



Bonds, Not Fear

Speaker Script · "Lead the Culture Without Intimidation"

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SLIDES 13

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Presenter notes for every slide, in order. Bracketed cues are stage directions; quoted lines are suggested wording — say them in your own voice.

01 Bonds, Not Fear

SLIDE 1 — TITLE: Bonds, Not Fear

SAY: "You can rule a section by fear or lead it by connection. Both work in the short run. Only one of them is still working in October."

CUE: This session sits right next to the hazing session. Signal that now.

02 Icebreaker

SLIDE 2 — ICEBREAKER: Remember the Titans, "Left Side, Strong Side" (1:39)

SET UP: "Listen to what they built — and notice nobody made them do it."

Play it.

AFTER: "That's what a section sounds like when it moves as one. That came from brotherhood, not fear."

03 The Premise

SLIDE 3 — THE PREMISE (statement slide)

Read it.

THE LINE: "Fear buys you a quiet room today and an empty one tomorrow."

Takeaway: "Bonds outlast fear."

04 The Fear Trap

SLIDE 4 — THE FEAR TRAP

Walk the four costs of fear: compliance not commitment, silence, survival mode, and the seed of hazing.

HIT THE SECOND ONE: "A frightened section hides mistakes and stops bringing you problems." Ask: "How do you fix a problem you never hear about?"

Flag the fourth bullet — it's the bridge to the hazing session.

05 A Warning: How Good People Turn Cruel

SLIDE 5 — A WARNING: HOW GOOD PEOPLE TURN CRUEL

Tell the Stanford Prison Experiment briefly — students randomly assigned as guards and prisoners, ordinary people drifting into cruelty within days.

BE ACCURATE, and say the caveat on the slide out loud: the study has since been criticized as more staged than scientific. Don't oversell it.

THE POINT THAT SURVIVES THE CRITICISM: "Authority without accountability lets small cruelties get excused by the role. That drift is real, and culture is the safeguard."

06 Safe People Rise

SLIDE 6 — SAFE PEOPLE RISE

Amy Edmondson's psychological safety, and Google's finding that it outranked talent and resources on their best teams.

GUARDRAIL — say it plainly: "Your job is not to make your section comfortable. It's to make it safe enough to be great." Some of them will hear 'safe' as 'soft.' Cut that off here.

07 Everyone Needs to Belong

SLIDE 7 — EVERYONE NEEDS TO BELONG

"The need to belong is fundamental. Every member walks in wanting to be part of something."

THE CRITICAL BULLET: "Ignore it and people find belonging the wrong way — cliques, division, or the false family hazing pretends to offer."

LAND: "Give them the real thing and nobody goes looking for the counterfeit."

08 Bonds vs. Fear

SLIDE 8 — BONDS VS. FEAR

Two-column contrast. Read the fear column, then the bonds column.

PULL ONE OUT: "Hides mistakes until they become disasters." Ask if anybody has watched that happen. Usually somebody has.

09 How to Build Real Bonds

SLIDE 9 — HOW TO BUILD REAL BONDS

Four: know them, sweat together, be human, protect them.

MAKE IT ACTIONABLE: "Learn names and what people are carrying." And on being human: "A leader who admits a mistake gives everyone else permission to be honest."

Emphasize Protect Them — defend, celebrate, never humiliate.

10 Bonding Is Not Hazing

SLIDE 10 — BONDING IS NOT HAZING

Slow down. This is the line-drawing slide and it must be unambiguous.

Bonding: voluntary, includes everyone, protects dignity, shared goal.

Hazing: coerced, singles people out, humiliates, power over.

GIVE THEM THE TEST: "If an activity only works because somebody is afraid or ashamed, it is not team-building. It is hazing."
Say that twice.

11 The Goal

SLIDE 11 — THE GOAL (statement slide)

Read it. The word to land on is family — but the right kind.

Takeaway: "Known. Safe. Together."

12 What It Looks Like Here

SLIDE 12 — WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE HERE

The everyday behaviors. Keep it brisk.

HIT TWO: "Check on the quiet ones — the member who says the least often needs you the most." And: "Shut down humiliation the instant you see it, no matter who is doing it."

That last one is a direct instruction, not a suggestion. Say it that way.

13 Build the Bond. Lose the Fear.

SLIDE 13 — CLOSE: Build the Bond. Lose the Fear.

"Know them, protect them, work them hard, and make them safe enough to be great."

End on the sign-off.