

JOSH ALLAN DYKSTRA

OPTIMISTIC FUTURIST
AUTHOR
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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BIOGRAPHY



Josh Allan Dykstra is an optimistic futurist, author, and keynote speaker who believes organizations are trying to change the wrong thing.

When people burn out, we teach resilience. When teams resist change, we manage the resistance. When people worry about A.I., we upskill them. When managers become bottlenecks, we give them more leadership training. Sometimes those things help. But after twenty years of trying to make work better, Josh has come to a different conclusion:

If you want change, stop changing the people.

Josh helps leaders look beyond the symptoms they see in their people to understand the systems producing them. His keynotes explore how workload, incentives, decision rights, processes, structures, technology, and culture shape human behavior — and how redesigning those conditions can create better change, better decisions, and better work.

That perspective comes from experience. Josh spent his career moving upstream: from studying human energy, to developing leaders and teams, to building and running a technology company around a radically different way of working. When that company ultimately failed, it pushed him toward an even bigger question: What if we're asking humans to compensate for bad system design far too often?

Over the past twenty years, Josh has worked with organizations employing more than 1 million people including Microsoft, CHANEL, Amazon, Carnival, and Genentech. His thinking has been featured in Fast Company, Forbes, Huffington Post, and Business Insider.

Josh is the author of *Igniting the Invisible Tribe: Designing an Organization That Doesn't Suck*, host of the Hello Tomorrow Podcast, and author of the new book *Work Will Kill Us All: An Optimist's Guide to the Future*.

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THE CHALLENGE + OPPORTUNITY

WE KEEP TRYING TO CHANGE PEOPLE.
WHAT IF WE'RE CHANGING THE WRONG THING?

Organizations are under enormous pressure to change. New technology. New strategies. New structures. New expectations. New ways of working. And when that change gets difficult, we tend to look at the humans.

They're resistant. Burned out. Disengaged. Afraid of A.I. They aren't collaborating. They aren't taking ownership. So we communicate more. Train them. Motivate them. Build resilience. Teach adaptability. Sometimes those things help.

But what if the people aren't the real problem?

Human behavior doesn't happen in a vacuum. It's shaped by workload, incentives, decision rights, information, processes, structures, technology, and culture. When those conditions stay the same, asking people to behave differently can only get us so far.

The opportunity is to stop fixing symptoms — and start redesigning the systems producing them.



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THE TRANSFORMATION

I help leaders stop fixing symptoms and start changing the systems that produce them.

I WILL HELP YOUR GROUP:

- **Find the real problem** — look beneath burnout, resistance, bottlenecks, poor adoption, and other "people problems" to identify what's happening upstream.
- **See the system shaping the behavior** — understand how incentives, workload, decision rights, information, processes, technology, and culture shape what people actually do.
- **Find where change can have the most leverage** — use friction, recurring failures, workarounds, and places where people constantly have to "save the day" as clues to what needs attention.
- **Start changing what they can actually change** — identify where they have influence, choose a system condition worth changing, and run practical experiments that can produce better results now.

SAME PEOPLE. NEW SYSTEM. BETTER RESULTS.



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Genentech · CHANEL · Ghirardelli Chocolate · Carnival · uchealth

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htc · Microsoft · Colorado · Denver Health · USC

Revolution Medicines · Boeing · Kaiser Permanente · noodles & company · Columbia University



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TESTIMONIALS



"Josh's simple, effective framework for boosting productivity across organizations left a lasting impression."
- Team Member, BMO Financial Group

BMO

"A great thought partner and sounding board... Josh understands the challenges of work and of leadership."
- Division Leader, State Of Colorado

COLORADO

"That was the most fun meeting I had all week!"
- Team Leader, Analog Devices

ANALOG DEVICES

"Josh's approach towards work culture revolutionized my thinking." - Team Member, Revolution Medicines

Revolution Medicines

"I've noticed a significant uptick in energy levels."
- Manager, Amazon Web Services

amazon web services

"We have a renewed sense of purpose, team cohesion, and thriving at work."
- Physician, Denver Health

DENVER HEALTH

"I have better mental clarity."
- Nurse, uchealth

uchealth

"A HUGE shift in communication."
- Team Member, Quest Diagnostics

Quest Diagnostics

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A DIFFERENT KIND OF KEYNOTE

REAL-LIFE LEADERSHIP

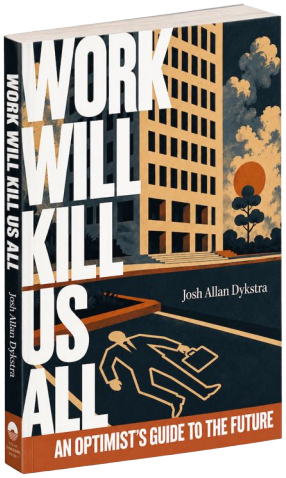
Josh isn't just a speaker. He's been a tech founder, CEO, consultant, and advisor to C-Suite leaders. Over twenty years, his work has reached organizations employing more than a million people.

A PERSPECTIVE PEOPLE REMEMBER

If you want change, stop changing the people. Josh shows audiences how to look beneath recurring people problems and change the conditions producing them.

PROVOCATIVE. FUNNY. HUMAN.

A former performing musician ("rockstar") and radio DJ, Josh brings big ideas to life with stories, wit, audience interaction... and just the right amount of troublemaking.



JOSH'S NEW BOOK

YOUR PEOPLE ARE *NOT* LEAVING THEIR BIG QUESTIONS ABOUT WORK OUTSIDE THE OFFICE DOOR.

A.I., jobs, the economy, and the future of work are already creating ambient stress and distraction inside organizations. Leaders who help their people understand what's actually happening — and give them a meaningful role in building what comes next — can turn that anxiety into clarity, connection, and agency.

Bring the conversation to your team. Josh offers bulk books and free team Discussion Guides to help people explore and learn together.

LEARN MORE AT

WWKUA.com

Josh has delivered keynotes, facilitated workshops, and led leadership retreats and other learning experiences with thousands of people over the last twenty years. For more topics, videos, and testimonials, please visit joshallan.com.

WATCH JOSH'S SPEAKER DEMO



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KEYNOTE TOPICS OVERVIEW

WHAT DOES YOUR GROUP NEED RIGHT NOW?

CHANGE

If You Want Change, Stop Changing People

Most change efforts focus on getting people to behave differently. Josh shows why lasting change starts by redesigning the systems that shape how people work.

FULL TALK DESCRIPTION ↗

LEADERSHIP

The Work Of Leaders Is Systems

Great leaders don't "manage" people. Josh shows how leaders can redesign the conditions around work to ensure people can decide, adapt, and perform better.

FULL TALK DESCRIPTION ↗

FUTURE

Hello Tomorrow: A Season Of Innovation

Challenging times of disruption can become seasons of extraordinary innovation. Josh shows how to move beyond fear and build what comes next.

FULL TALK DESCRIPTION ↗

A.I.

Leading With Wisdom In the Age of A.I.

A.I. makes intelligence abundant — but intelligence isn't wisdom. Josh shows you where humans matter most and how to redesign work around that edge.

FULL TALK DESCRIPTION ↗



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KEYNOTE TOPIC

CHANGE

A KEYNOTE BY OPTIMISTIC FUTURIST JOSH ALLAN DYKSTRA

IF YOU WANT CHANGE, STOP CHANGING PEOPLE

Your organization needs to change. New technology. New strategies. New structures. New ways of working. But when change gets difficult, we tend to look at the humans. They're resistant. Burned out. Disengaged. Afraid of A.I. So we communicate more. Train them. Motivate them. Build resilience.

But what if we're trying to change the wrong thing?

In this provocative and practical keynote, Josh Allan Dykstra challenges the assumption that when people aren't behaving the way we need them to, the intervention should begin with the people. Drawing from twenty years of work inside organizations — and his new book, *Work Will Kill Us All* — Josh shows how "people problems" are often signals of something happening upstream.

Systems shape behavior. If we want change that sticks, we need to understand, and change, the conditions producing it.

YOUR GROUP WILL LEAVE KNOWING HOW TO:

- **Stop wasting energy on the wrong problems** — Recognize that resistance, burnout, poor adoption, and other "people problems" are clues pointing upstream so you can address what's actually producing them.
- **Find where change will have the biggest impact** — Follow friction, bottlenecks, workarounds, and places people constantly "save the day" to find where relatively small changes can make work dramatically better.
- **Make change easier instead of forcing it** — Stop asking people to "try harder" inside conditions working against them. Change the conditions so better behaviors make sense and are easier to sustain.
- **Know where to start** — Find your edge of influence and identify the rules, processes, rewards, decisions, or experiments you can actually change without waiting for the whole organization to transform.

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KEYNOTE TOPIC

LEADERSHIP

A KEYNOTE BY OPTIMISTIC FUTURIST JOSH ALLAN DYKSTRA

THE WORK OF LEADERS IS SYSTEMS: MOVING BEYOND "MANAGEMENT"

Organizations want people who take initiative, make good decisions, adapt quickly, and take ownership. But many workplaces are still built around permission, approval, escalation, supervision, and decisions flowing upward. Then we wonder why people wait to be told what to do.

The problem isn't your people.

In this thought-provoking and practical keynote, Josh Allan Dykstra challenges leaders to move beyond traditional "management" and see leadership through a systems lens. Drawing from twenty years of organizational work — including building and running his own self-managing company — audiences learn to redesign conditions so people can make better decisions, take greater ownership, and solve more problems without "waiting for the boss."

Because the goal of leadership isn't to become indispensable. It's to build an organization that can succeed when you're not in the room.

YOUR GROUP WILL LEAVE KNOWING HOW TO:

- **Diagnose the system behind the behavior** — Look beyond individual performance to identify the decision rights, incentives, information flows, and culture producing recurring problems.
- **Move decisions closer to the work** — Reduce unnecessary approvals and bottlenecks by putting authority where the best information lives, so teams move faster without waiting for managers.
- **Create autonomy without chaos** — Use clear purpose, boundaries, shared information, and decision systems to give people the context they need to exercise good judgment.
- **Build ownership instead of dependency** — Identify where management practices unintentionally teach people to wait, escalate, or seek permission and redesign them so more people can think, decide, and lead.

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KEYNOTE TOPIC

FUTURE

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HELLO TOMORROW: TURNING DISRUPTION INTO A SEASON OF INNOVATION

Times of disruption put enormous pressure on organizations — and the humans inside them. When everything feels urgent, people narrow their focus, protect what already works, and react to what's directly in front of them.

But disruption can also expose the assumptions, systems, and ways of working that no longer fit the world we're entering, creating unique moments in time where conditions are ripe for creativity and reinvention.

In this inspiring and practical keynote, Josh shows leaders and teams how to use these moments as openings for innovation — protecting human energy, making wiser decisions under pressure, and getting clear about the future they want to build.

Our goal isn't simply to survive disruption. It's to use cycles of disruption to create an even better tomorrow.

YOUR GROUP WILL LEAVE KNOWING HOW TO:

- **Discover what disruption is revealing** — Look beyond the immediate chaos to identify assumptions, systems, and ways of working that no longer serve the organization.
- **Protect the energy innovation requires** — Recognize when constant urgency is draining teams and make smarter choices about where attention and effort create the most value.
- **Create space for wiser decisions** — Challenge assumptions, separate genuine priorities from noise, and make better decisions when the path ahead isn't obvious.
- **Build backward from a better future** — Define the future you actually want, then identify the experiments, decisions, and system changes you can begin making now.

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KEYNOTE TOPIC

A.I.

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THE HUMAN EDGE: LEADING WITH WISDOM IN THE AGE OF A.I.

For most of human history, organizations paid a premium for intelligence: analyzing information, solving problems, generating ideas, and producing answers.

A.I. is changing that. Technology can now give us more answers, capability, and speed than ever before. But intelligence isn't wisdom. Wisdom isn't simply knowing what can be done. It's knowing what *should* be done.

In this energetic and practical keynote, Josh cuts through A.I. hype and A.I. panic to demonstrate what becomes more valuable as intelligence becomes abundant — and how leaders can redesign work around the Human Edge: judgment, context, purpose, and restraint.

Because the organizations that win the A.I. age won't simply have the most intelligence, but the wisdom to know what to do with it.

YOUR GROUP WILL LEAVE KNOWING HOW TO:

- **Make better decisions with A.I.** — Know when to trust the intelligence A.I. provides... and when human judgment, context, and restraint need to take the lead.
- **Get better answers by asking better questions** — Use A.I. to expand thinking instead of simply accelerating assumptions, bad questions, and premature conclusions.
- **Avoid automating the wrong work** — Reconnect tasks to the outcomes they're supposed to create before using A.I. to make the wrong things faster and cheaper.
- **Make human work more valuable** — Redesign work so A.I. handles more of what machines do well while people spend more time on judgment, creativity, connection, and purpose.

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LET'S TALK

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Text for immediate availability and fee info!

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