FROM ACCIDENTAL TECHIE TO IT PRO:

ADVOCATING FOR YOUR ROLE, PAY, AND RECOGNITION

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TIFFANY CASTAGNO

- Human Resources Consulting
- 17+ years of experience supporting Small to Mid-sized organizations
- I love music and singing
- I am the oldest of three girls but the only one without children and love being an Aunt

CEPHR℠
Cultivating the Evolution of Professional HR

CINDY LEONARD

- Digital Transformation Consulting
- 26 years working with nonprofits
- Dog & cat mom
- Fervent lover of Canadian rock band Rush & Toronto Blue Jays baseball

Cindy Leonard Consulting LLC

POLL

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WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THIS?

1. Recognizing Unpaid & Unacknowledged Labor

2. Reducing Burnout & Turnover

3. Strengthening Organizational IT Infrastructure

4. Encouraging Leadership Buy-In for IT Support

5. Creating a Community of Support

6. Helping Nonprofits Operate More Effectively

WHAT <u>IS</u> AN "ACCIDENTAL TECHIE"...?

- Accidental Techie = Unofficial IT troubleshooter

- IT tasks without formal title, training, or recognition

- Starts small → Grows into major responsibilities

- Often no extra pay, support, or resources
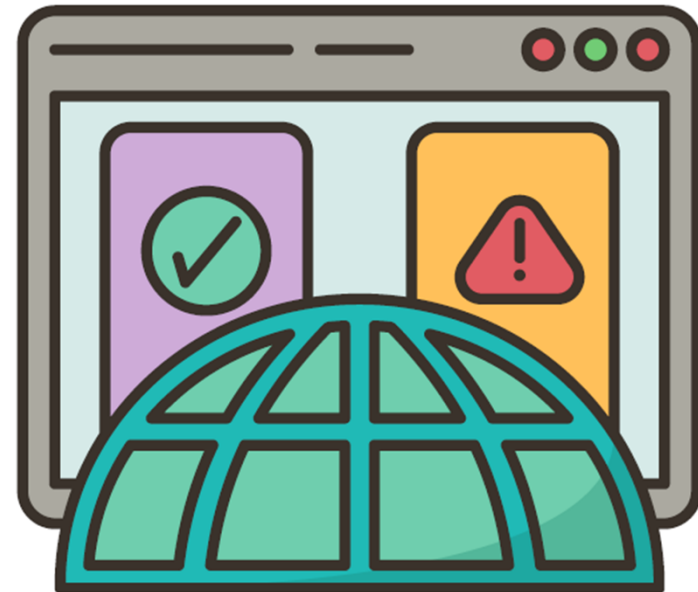
POTENTIAL IMPACTS

Personal impact:
Stress, burnout, frustration

Organizational risk:
Inefficiency, security issues, high turnover

CINDY'S PERSONAL JOURNEY

ARE YOU AN "ACCIDENTAL TECHIE" AT YOUR ORG?

❏ Go-to person for IT problems even though not in your job description

❏ Significant portion of workweek solving tech issues for organization or other people

❏ Finding yourself self-teaching or seeking out IT training on your own time (and dime)

❏ Organization expects you to handle increasingly complex IT tasks without additional resources or compensation

YOU ARE NOT YOUR JOB TITLE: GETTING STARTED WITH SELF-ADVOCACY

- Look at:
  - Job Description
  - Your Offer Letter
  - Performance Reviews

- Review your daily responsibilities with your official Job Description

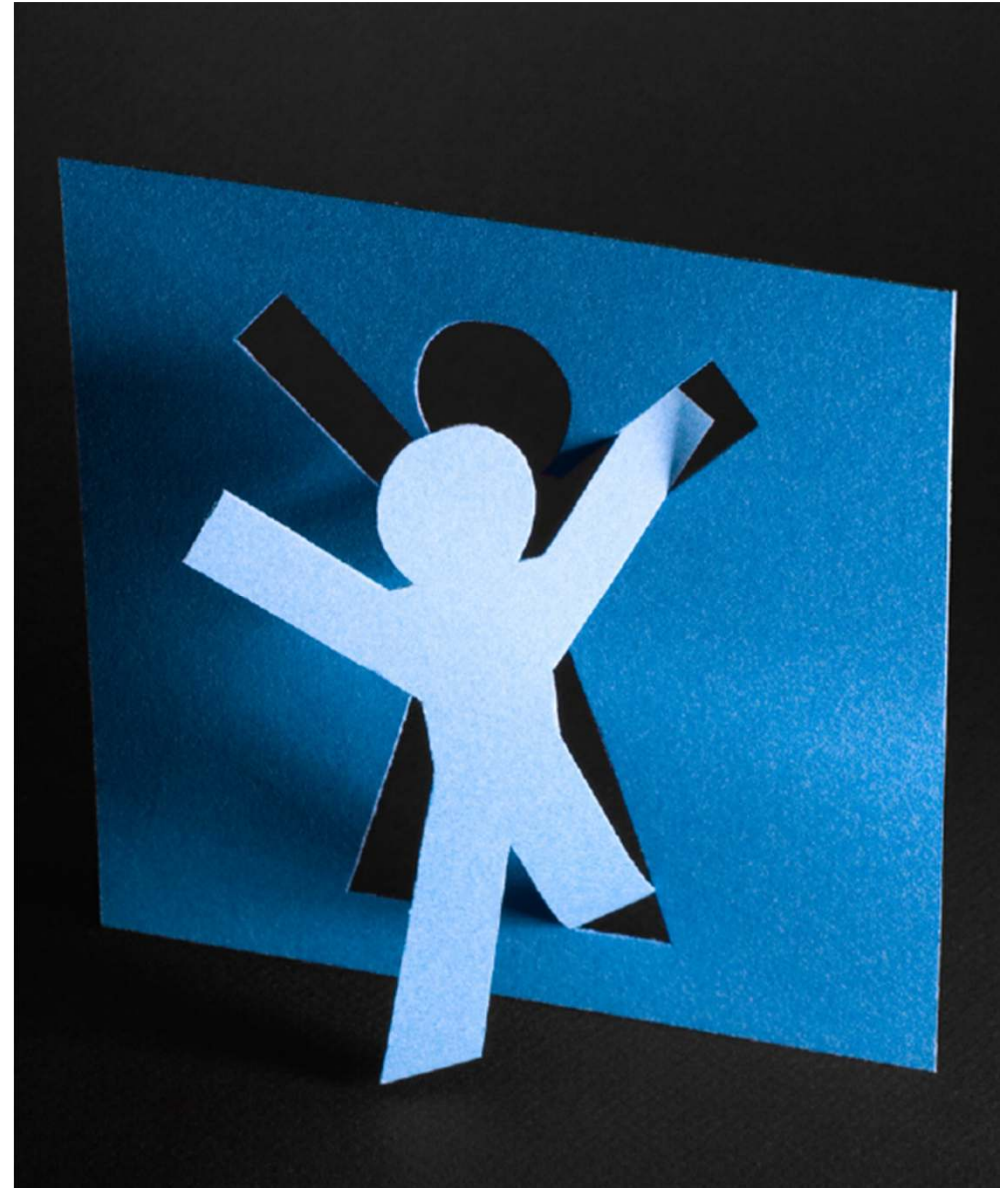- Job/Time Audit as necessary

ADVOCATING FOR YOURSELF AT WORK

- Prepare Talking Points - state the facts

- Have a conversation with your Manager providing data

- Share how you like to be recognized

BREAKOUT GROUPS

Discuss:
What's one challenge you face when advocating for recognition?

UNDERSTANDING & COMMUNICATING YOUR VALUE

Quantify your contributions:

- **Efficiency** – Streamlining processes, reducing manual work

- **Cost savings** – Avoiding unnecessary expenses, finding free/discounted tools

- **Risk reduction** – Preventing security issues, ensuring compliance

- **Productivity gains** – Helping teams work faster and smarter
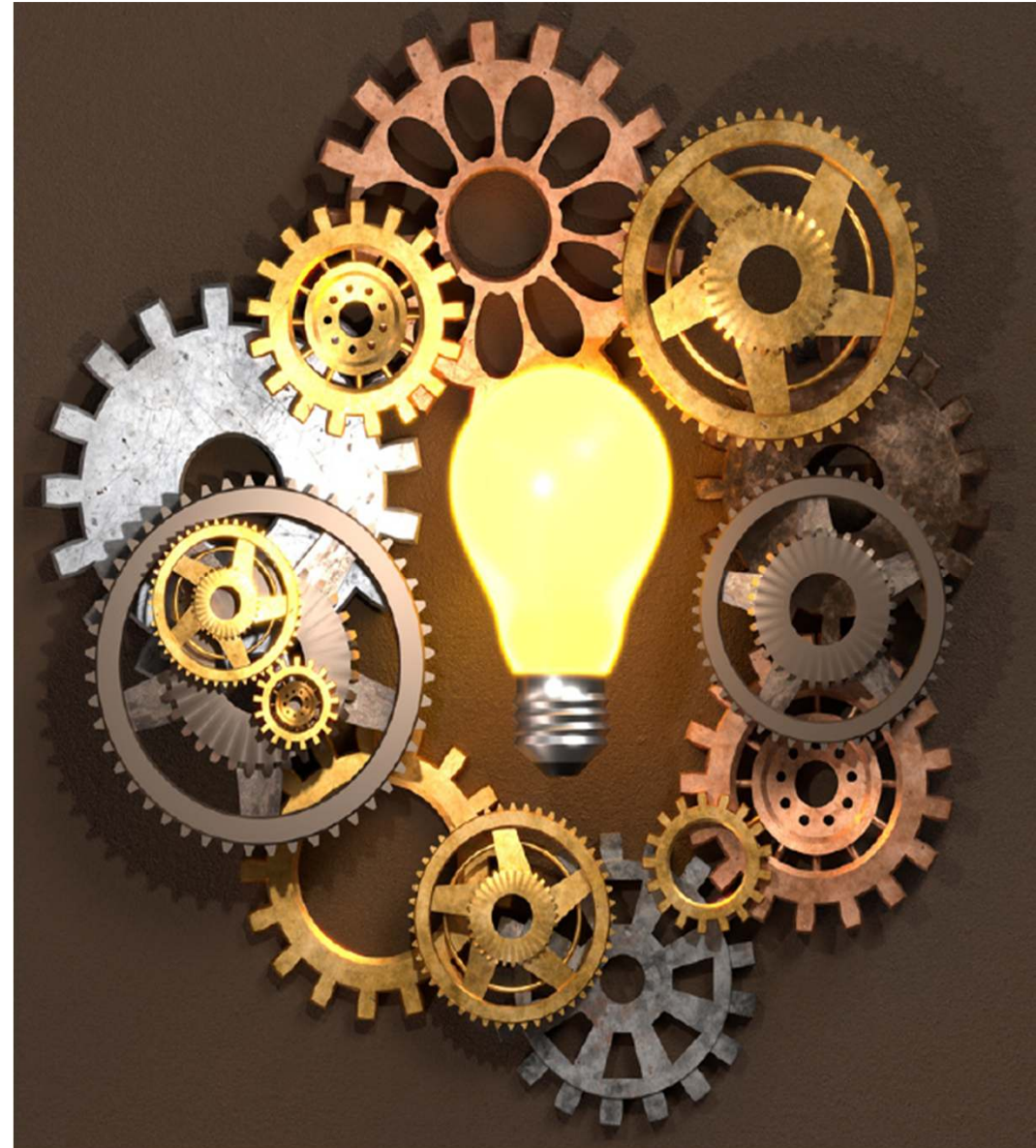
METRICS & STORYTELLING

- What you did

- Why it mattered

- How it benefited the organization

THINK & WRITE

Draft a one-sentence statement describing one tangible impact you've made through your IT work.

Think along the lines of: "I implemented [specific task], resulting in [specific benefit or impact]."

Share in the Chat when you are done.

JOB CREEP: HOW IT HAPPENS

- Lack of Clear Role Definition

- Lack of Metrics, KPIs

- Being busy and sideways demand

- Temporary becomes ongoing

JOB CREEP: HOW TO SPOT IT

- Things are taking longer

- More, ongoing sideways demand

- Tasks not aligned with your Department, role

- Lack of Role Clarity

JOB CREEP: HOW TO TALK ABOUT IT

- Saying no, requesting alternate timelines

- Document it - Bring the data!

- Talk about it - early and often

- Set boundaries and non-negotiables

- Be your own Champion
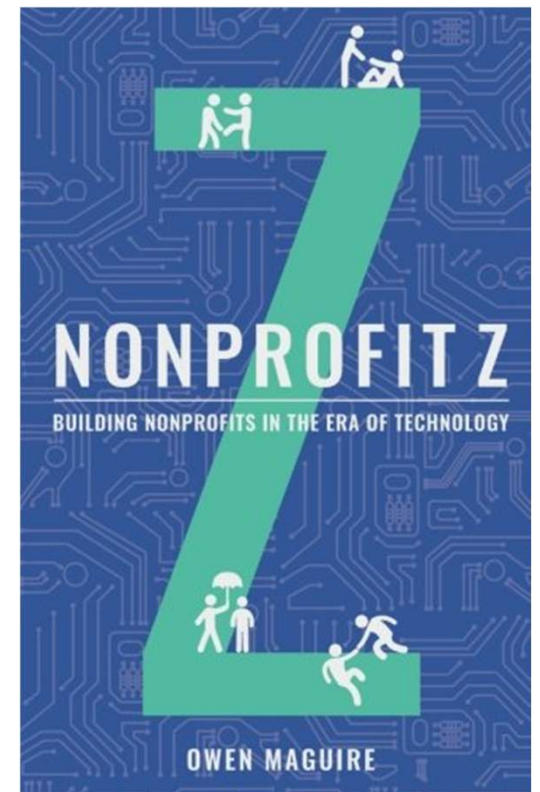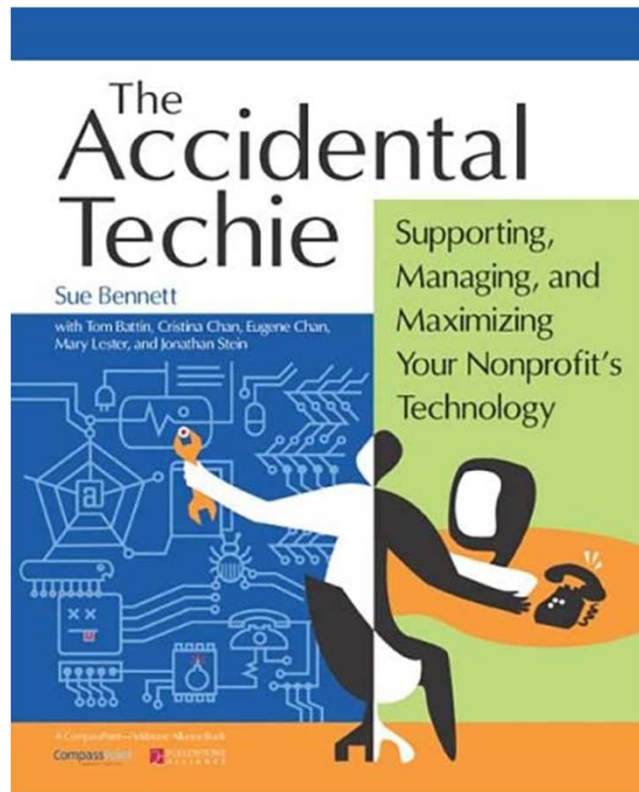
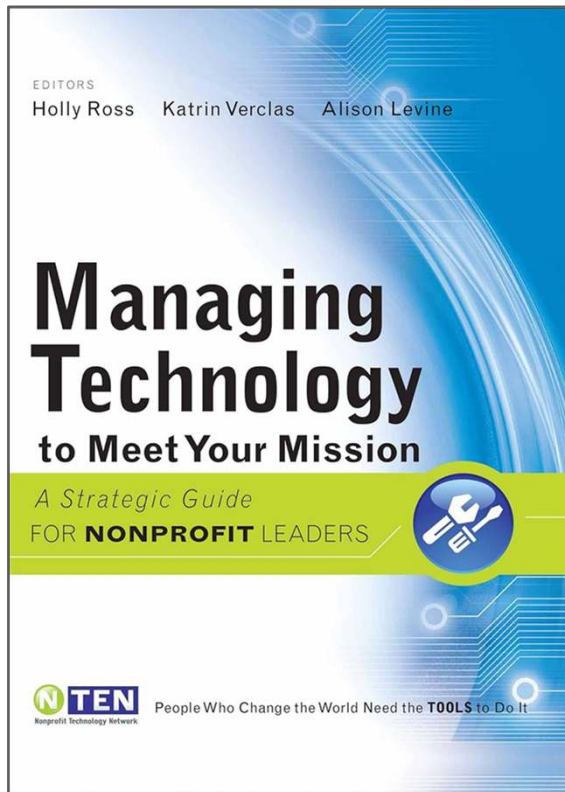- Schedule Progress Reviews/Evaluations

FINAL TIPS FOR LONG-TERM CHANGE

- Do your research - internal and external

- Collaborate and connect + Mentorship

- Share your wins and celebrate them

- Don't be afraid to advocate for yourself! (And know that it's a skill you build - you may not get it right at first, keep practicing)
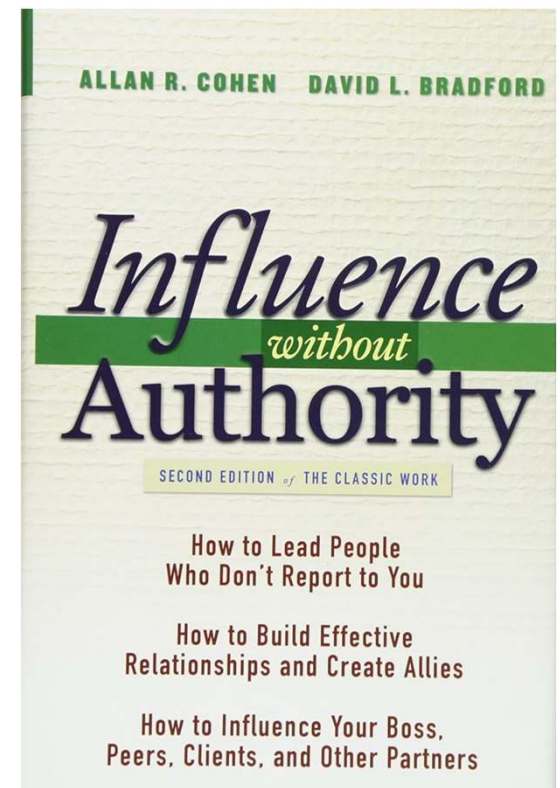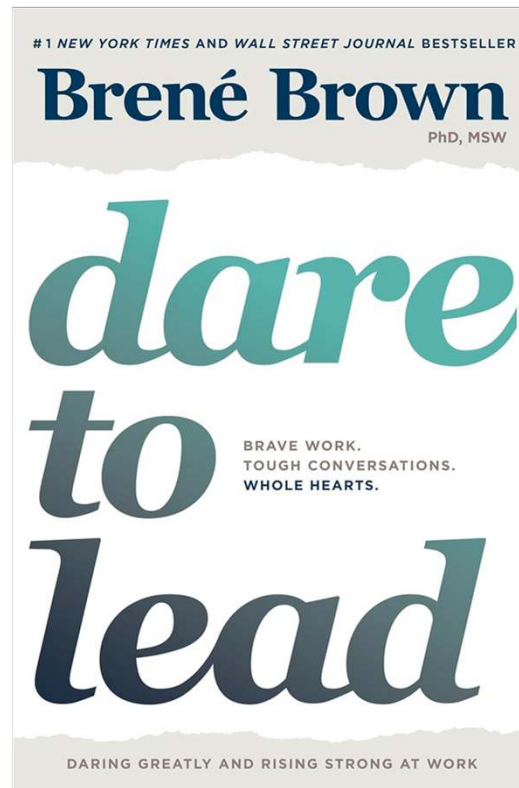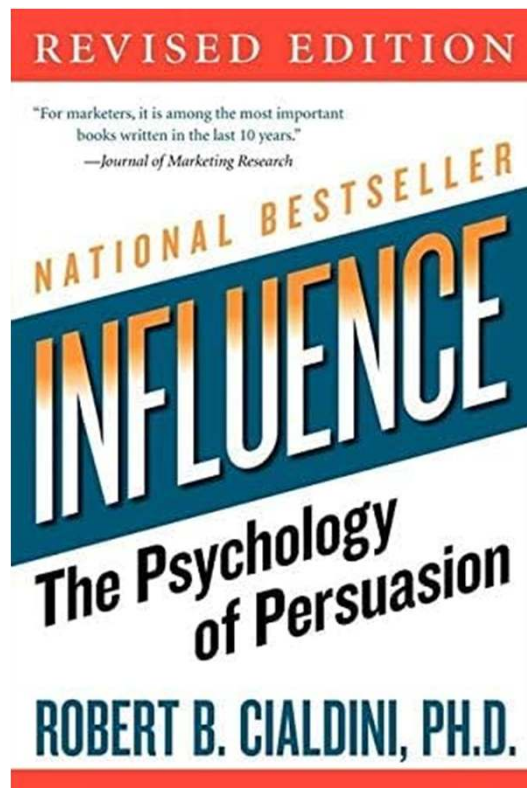
RESOURCES- TECH

Books

Also: literally ANYTHING written by **Beth Kanter**

Managing Technology to Meet Your Mission — A Strategic Guide FOR NONPROFIT LEADERS — Editors Holly Ross, Katrin Verclas, Alison Levine — NTEN, People Who Change the World Need the TOOLS to Do It

The Accidental Techie — Sue Bennett with Tom Battin, Cristina Chan, Eugene Chan, Mary Lester, and Jonathan Stein — Supporting, Managing, and Maximizing Your Nonprofit's Technology

NONPROFIT Z — BUILDING NONPROFITS IN THE ERA OF TECHNOLOGY — OWEN MAGUIRE

RESOURCES- HR/CAREER BUILDING

Books

RESOURCES - TECH

NTEN
- Peer support groups (online and in person)
- Certificate programs
- Online courses

TechSoup
- Online courses
- TechSoup Connect chapters

MORE RESOURCES – TECH

Tech Learning Platforms

- [Coursera](#) – University-level courses on IT, cybersecurity, programming, and data science.
- [edX](#) – Free and paid courses from institutions like Harvard, MIT, and Microsoft.
- [Udemy](#) – Affordable courses on everything from basic IT skills to advanced cybersecurity.
- [LinkedIn Learning](#) – High-quality business and tech courses with certifications.
- [freeCodeCamp](#) – Hands-on coding lessons in web development, Python, and more.
- [Codecademy](#) – Interactive learning for coding, SQL, and data analytics.
- [CS50 by Harvard](#) – One of the best free computer science courses available.

EVEN MORE RESOURCES - TECH

IT, Cybersecurity & Cloud Computing

- Microsoft Learn – Free courses on Microsoft products, Azure, and IT fundamentals.
- Google Cloud Skills Boost – Free Google Cloud and IT certification training.
- Cisco Networking Academy – IT, networking, and cybersecurity training from Cisco.

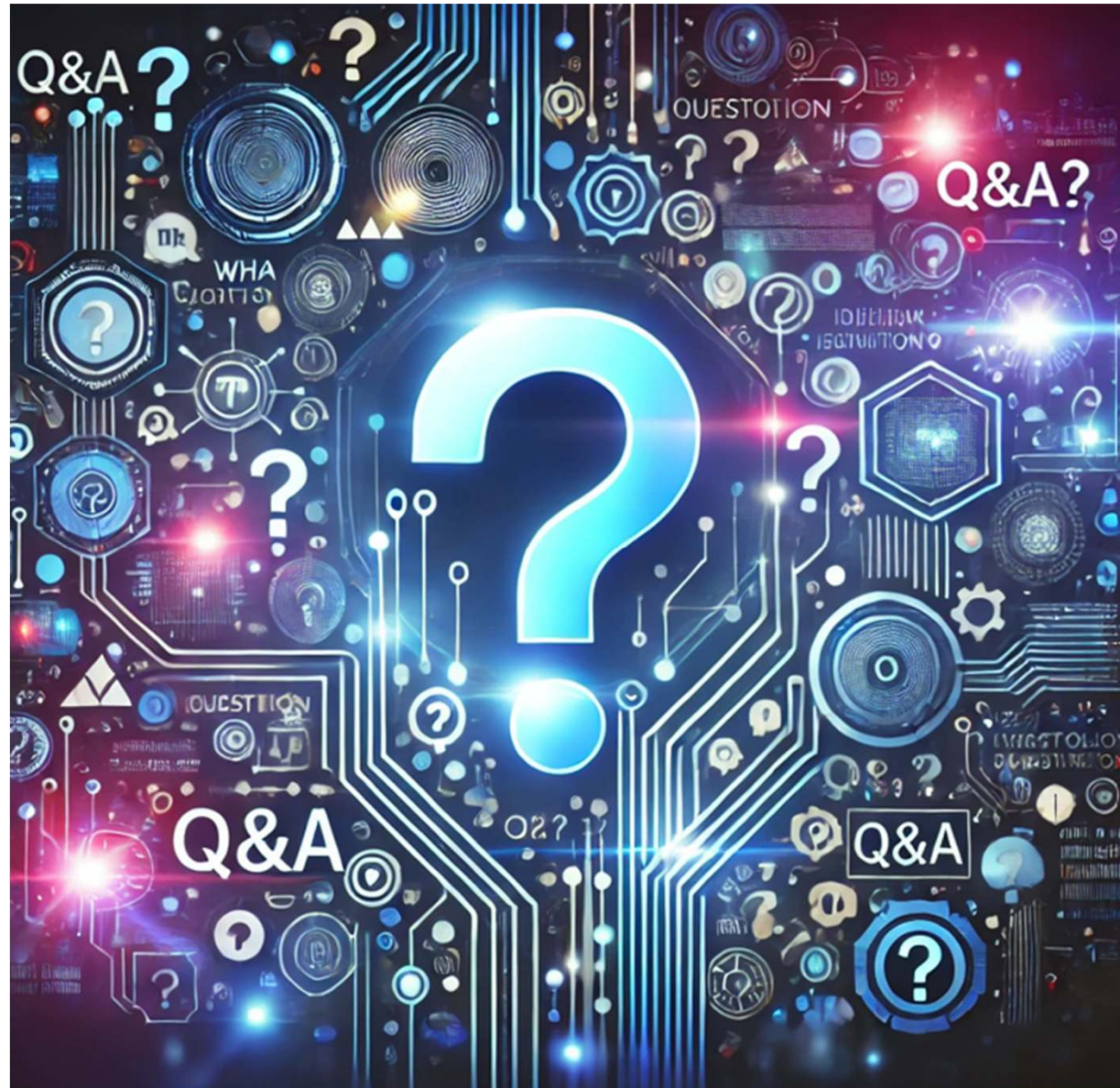# RESOURCES - HR/CAREER BUILDING

Culture Amp's People Geeks
- Slack Channel/Peer support Certificate programs
- Online courses

HackingHR
- Online courses and Conferences
- Community

QUESTIONS?

GET IN TOUCH

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