

RICK PIÑA

OPENING KEYNOTE

The Leadership Inflection Point

(What Got You Here Won't Get You There)

RICK PIÑA

ALPFA LEAD Program · Charlotte, NC · August 8, 2026

THE NEXT TWO DAYS

**You are here because
you want to grow.**

Disconnect.

Reflect.

**Ask yourself the
tough questions.**

THE PREMISE

**Whatever got you here
is not what gets you
to the next level.**

Think like the next level.

Communicate like the next level.

Operate under new paradigms.

THE FRAMEWORK

Framework: Myron Golden's Four Levels of Value

The Four Levels of Value

The marketplace pays you based on the level of value you operate at.



01

LEVEL ONE

IMPLEMENTATION

WHO THEY ARE

Individual contributors who execute the tasks.

Keyboard. Spreadsheet. Broom.
Playing the instrument.

They execute the vision according to the plan.

Every vision on earth gets executed by an implementer.

01

LEVEL ONE

IMPLEMENTATION

THE CEILING

The best at this level is still capped.

**You can be the best here
and still be capped.**

Capped compensation. Capped impact.

People who refuse to leave the keyboard stay at that level.

01

LEVEL ONE

IMPLEMENTATION

THE CLIMB



Your manager is not graded on a keyboard. They are graded on the team's output.

**Think outcomes,
not tasks.**

Teach your excellence to others.

Do your portion so well that doers one day do for you.

02

LEVEL TWO

UNIFICATION

WHO THEY ARE

Managers and directors. You are given implementers.

**Your job is that the
implementers implement.**

Entrusted with their portion of the vision.

Empowered to execute their portion. Not everyone's.

02

LEVEL TWO

UNIFICATION

THE SHIFT

The conductor does not play the instrument.

**From playing the instrument
to playing the people.**

Twelve direct reports. Twelve sets of outcomes.

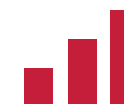
You are not paid to do those tasks anymore.

02

LEVEL TWO

UNIFICATION

THE CLIMB



Translate the vision one level above you before anyone asks.

**Learn how VPs think,
communicate, and talk.**

Master your portion. Do not covet your peers' portion.

Be the manager whose team always understands the why.

03

LEVEL THREE

COMMUNICATION

WHO THEY ARE

VPs and SVPs. Offsites and executive retreats.

Your first exposure to the C-suite.

You hear the vision directly from the visionaries.

Two levels down, one VP influences 96 people and more.

03

LEVEL THREE

COMMUNICATION

THE JOB

Translate what came down into what teams can execute.

**They take the vision
and cast it. One to many.**

Centralized vision. Decentralized execution.

What we are doing, why we are doing it, how our portion gets done.

03

LEVEL THREE

COMMUNICATION

THREE DIRECTIONS

Communicate **in three directions.**

Down

Translate the vision so your teams can execute it.

Up

Say what your division is doing, in your boss's language.

Out

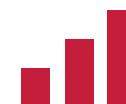
Build consensus with peers, partners, and stakeholders.

03

LEVEL THREE

COMMUNICATION

THE CLIMB



Come back from every offsite with a translation and a point of view.

Study what visionaries do to cast vision.

Guard your thinking time the way they do.

Produce vision level thinking for your portfolio before anyone asks.

04

LEVEL FOUR

IMAGINATION

WHO THEY ARE

The C-suite and founders.

Paid to think.

They chart where we are going and what it takes to get there.

CEO for the company. CRO for revenue. COO for operations.

04

LEVEL FOUR

IMAGINATION

THE DISCIPLINE

36 months. Three big ideas.

Three big things. Not fifty.

People. Numbers. Culture.

At level one your week is 22 tasks. At the top it is three goals.

LEVEL FOUR • IMAGINATION

Anybody can steer the ship.
It takes a visionary
to chart the course.

The higher you go, the broader you think and the fewer things you do.

THE MARKETPLACE

**The marketplace pays you
based on the level of value
you operate at.**

Not effort. Not tenure. Not how much you care.

Each level maxes out at a pay range. Keep moving up the value chain.

RICK PIÑA

THE MIRROR

Where are you really?

Not your title. Your level.

15, 18, 22 years in.

And still wondering why you are not in the room.

THE TELL

Still not invited to the offsite. Why?

The invite list tells you your level.

Three star offsites with Colin Powell and Michael Dell. Not available to everybody.

LOCATE YOURSELF

Know where you sit.
Know where the next level sits.

Strategic

Thinking it.

Operational

Implementing the strategy.

Tactical

Putting out fires.

DELIVER AT YOUR LEVEL

**If you are paid at one level,
you cannot spend your days
working two levels down.**

EXAMPLE

An EVP spending four hours booking flights and hunting cheaper hotels is destroying value.

THE RULE

**If you do not think on that level,
you will never be brought
into that level.**

Think like your leadership. Communicate like your leadership. Make it obvious you already belong.

SPEAK THEIR LANGUAGE

Every business has a language.

Learn your leadership's lexicon.

THE LINE

When that paratrooper gets in the door, that radio needs to be six pounds or less.

GET NOTICED

Nobody can stop you on LinkedIn.

If you never get noticed, you're not going to get promoted.

Nobody at your company controls your LinkedIn.

Your company brand needs approval. Your own brand does not.

THE LINKEDIN PLAYBOOK

Four moves. Start this week.

Nobody has to approve it. These are your thoughts.

01

**Research your
company's direction
on your own time**

02

Post your thoughts

03

**Tag your company
and your boss**

04

Their peers see it

LINKEDIN IN ACTION

17 years at Schneider.
Here's where I see us going.

Tag the company.

Tag the boss.

The boss's peers ask: who is this?

GET NOTICED

**If you never get noticed,
you're not going to get promoted.**

THE WHOLE LEADER

The next level is not just professional.

Spiritual

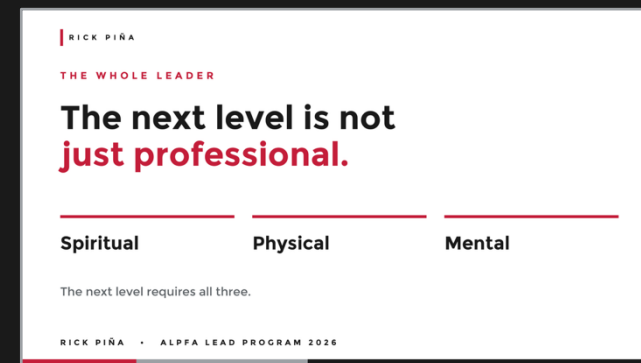
Physical

Mental

The next level requires all three.

THE WHOLE LEADER

The world says these
three make you whole.
Add a fourth. Family.



The world's standard.

Spiritual

Physical

Mental

Family

If you get to the end of your career without your family, you failed.

THE RECAP

Which level are you on?
Which level are you paid at?
Which level do you think at?



RICK PIÑA

THE CHARGE

For the next two days

Chart **YOUR** course.

Reflect on your level.

Ask the tough questions.

RICK PIÑA • ALPFA LEAD 2026