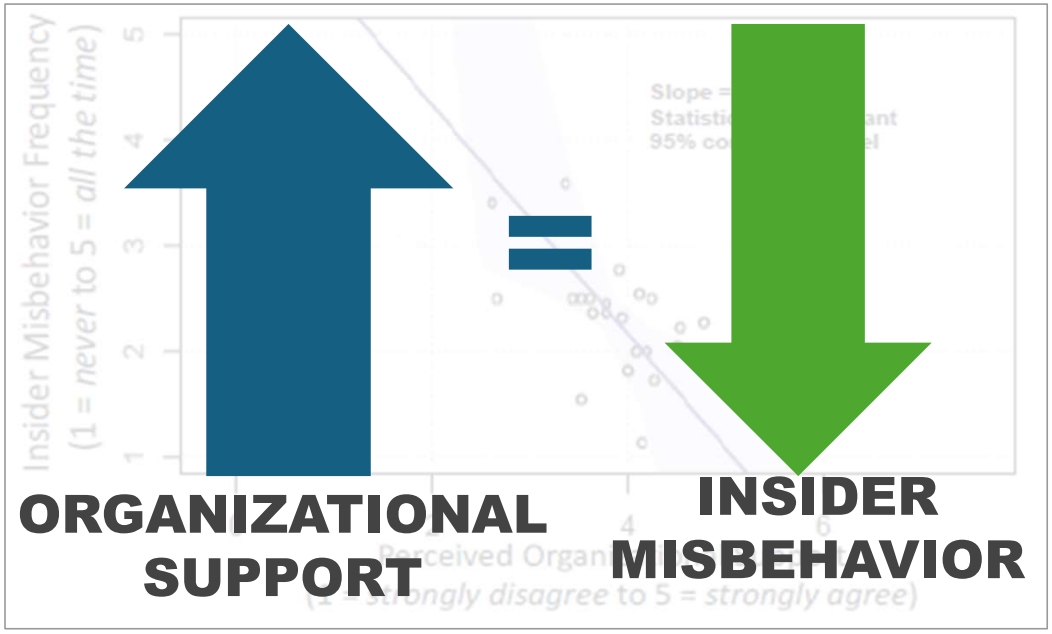
>33% without friends… are “highly engaged”



“best friends”

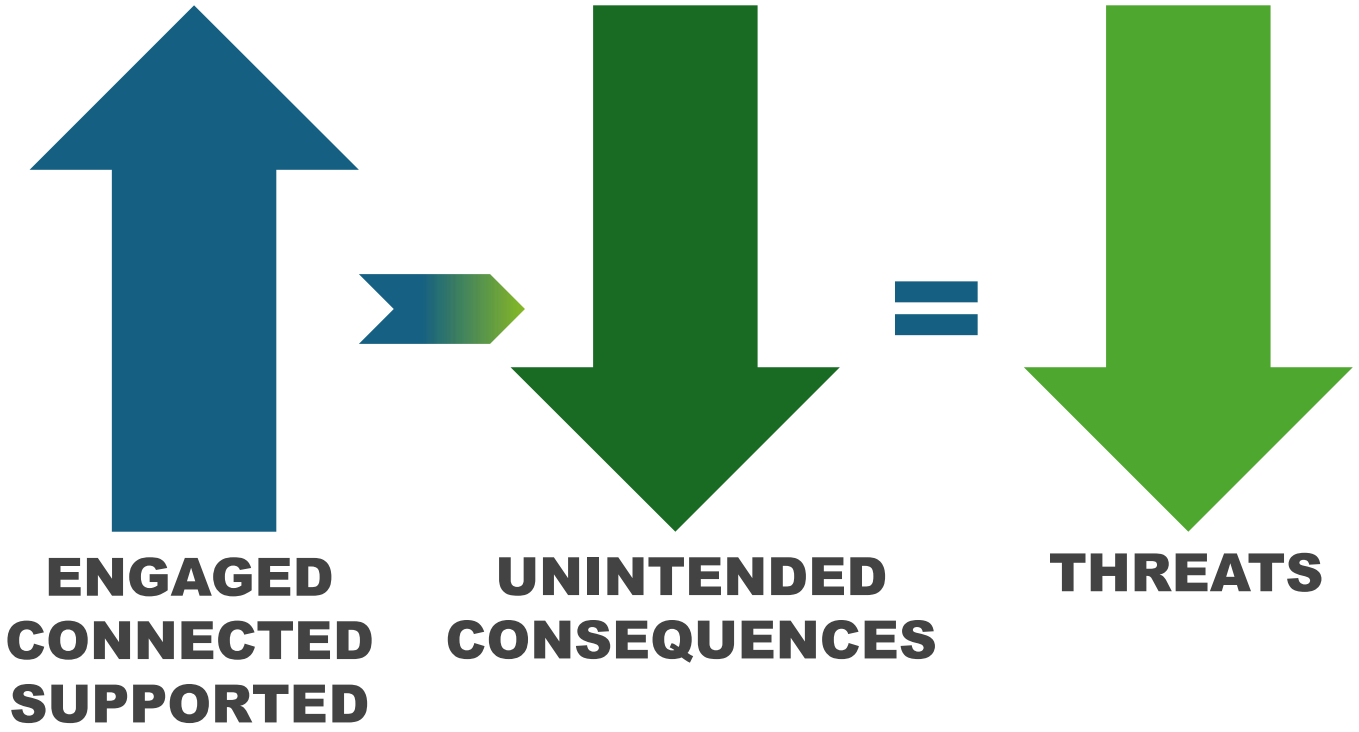
Gallup, 2016

I am supported…

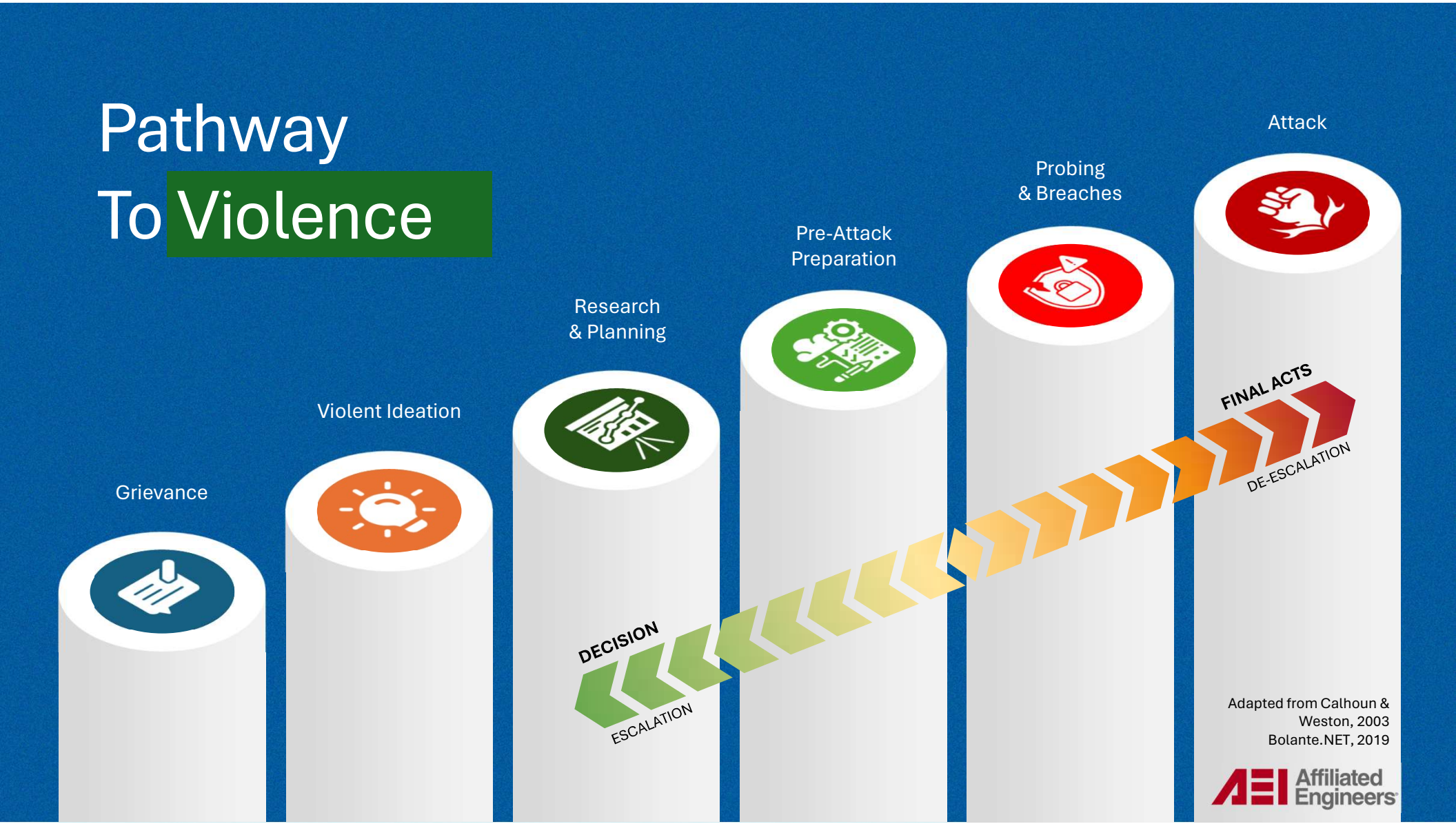


CERT: Negative Correlation Between Perceived Organizational Support and Insider Misbehavior

27


ENGAGED
CONNECTED
SUPPORTED
UNINTENDED
CONSEQUENCES
THREATS

Pathway To Violence



Adapted from Calhoun & Weston, 2003
Bolante.NET, 2019

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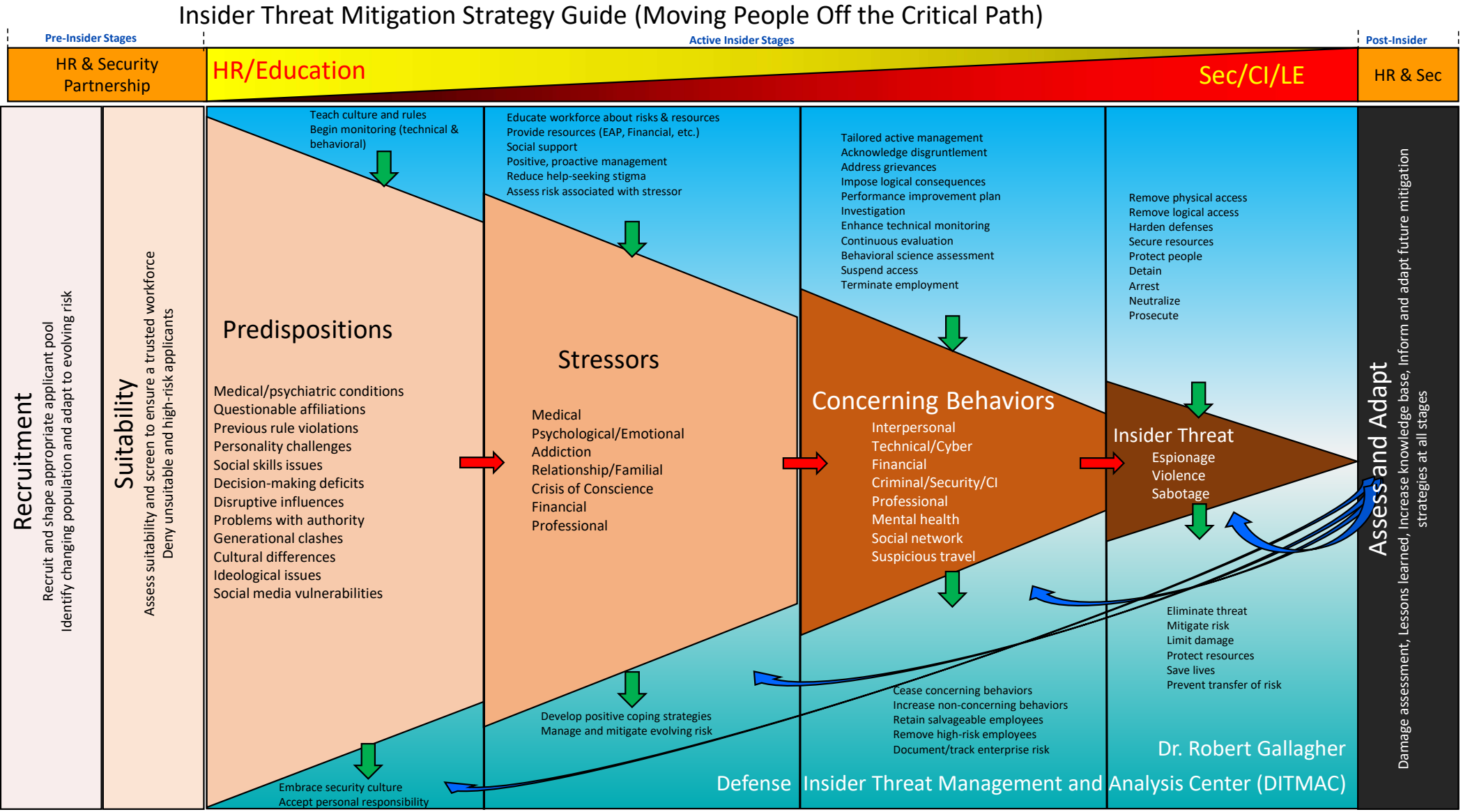
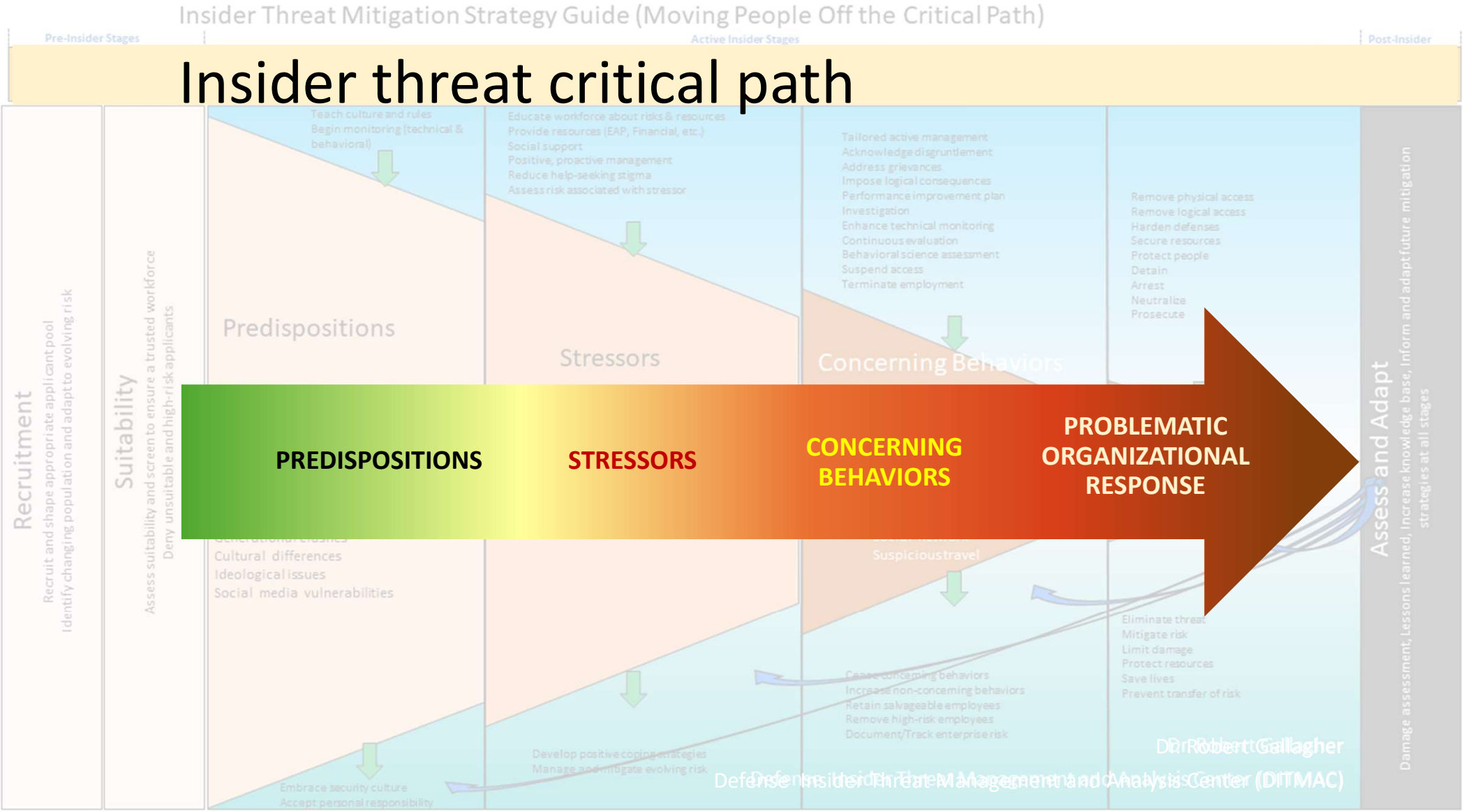

Insider Threat Mitigation Strategy Guide (Moving People Off the Critical Path)
Pre-Insider Stages
Active Insider Stages
Post-Insider
HR & Security Partnership
HR/Education
Sec/CI/LE
HR & Sec
Recruitment
Recruit and shape appropriate applicant pool
Identify changing population and adapt to evolving risk
Suitability
Assess suitability and screen to ensure a trusted workforce
Deny unsuitable and high-risk applicants
Teach culture and rules
Begin monitoring (technical & behavioral)
Predispositions
Medical/psychiatric conditions
Questionable affiliations
Previous rule violations
Personality challenges
Social skills issues
Decision-making deficits
Disruptive influences
Problems with authority
Generational clashes
Cultural differences
Ideological issues
Social media vulnerabilities
Embrace security culture
Accept personal responsibility
Educate workforce about risks & resources
Provide resources (EAP, Financial, etc.)
Social support
Positive, proactive management
Reduce help-seeking stigma
Assess risk associated with stressor
Stressors
Medical
Psychological/Emotional
Addiction
Relationship/Familial
Crisis of Conscience
Financial
Professional
Develop positive coping strategies
Manage and mitigate evolving risk
Tailored active management
Acknowledge disgruntlement
Address grievances
Impose logical consequences
Performance improvement plan
Investigation
Enhance technical monitoring
Continuous evaluation
Behavioral science assessment
Suspend access
Terminate employment
Concerning Behaviors
Interpersonal
Technical/Cyber
Financial
Criminal/Security/CI
Professional
Mental health
Social network
Suspicious travel
Cease concerning behaviors
Increase non-concerning behaviors
Retain salvageable employees
Remove high-risk employees
Document/track enterprise risk
Remove physical access
Remove logical access
Harden defenses
Secure resources
Protect people
Detain
Arrest
Neutralize
Prosecute
Insider Threat
Espionage
Violence
Sabotage
Eliminate threat
Mitigate risk
Limit damage
Protect resources
Save lives
Prevent transfer of risk
Assess and Adapt
Damage assessment, Lessons learned, Increase knowledge base, Inform and adapt future mitigation strategies at all stages
Defense Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center (DITMAC)
Dr. Robert Gallagher

Insider threat critical path

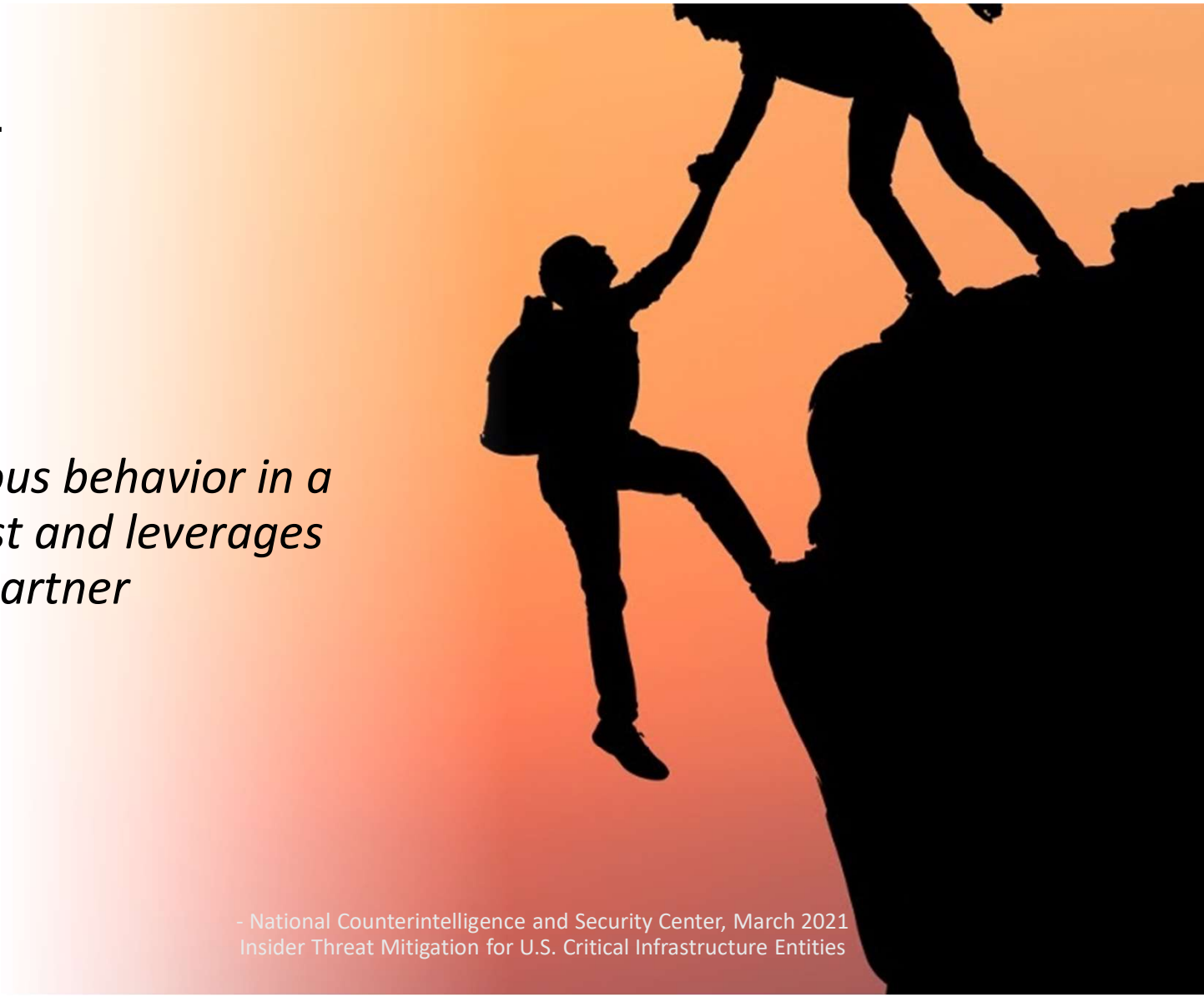


Human problems require human solutions

- National Counterintelligence and Security Center, March 2021
Insider Threat Mitigation for U.S. Critical Infrastructure Entities

Organizational culture as a security force multiplier

Respond to anomalous behavior in a way that fosters trust and leverages the workforce as a partner



- National Counterintelligence and Security Center, March 2021
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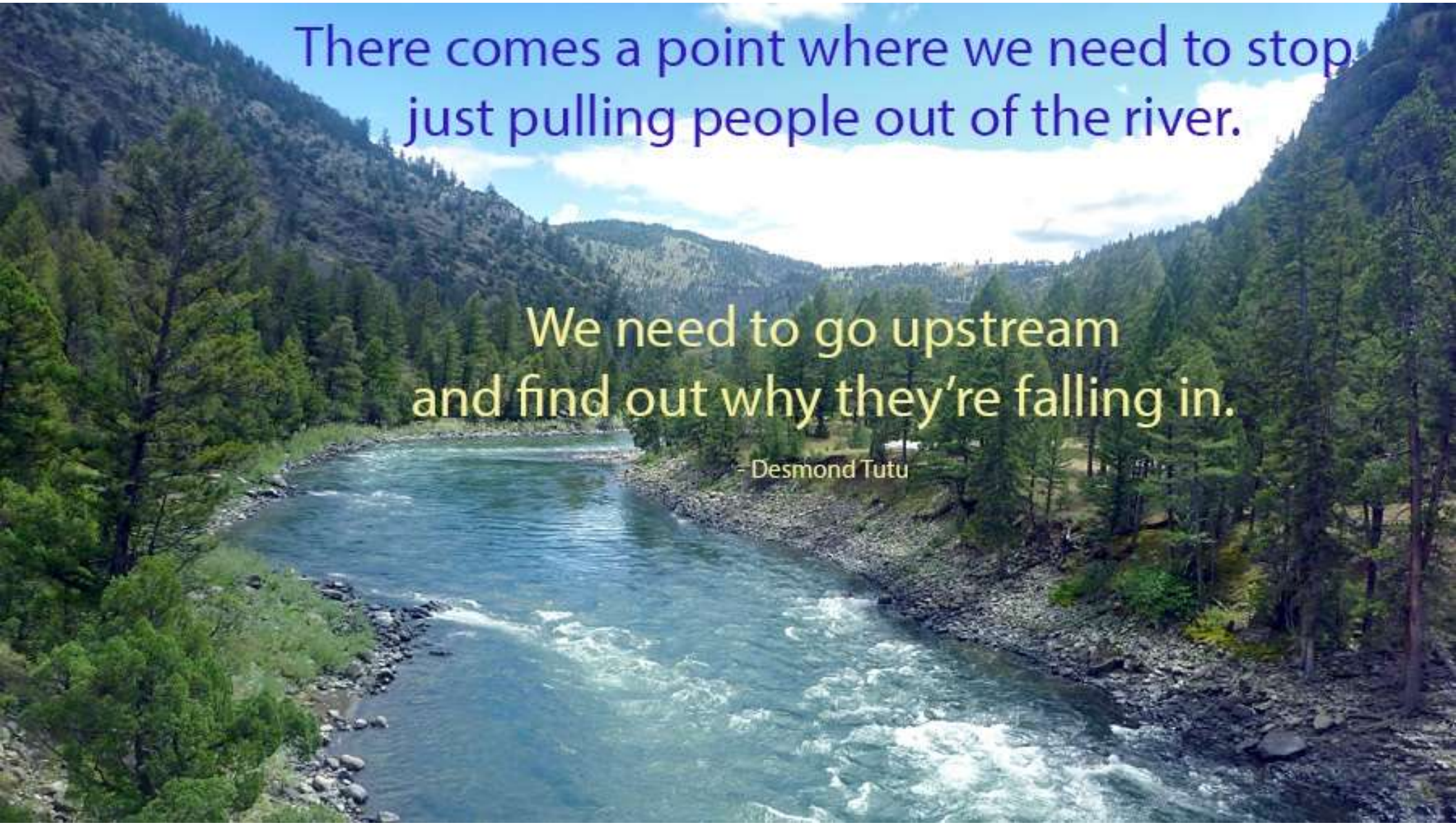
Empathy


There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river.
We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.
- Desmond Tutu

breaking up is hard to do

melissa.muir@pinkerton.com | senior threat management consultant
206.818.8844