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FEI SUMMIT REPORT

ANNUAL FINANCIAL LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

May 2018 | Houston, TX

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FEI SUMMIT 2018 RECAP

Financial Executives International (FEI) recently held its annual Financial Leadership Summit in Houston. The theme of this year's summit was Excellence in Financial Leadership.

Built on FEI's tradition of connecting talented members with invaluable resources, the Financial Leadership Summit brings together the best and brightest to learn what it takes to be an effective financial leader.

The following highlights were prepared by the summit attendees and focuses on the most compelling sessions.

DAY ONE

The 5 Second Rule: Achieve Breakthrough Performance in Your Career & Life

Speaker: Mel Robbins, CNN Contributor & Life Coach

Mel Robbins is an entrepreneur, best-selling author, social media influencer, and renowned motivational speaker.

She lives by the 5 Second Rule to ignite change in her life, both professionally and personally. In her presentation, Robbins tackled the topic of procrastination and society's innate tendency to fall victim to it. Procrastination, she describes, is a habit that halts tasks due to a psychological conflict which can be debilitating and can seriously impact our careers, relationships, and quality of life in unhealthy ways.

Robbins tells us that most people don't really understand procrastination. Because of this, we see it as a result of being lazy or having poor work ethic. Instead, Robbins explains procrastination as a behavior that helps people cope with stress. The avoidance isn't on the task itself but the stress that is associated with said task.

The answer to dealing with procrastination or an avoidance of stress is **the 5 Second Rule**.

The 5 Second Rule is a simple tool that undercuts most of the psychological weapons your brain uses to keep you from taking action, which will allow you to procrastinate less, live happier, and reach your goals.

5...4...3...2...1 – go!

Here are three ways the 5-second countdown can do the same for you:

- Through little acts of courage, the 5 Second Rule makes you less afraid over time.
- There are three reasons the “right time” will never come, so you just have to start.
- The 5 Second Rule helps override your feelings, a tactic which is called psychological intervention.

To learn more about the 5 Second Rule, watch [Mel Robbin's TEDx Talk](#) or read her book, [The 5 Second Rule: Transform your Life, Work, and Confidence with Everyday Courage](#).

DAY TWO

#HoustonStrong

Speakers:

- Andre Suskavcevic, FEI President and CEO
- Jim “Mattress Mack” McIngvale, Owner of Gallery Furniture
- Greg Castle, CEO of Best Friends Animal Society

Last August, Houston was hit by catastrophic flooding from Hurricane Harvey. Highways were flooded, the downtown area was covered in knee-deep water and the intensity of the storm was more than anyone in Houston had ever experienced. More than 30,000 people were forced from their homes and at least 16,000 rescues were performed.

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Andre Suskavcevic spoke about why FEI chose Houston as their host city for this year's summit. He acknowledged the many heroes that jumped into action when Hurricane Harvey hit, including the first responders and everyday citizens. Their excellence in caring for others led to Houston being chosen as the host city.

Suskavcevic then introduced Jim McIngvale, known locally as "Mattress Mack." Mack took the stage in his Houston Astros jersey and told the story about why he opened his high-end furniture store showrooms and used them as makeshift shelters. He knew that many people had been displaced from their homes, so he sent his drivers out on his truck to rescue those who were stranded and also provided food and shelter for the duration of the chaos.

As Hurricane Harvey destroyed homes and separated people from their pets, Best Friends Animal Society mobilized to join the relief efforts. The Best Friends team rescued stranded animals, delivered supplies to hard-hit shelters, drove displaced pets to safety, and supported emergency sheltering efforts.

Greg Castle, Co-Founder and CEO of Best Friends Animal Society, is dedicated to helping no-kill shelters find the funding, branding, and promotion they need to place animals in new loving homes.

The theme of unity and community was threaded throughout Mack's and Castle's presentation. They both believe that unity and community are what our country needs to grow and strengthen. Although they believe tragedy will always strike, the way the community reacts is what will really matter. For Mack and Castle, offering a furniture store as a place of refuge and saving thousands of animals in a time of need was a no brainer.

Leadership Under Adversity – On & Off the Planet

Speaker: Scott Parazynski, MD, Retired NASA Astronaut, 7 Time Space Walker and First Astronaut to Summit the Top of the Earth

Dr. Scott Parazynski is a highly decorated physician, astronaut, and tech CEO, recently inducted into the US Astronaut Hall of Fame. He is a keynote speaker on innovation, risk management, mentorship, and leadership under extreme adversity.

His presentation had the following takeaways:

- People and businesses today have an obligation and the opportunity to innovate, those who don't will get left behind.
- When you utilize people with different skill sets and backgrounds, you will get different perspectives which often lead to unique and innovative ideas.
- Call on the quiet colleagues or the person least likely to speak up and ask them their opinion – often times they have the best solution or idea.
- Keep your eyes on the summit, but remember to make it a round trip.
- Learn from failure, but don't forget you can learn from success too!
- Big data is the future so leverage your analytics.

Future Forces: Insights for Navigating Uncertainty in the Connected Age

Speaker: Seth Mattison, Co-Founder and Chief Movement Officer, Luminare Labs

Seth Mattison advises world-leading brands and organizations on the key shifts happening around talent management, change and innovation, leadership, and

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the future of work. He is an internationally renowned expert and author on workforce trends, generational dynamics, and business strategy.

In his session, Mattison describes his belief that we are entering the greatest period of global transformation the world has ever known. These changes are enabled by rapidly-evolving technology and destabilizing demographic changes. He believes the rigid business models and long-standing rules we've come to count on for centuries are no longer reliable and are proving inefficient or ineffective against many of today's most pressing challenges. [This constant state of disruption](#) mandates a new level of professional courage and influence to effectively impact our organizations and those around us.

According to Mattison, the newest trend disrupting the current workplace is the forces of both hierarchies and networks. The battle between hierarchies and networks has actually been playing out for thousands of years.

Mattison argues that many of us have come of age in a world where the structures, and more importantly, the deeply embedded culture of the hierarchy, has been our reality. In our new culture, we are marching towards a digitally-connected and networked.

So by coming of age in the hierarchal structure, he expresses that for a leader to be successful in today's age, they must reshape and rewire the way their brain functions and learn how to accommodate for this networked environment.

He explains that it's not how the world we're creating or moving into operates today. It's not that hierarchy is bad or outdated. It's about asking yourself and others:

- In a world that is becoming more networked and connected, where does a hierarchy serve us? Where is it no longer serving us?

- What's one unwritten rule of the world of the hierarchy that I need to just simply let go to embrace this new network state?

We need to shift leadership paradigms to prepare for the future of our work and be open to living in both a hierarchal and networked world.

We encourage you to share this recap with anyone who may find it relevant and interesting. Don't forget to sign up for our email list to receive the latest information from us.