

Executive Edge - April 2025

This month, we are thrilled to announce that [Strategy2Growth](#) is partnering with the non-profit organization [CEOMentors](#) to share our extensive business experience with the next generation of leaders. CEOMentors' mission is to empower and guide emerging business leaders by offering them the resources, mentorship, and opportunities to enhance their skills, drive innovation, and lead with integrity. Our team will continue to stay on top of industry trends and carefully curate the most valuable articles for our subscribers.



[Lessons from the Woman who Couldn't be Stopped](#)

It easy to forget that large, successful companies with an enduring brand were once small, struggling, and unknown to nearly all but their founders. For example, Estee Lauder, founder of the iconic company that bears her name and is synonymous with cosmetics.

A one-page article from the Farnum Street " Outliers Blog provides a quick overview of how she took her products **from a kitchen in Queens, NY to the shelves at Harrod's in London**. There is also a link to an 80 minute deep dive podcast (highly recommended) which explores **how she built a company that endures decades after her death**.

Check out these ten "[Lessons from Estee' Lauder](#)" and you'll see why Farnum Street founder Shane Parrish calls her "**the woman who couldn't, who wouldn't, be stopped**."

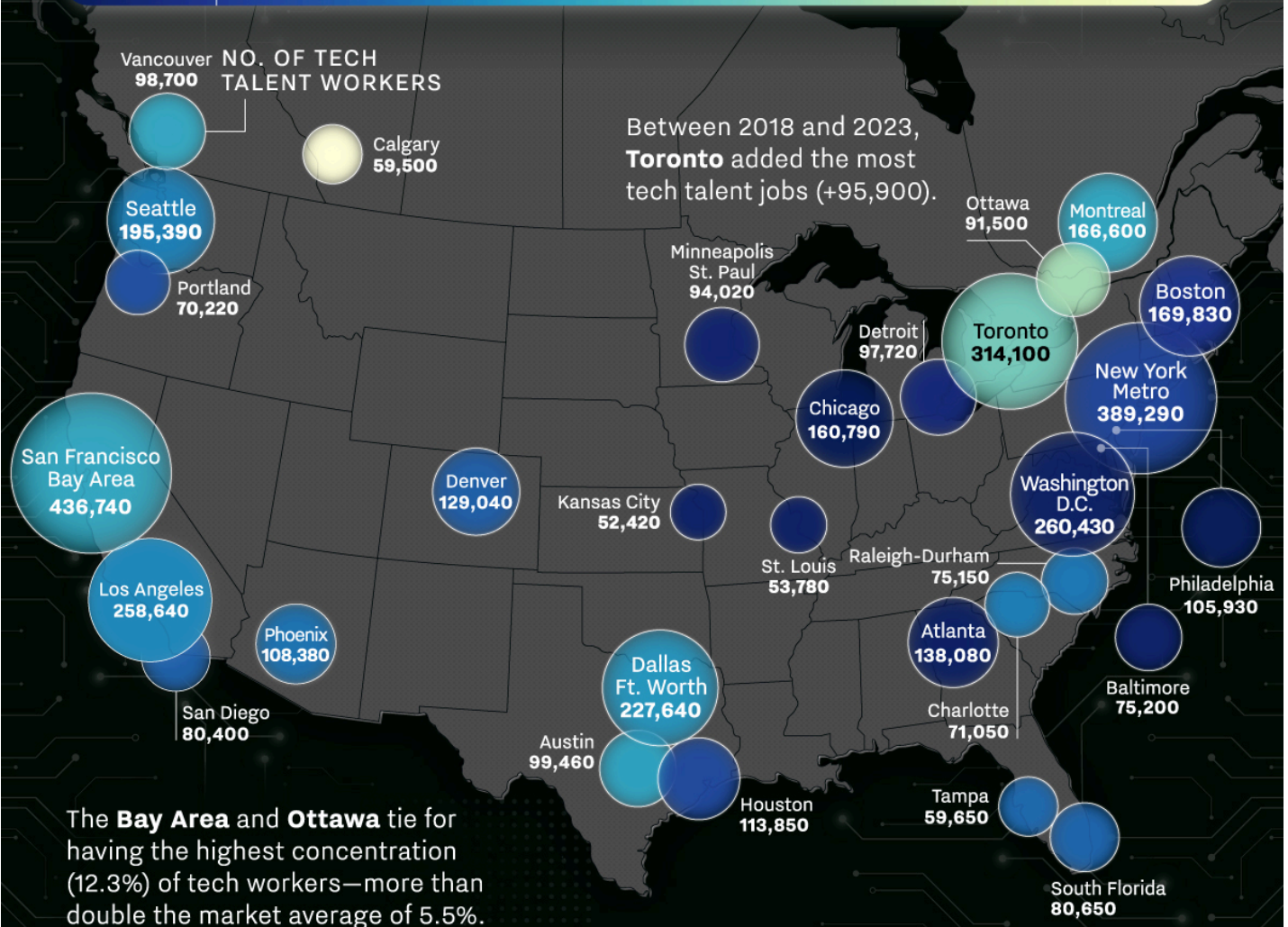
Top Tech Talent Hubs

IN NORTH AMERICA

CHANGE IN NO. OF TECH JOBS (2018–2023)

-9.5% 0%

+78.1%



Source: CBRE

Data is for 2023.

COLLABORATORS RESEARCH + WRITING Kayla Zhu | ART DIRECTION + DESIGN Sabrina Lam



Where Data Tells the Story



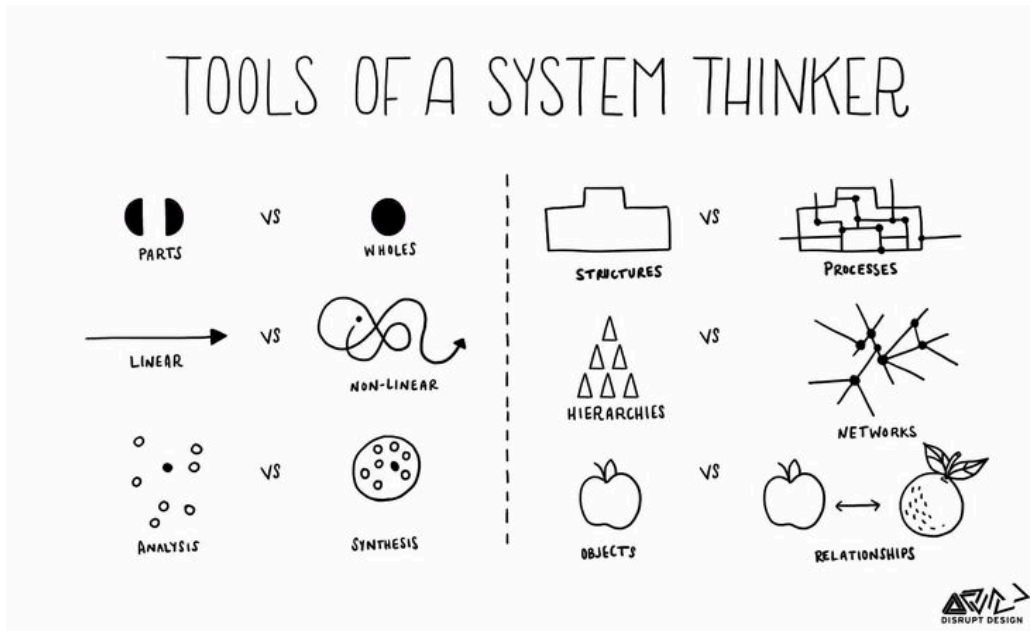
Talent and the Technology Map

The introduction of any technology has what are called “second order” effects; in other words, **impacts beyond their initial effect**. For example, the Bessemer process made steel economical in the 1800 but also made it possible to have buildings more than a few stories, which made skyscrapers possible and which in turn remade American cities. The introduction of air conditioning less than a

century ago make Washington DC a year-round city (this may not be a good thing) and spurred the economic development of the sunbelt.

More recent advances and events are no exception. **"Multiple, massive, simultaneous once-in-a-generation changes in technology, demographics, climate and more are reshaping what Americans do for work, where they settle and where industries thrive. A field guide to the immediate future."**

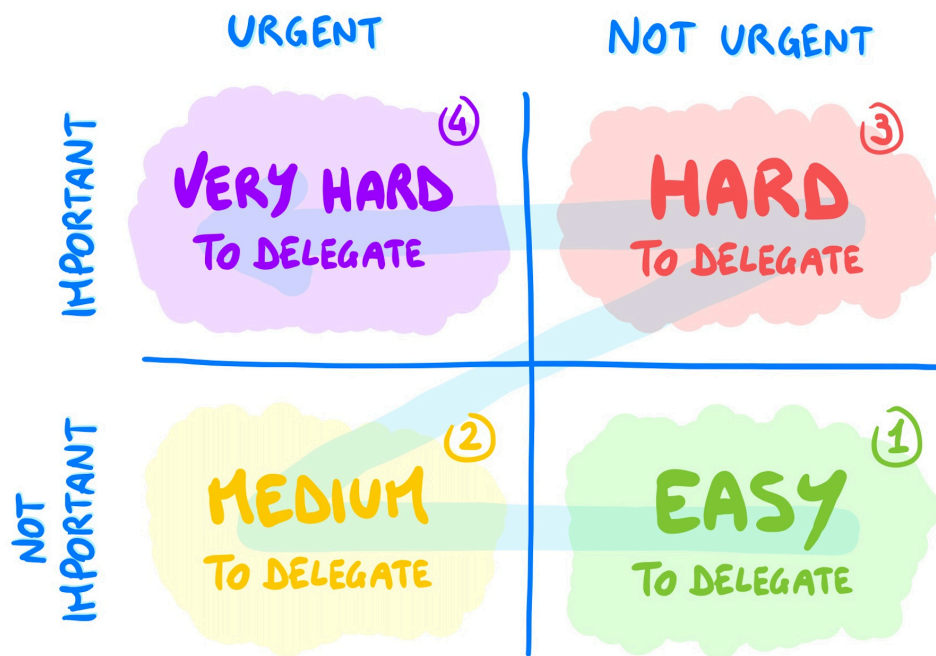
This short article should be **read by every C-Level executive as they plan for where to be and who to hire.** [How Talent And Technology Are Redrawing America's Economic Map](#)



A Toolkit for Thinkers

One way we are different from the animals is that we can "think about thinking." That sounds easy until you try it and discover that **you don't have framework for thinking about your own thinking ...or helping your team think about their thought processes.**

A recent short HBR article suggests that when leaders say " 'Person X really needs to learn to think critically'"what they actually meant was that Person X seemed to not be thinking *at all.*" The article suggests you "think about thinking" by understanding "[The 4 Types of Thinking Leaders Need to Practice—and Teach.](#)"



Overcoming the Primary Executive Risk - Delegation

We rise in our careers by getting things done. The paradox of the ascent is that the higher we rise the more we must depend on others to perform the work we are ultimately responsible for. The willingness and ability to delegate may be the most essential skill to attain the C-Suite. The inability, or unwillingness to do this has **short circuited more than one career**. But getting work done through others requires that we trust in their intent and ability; in short, **executives must take the risk of delegation for their companies and for themselves to succeed.**

A short HBR article [How to Get Better at Delegating](#) offers a roadmap for both new and veteran executives. Peter Drucker once remarked that in organizations, **the "bottle neck is always at the top of the bottle."** Awareness of your willingness and ability to delegate and intention to master this fundamental core competency will determine how narrow or wide, and how high or low, the bottleneck is in your organization. As important as it is to delegate, **it's equally important to avoid the trap of encouraging, unintentionally, your subordinates to delegate to you.** To avoid this, read another classic HBR article ["Who's Got the Monkey?"](#)



In Defense of Ostriches

They are not the most beautiful of birds, they can't fly, and they stick their heads in the ground when threatened.... **Or do they?** The Presser Group speaks to Vistage executives about asset protection across the US. This recent blog post from their site explains **what ostriches are really doing when they stick their heads in the sand....and why you should emulate them under certain circumstances.**

Check out a few enlightening thoughts about [The Proverbial Ostrich](#).



Overcoming Blindspots in Decision Making

When it comes to making decisions, we all have built-in biases. These **biases can stall, skew, or deny the kind of clear-sighted decisions that are at the heart of strategic management.** To effectively tie strategy to value creation, management should make tangible efforts to overcome these blindspots. The

list of best practices for decision-making is long and can be daunting, but executives can begin by recognizing four foundational biases and taking time-tested steps to address them. McKinsey & Company offers a [primer on the most common decision-making challenges](#), along with some potential remedies to **turn good ideas into value-creating actions**.



Another Leadership Lesson from Steve Jobs

The late Steve Jobs was not known for his sense of humor ...and he could be a very difficult person to work for. But **he appreciated humor and on occasion could employ it to significant effect as a leader**. Can you?

A short article from Inc Magazine recounts **Jobs' extremely effective use of humor on January 9, 2007**, when he introduced the iPhone at the annual MacWorld conference. He didn't utilize the timeless set up: **"an iPhone walks into a bar,"** but **his use of humor to introduce not just a new phone, but a new way of computing, was very effective**.

Humor is a vital tool for leaders because **it creates connection and makes people feel safe**. That's a pretty important consideration when **introducing a new product or asking your team or customers to take risk**. A one page article in Inc Magazine shares how "[This 18-Year-Old Steve Jobs Lesson Will Instantly Make You a More Effective Leader](#)".



A Navy SEAL Teaches the Art of Prioritization

We spend so much time and energy figuring out **how** to do things, but maybe we should be figuring out what **ought** to be done.

In a one-page article former Navy Seal Andrew Pence writes that "Your time and energy are finite, so it is imperative to have **absolute clarity on what things are important versus those that are simply urgent**." Check out "[The Art of Prioritization from a Navy Seal](#)" from Chief Executive Magazine, which is excerpted from his book co-authored with a former of NBA Player and a CEO: "[Bullets, Basketballs, and Boardrooms](#)." See also [a short \(5 minute\) video](#) with one of the authors.