



# Geoff Colvin

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Senior Editor at Large, Fortune  
Bestselling Author

# **The Future Isn't Waiting: Confront Reality Now**

Geoff Colvin

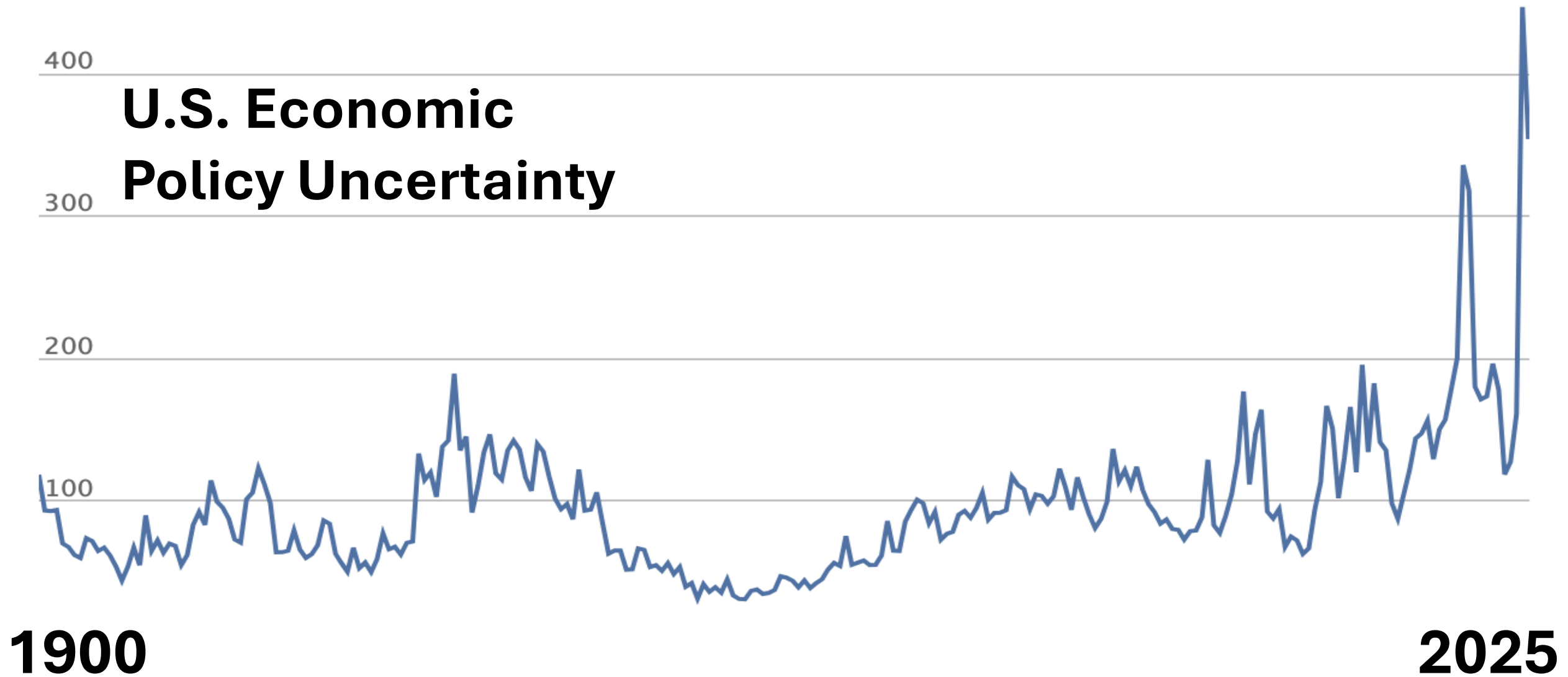
2025 HDA Annual Board & Membership Meeting

9 September 2025



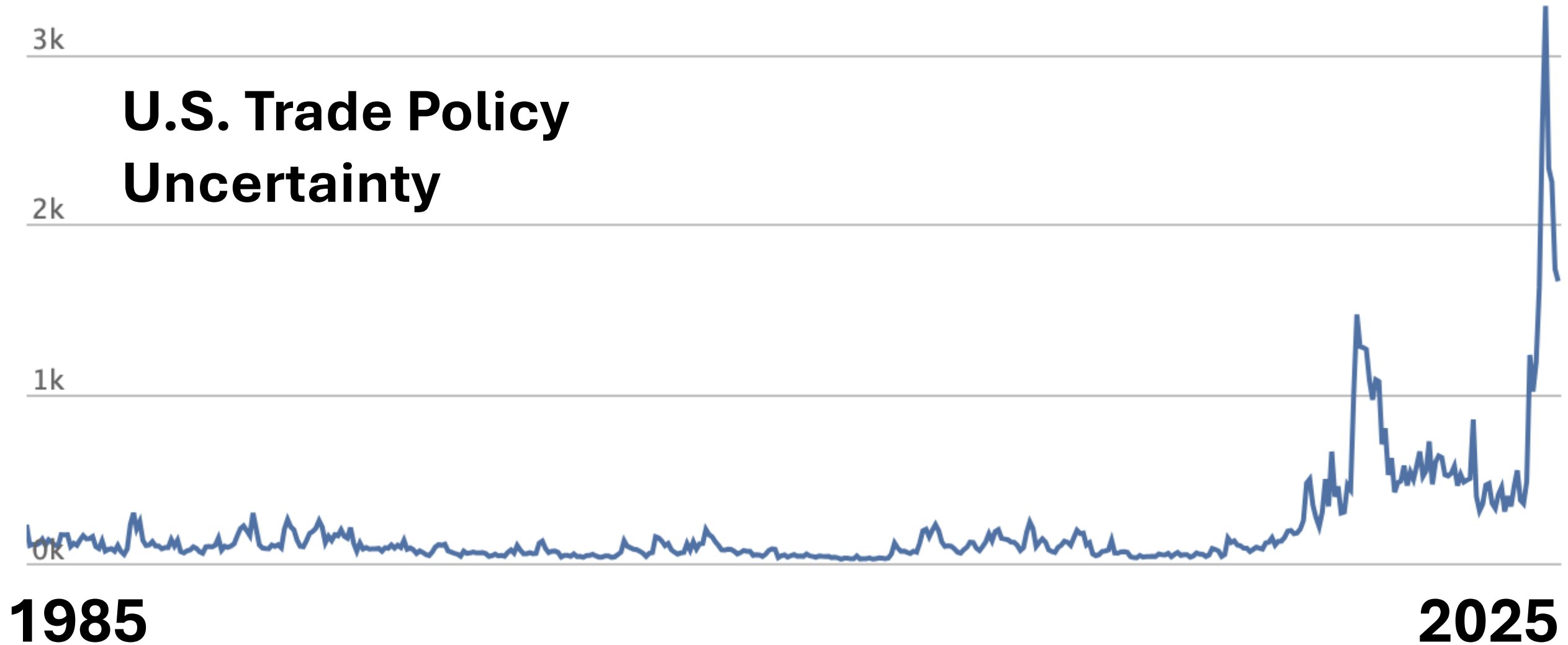
**Headlines:  
Sept. 9, 2025**

# Uncertainty: It really is unprecedented.



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## U.S. Trade Policy Uncertainty





# Policy - The realities we must confront

- From all three branches of government



# Policy - The realities we must confront

- From all three branches of government
- Tariffs





# Policy - The realities we must confront

- From all three branches of government
- Tariffs
- Immigration







“I don’t want people to know exactly what I’m doing – or thinking. I like being unpredictable. It keeps them off balance.”

# AI - The realities we must confront

- Speed of advance



# AI - The realities we must confront

- Speed of advance
- Potential black swans





# AI - The realities we must confront

- Speed of advance
- Potential black swans
- Your employees





# **Humanity: The difference between high-value workers and low-value workers**

**“What I most need now are people who are empathetic and collaborative....”**

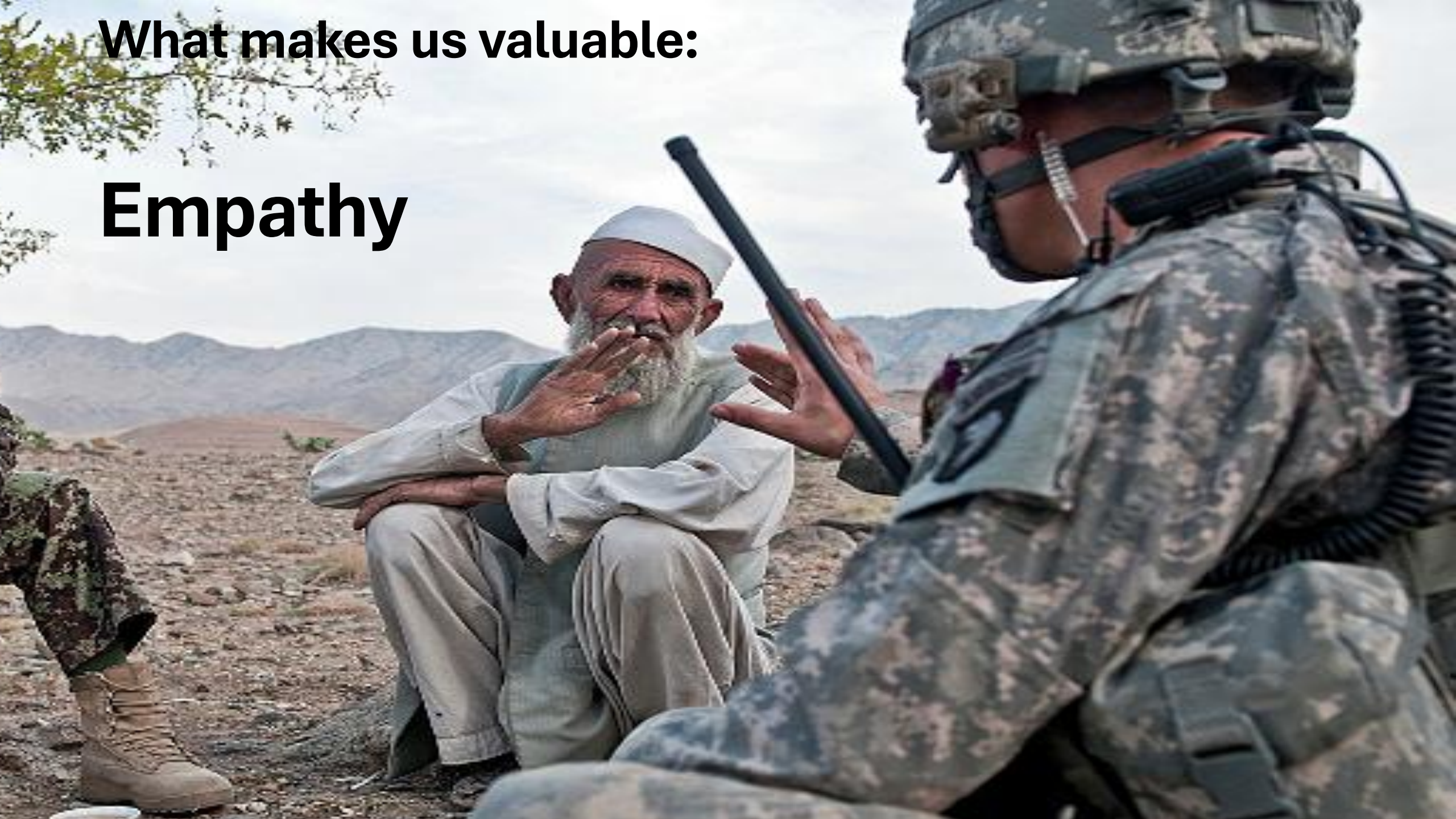
-CIO of one of the world's largest retailers

“...I can't have a great AI architect who has to be locked in a room.”



**What makes us valuable:**

**Empathy**





# What makes us valuable: **Storytelling**







What makes  
us valuable:

Creative problem-  
solving together

The magic of in-person interaction

**A magic happens like this...**





The magic of in-person interaction

**...and not like this**



The magic of in-person interaction

**It's deeper than we realize**





# **Why leaders fail to confront reality**

# Why leaders fail to confront reality: Ego

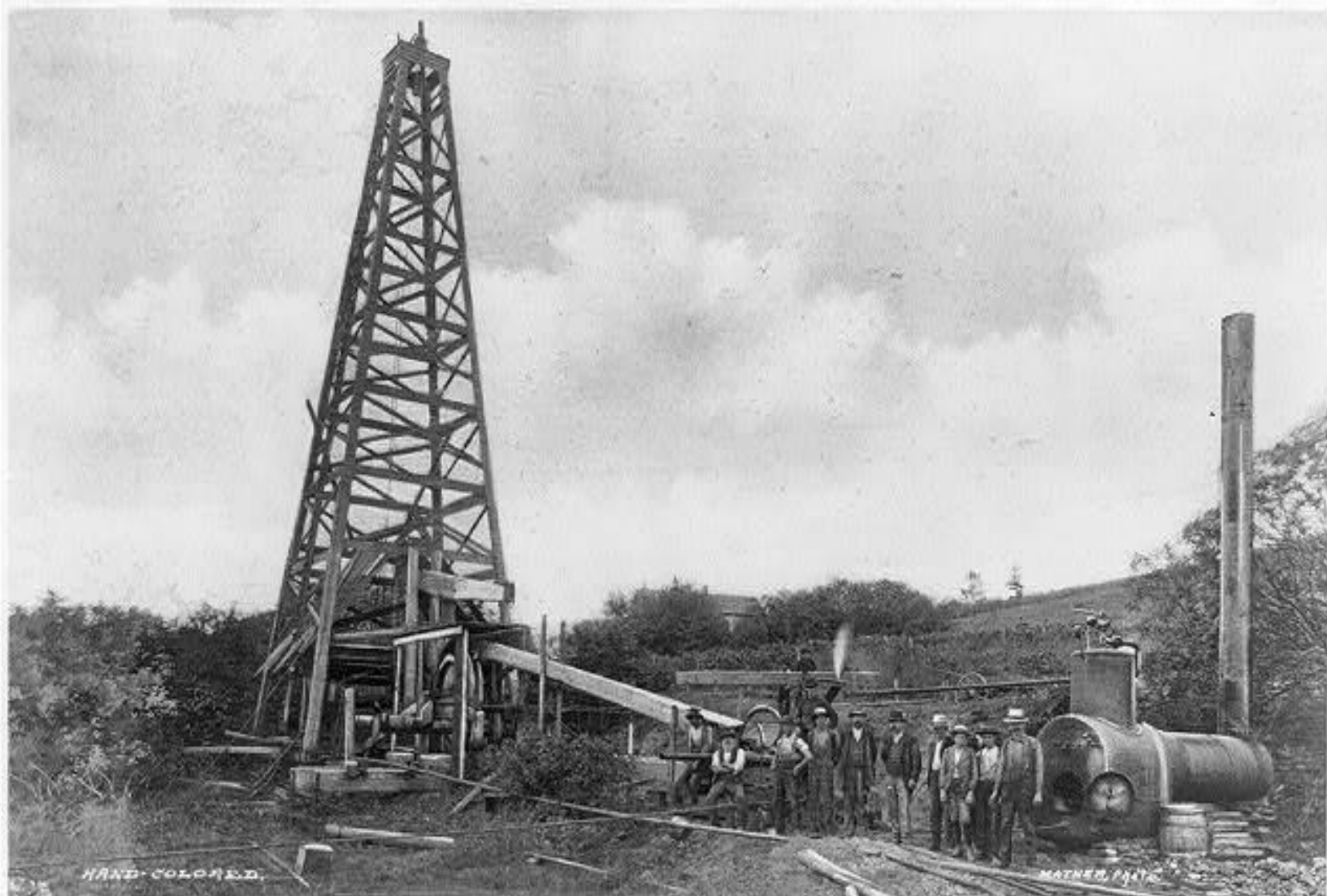




# Why leaders fail to confront reality: Culture and Incentives



# Why leaders fail to confront reality: Faulty Logic





# **Why leaders fail to confront reality: Faulty governance and systems**



# Changing the business model: Examples from the covid pandemic







Creating value in new ways – **business model.**

RITOS, TACOS & SALADS

WHAT GOES INSIDE

FEATURED ITEM

KID'S ME

RITO 4

CHICKEN

1.99

155-755

S 350-685\*

D 160-825\*

SOFRITAS   
VEGGIE

1.99  
6.80  
6.80

\*Calorie Range

CHEESE OR SOUR CREAM 100-115\*  
GUACAMOLE (ADD 2.05) 230\*

\*Calorie Range

For carnivores and vegans alike, try it on your burrito, bowl, tacos or salad.

145 Calories

YOUR  
y three ing  
crispy corn,  
th fruit or k

CHEESE QUE  
With a side of rice an  
or kid's chips, and a d

Kid's Drinks: Organic M





Creating value in new ways - **business model.**





Creating value in new ways - **business model.**



Creating value in new ways - **business model.**





**Winners confront the new reality  
faster and more fully.**



Winners stop protecting yesterday and **create tomorrow.**



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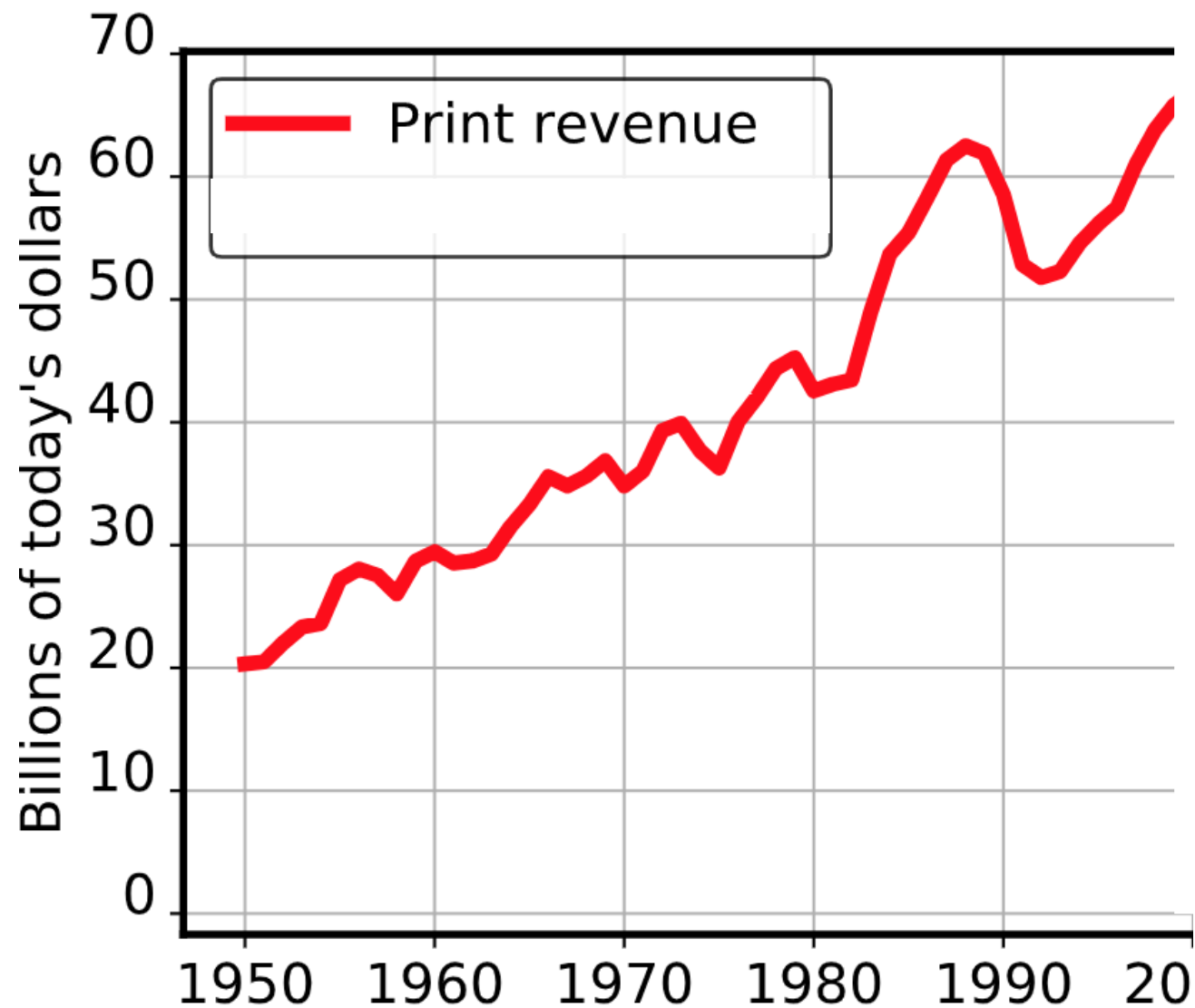
**Winners summon the courage to act.**





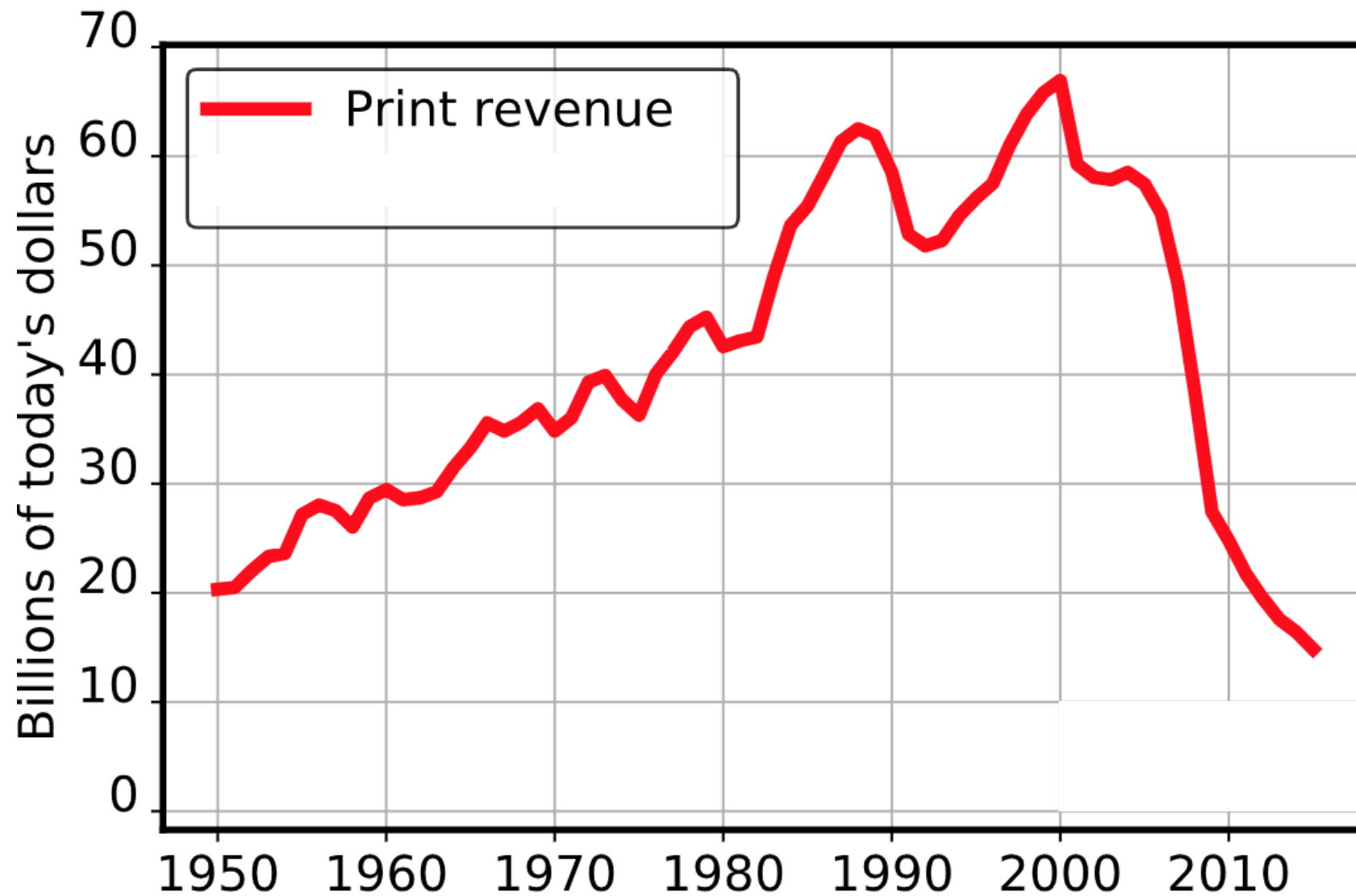
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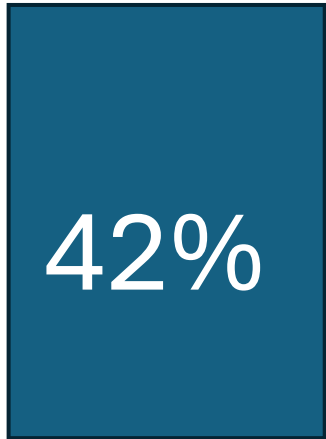


# The value of optimism



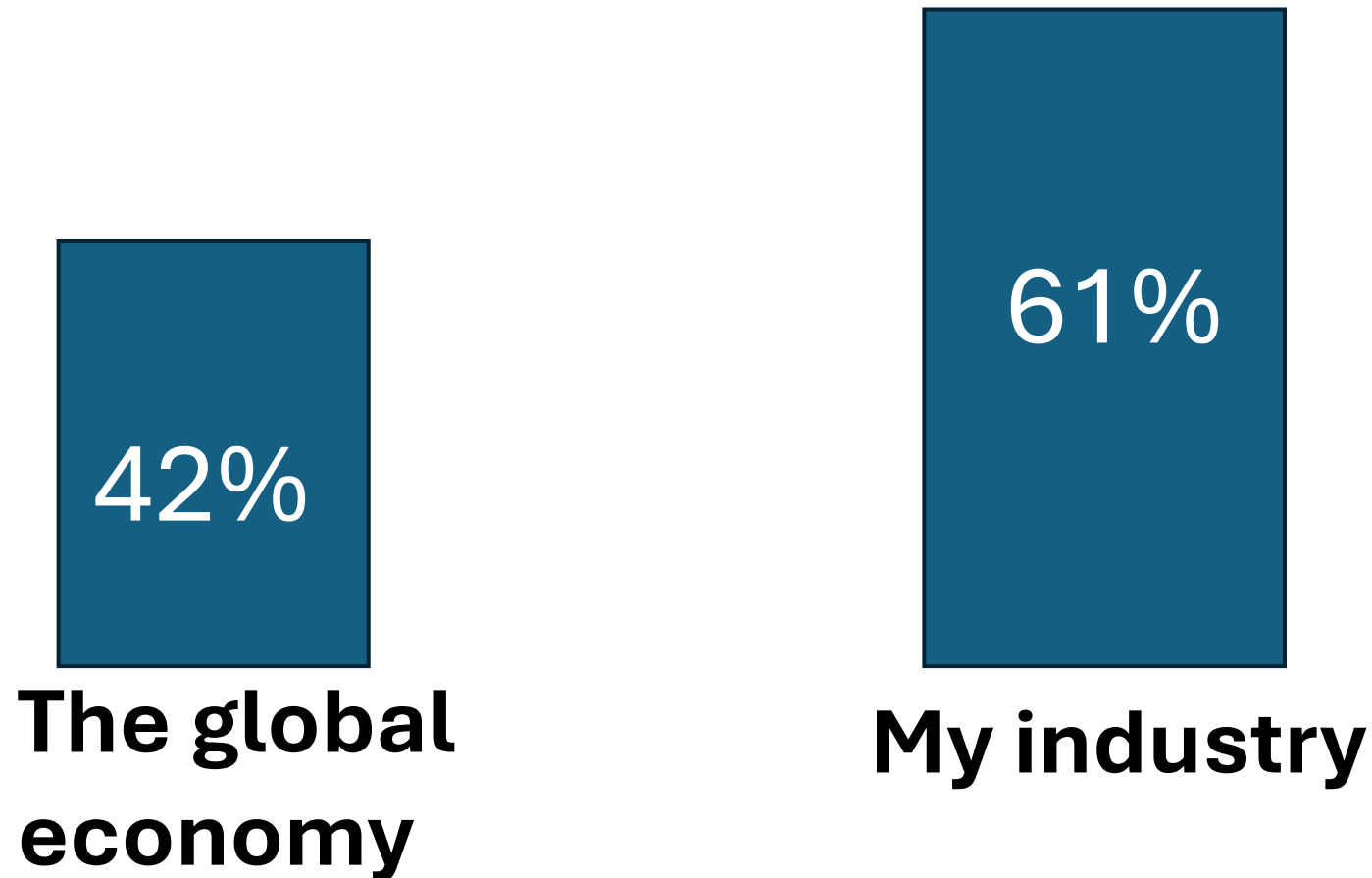


# **CEOs: I'm optimistic or very optimistic about the performance of...**



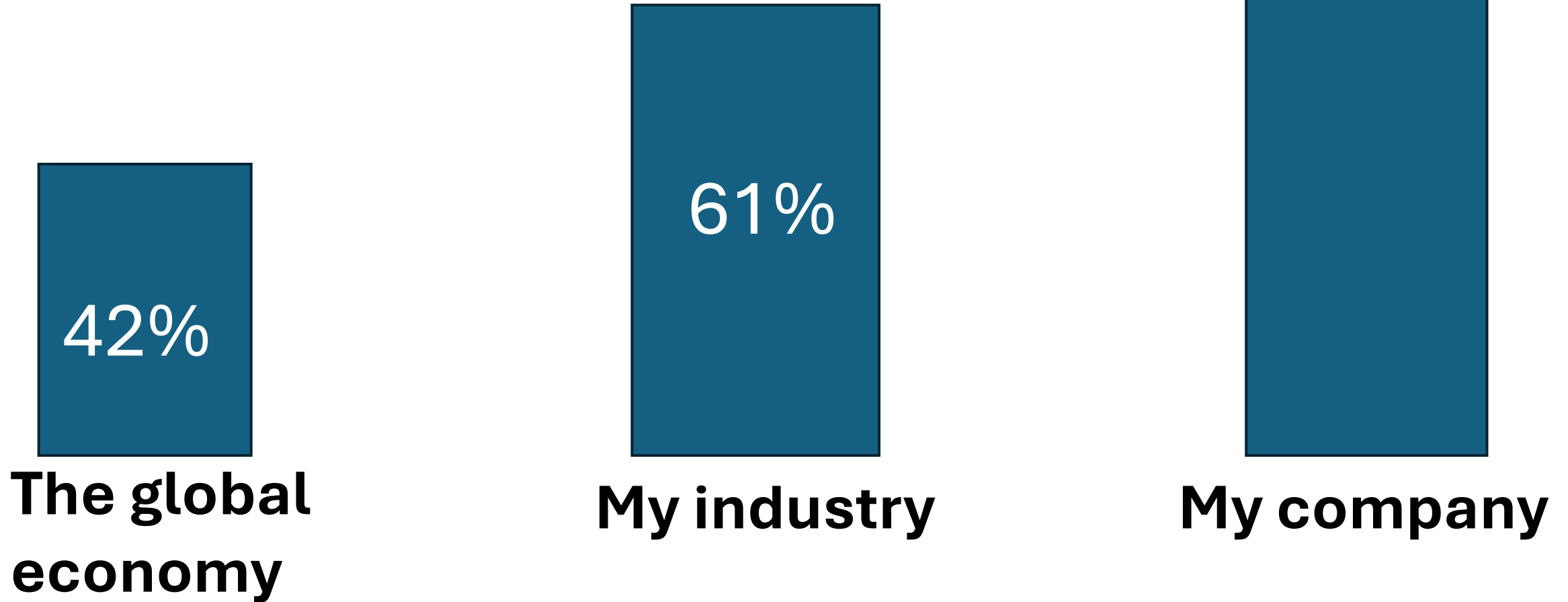
**The global  
economy**

# **CEOs: I'm optimistic or very optimistic about the performance of...**





# **CEOs: I'm optimistic or very optimistic about the performance of...**



**Optimism really is good for  
you and your organization.**

**Bottom line:**

**Winners – the optimists – see this tumultuous era not as a threat but as a giant opportunity.**



Tumultuous times are when **the leaders change.**



An aerial view of a cycling race on a narrow, paved road. Several cyclists are visible, some in the lead and others following. Spectators are lined up on both sides of the road, some standing and some sitting on the ground. The road is flanked by a steep, rocky hillside on the right and a grassy area on the left. The scene is captured from a high angle, showing the shadows of the cyclists and spectators on the road.

30.0 KM	LEADERS	CHASE 1	+2:29	CHASE 2	+5:56	YELLOW GROUP	+6:15	OFF THE BACK	+7:56
4:07:27	2 RIDERS	M. HIRSCHI		2 RIDERS		R. URAN			

**TOUR DE FRANCE**  
**STAGE WINS**

**STAGE 4** Primož Roglič Team Jumbo - Visma SLO

USF vs #7 NOTRE DAME  
SAT 2:30<sup>ET</sup> on **USA**

# Stay optimistic!

## World GDP per capita In constant dollars



# Talent Is Overrated

What *Really* Separates  
World-Class Performers from  
Everybody Else



GEOFF COLVIN

Senior Editor at Large, FORTUNE

# HUMANS ARE UNDERRATED

WHAT HIGH ACHIEVERS KNOW  
THAT BRILLIANT MACHINES NEVER WILL



GEOFF COLVIN

Bestselling Author of **TALENT IS OVERRATED**