



Schachter Monthly

By Ephraim Schachter • Oct 11, 2022

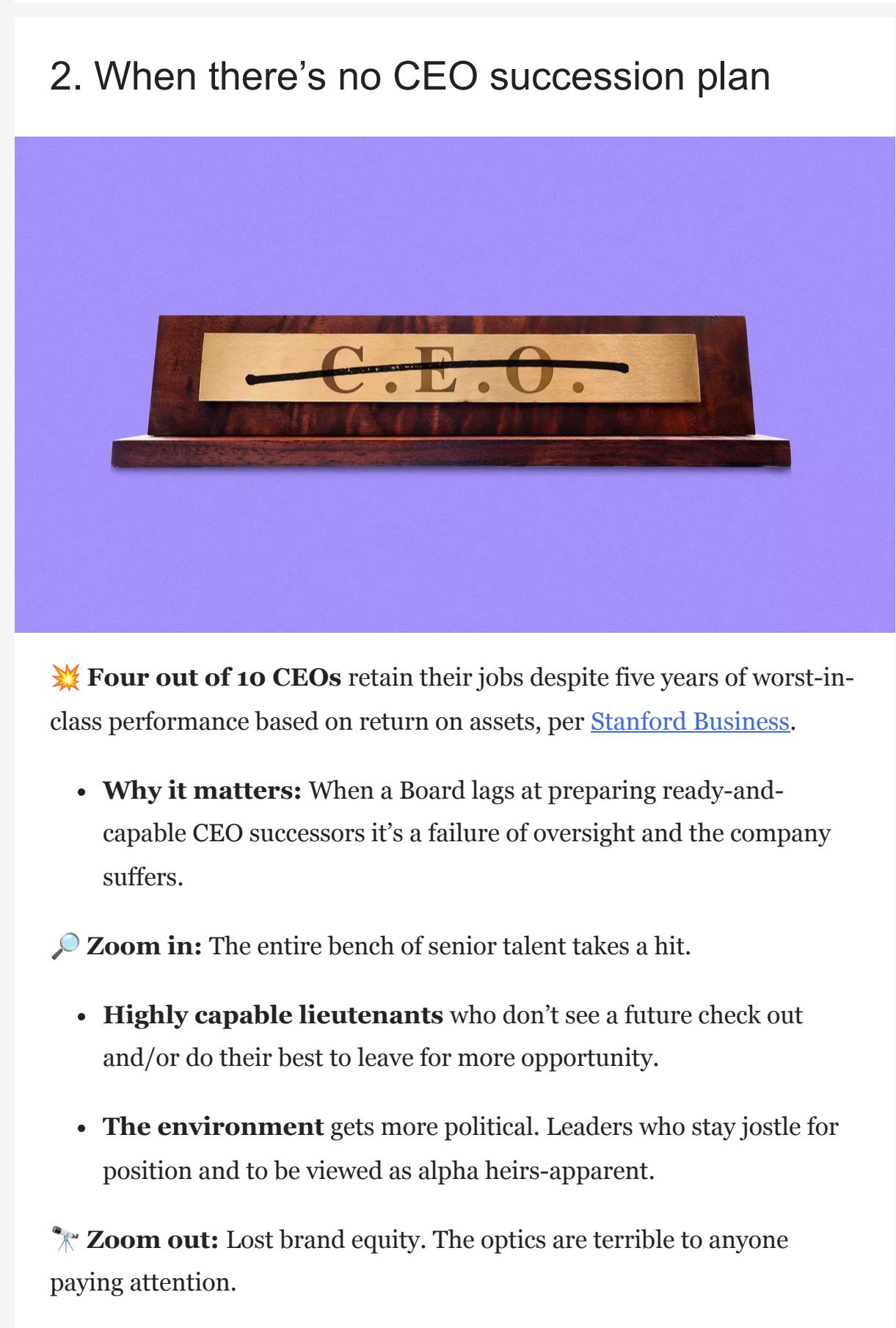
Smart Brevity® count: 4 mins... 1085 words

🎃 **Happy October** to my senior leaders in Business, HR, Academia and Nonprofits! Here are this month's insights and actionable tools & tips.

💡 **Catch up on Schachter Monthly!** Missed any of our past issues? You can now access downloadable versions dating back to last November's launch, [here](#).

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1 big thing: Quiet quitting is actually your friend



🔥 **The hot topic** in employee engagement is 'quiet quitting.' The loose definition: when employees do the bare minimum required for their job.

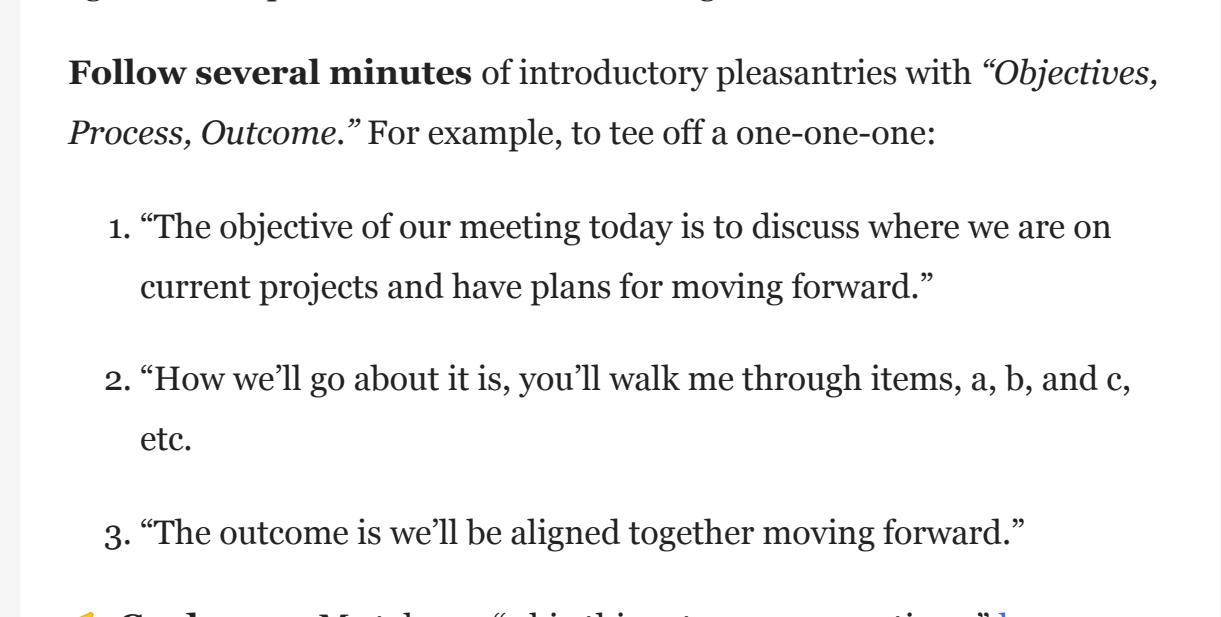
By the numbers: Per [Gallup](#), 'quiet quitters' make up at least 50% of the U.S. workforce. The ratio of engaged to actively disengaged employees its lowest in almost a decade.

- **To borrow** from an old HR joke, "What's worse than people quitting and leaving? People quitting and staying."

Why it matters: More an opportunity than a problem, quiet quitting invites leaders to distinguish themselves and their organizations and engage and win over talented people.

- So many people in positions of senior authority don't 'lead.'
- 💡 **The big opportunity:** my definition of Leadership is getting valuable things done through others who benefit from following you. Let's unpack that:
 1. **Valuable things.** Articulate a compelling vision of a future that improves on where you are now. Stake out key strategies to drive together.
 2. **Getting done.** Execute and drive results. Make important promises and deliver on them.
 3. **Through others.** Leaders lead people. Build your bench and set your culture.
 4. **Who follow you.** Lead through example of character and moral authority. Project confidence in the mission and future.
 5. **Who benefit from following you.** Bring about collective wins, rewarding and recognizing people in ways they find meaningful.

2. When there's no CEO succession plan



🌟 **Four out of 10 CEOs** retain their jobs despite five years of worst-in-class performance based on return on assets, per [Stanford Business](#).

- **Why it matters:** When a Board lags at preparing ready-and-capable CEO successors it's a failure of oversight and the company suffers.

💡 **Zoom in:** The entire bench of senior talent takes a hit.

- **Highly capable lieutenants** who don't see a future check out and/or do their best to leave for more opportunity.

- **The environment** gets more political. Leaders who stay jostle for position and to be viewed as alpha heirs-apparent.

💡 **Zoom out:** Lost brand equity. The optics are terrible to anyone paying attention.

1. **Worst-in-class** performance for more than one year (let alone five!) warns of impending failure.
2. Prospective CEO candidates are less likely to accept your offer and embrace the risk they'll face from Day One.

Directors' awkward feelings about broaching the topic of succession planning with the incumbent CEO is cited as one impediment.

- **The bottom line:** If that makes them squeamish, they shouldn't be serving on a Board.

💡 **Go deeper:** The full [Stanford piece](#) on CEO turnover and succession planning.

3. Less remedial executive coaching for CXOs

💡 **When Boards & CEOs** tap executive coaches for struggling C-Suite members, it's often after much time and repeated instances of underperformance.

⚠ **Why it matters:** Executive coaching that begins late is less likely to deliver meaningful results.

- Your CXO coachee has established their brand with the team, the Board, the department.
- The engagement is perceived in the organization as remedial, tagging the coachee as deficient.

💡 **My POV:** Have an investing mentality re executive coaching. Increase the value of your human assets. Offer executive coaching when the objective is one of the following:

1. **Realizing executive leadership potential** by accelerating the assimilation of targeted skills.
2. **Critical leadership transitions** like onboarding a new executive for early traction, supporting key promotion, and developing high-potentials.
3. **Finishing School**, helping a talented technical expert become a senior leader, and enhancing the executive polish of someone rough around the edges.

💡 **What to do:** Rather than offering coaching when the incumbent has demonstrated recurrent underperformance:

- Target your high performing EVPs so they can become world class stars
- Invest heavily in your SVP class so they'll be ready when you need them.

4. October pro tip: How to start every meeting

💡 **What I'm seeing:** Many senior leaders lack a deliberate approach for kicking off their one-and-one and group meetings. They follow a general agenda resembling a topic list.

- **Why it matters:** Meetings run long, are inefficient, and participants may leave without clarity on their purpose or the desired takeaways.

Bonus bummer: Your leadership looks weak when you allow a meandering mess to spread unchecked.

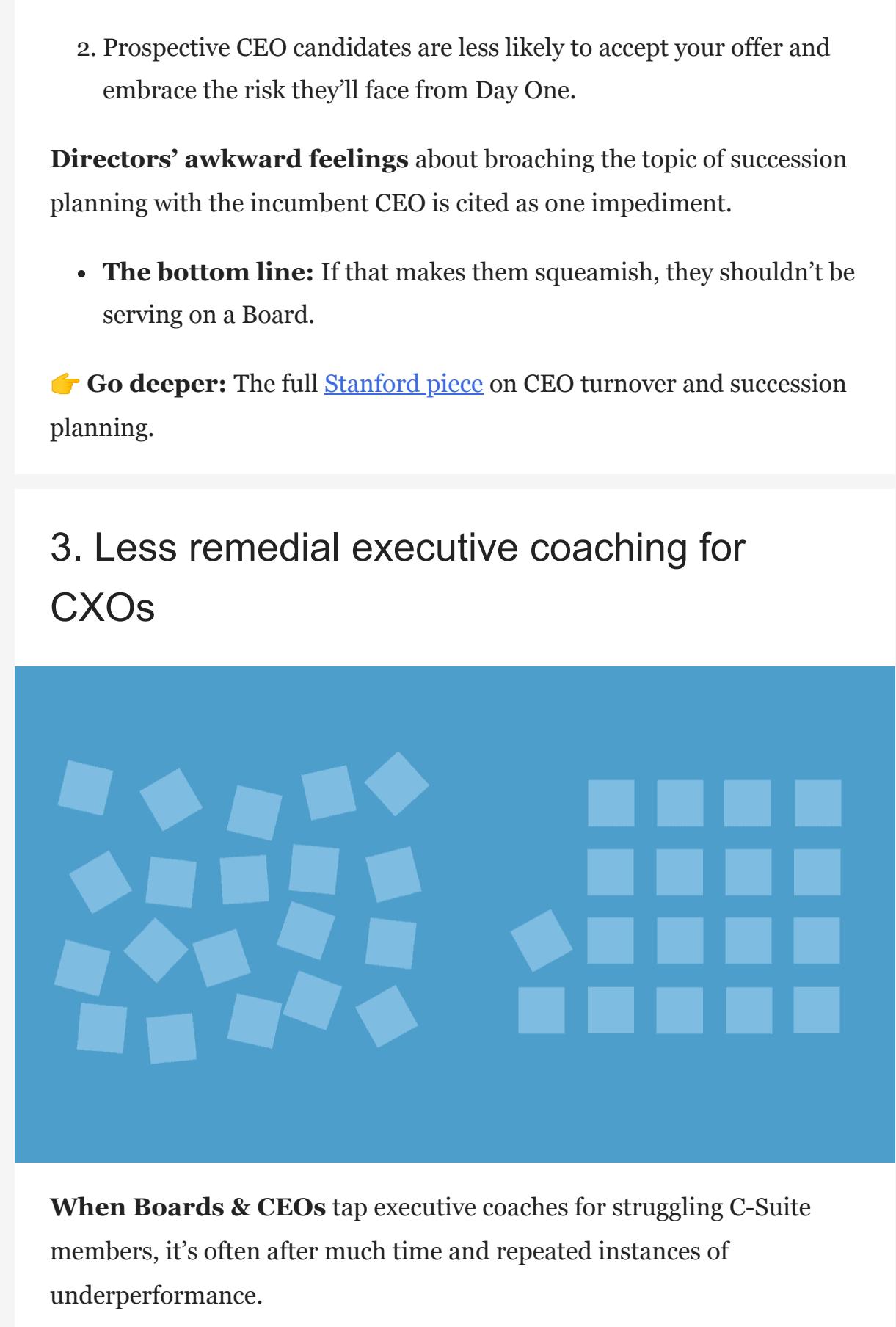
💡 **My POV:** You benefit from a consistent, formulaic opening that sets expectations clearly for what will unfold. Moreover, one that keeps to the agenda in response to the unavoidable tangents and rabbit holes.

Follow several minutes of introductory pleasantries with "*Objectives, Process, Outcome*." For example, to tee off a one-one-one:

1. "The objective of our meeting today is to discuss where we are on current projects and have plans for moving forward."
2. "How we'll go about it is, you'll walk me through items, a, b, and c, etc."
3. "The outcome is we'll be aligned together moving forward."

💡 **Go deeper:** My take on "1 big thing: too many meetings," [here](#).

5. Career corner: Mistakes that lose your boss



💡 **What I'm hearing:** Clients describe their CXO boss as uninterested in their work or career and disinclined to get involved or spend political capital for them.

- **Why it matters:** Getting them to take an active role advocating is essential to drive results and be seen as ready for an executive role

💡 **My recommended inoculators:** There are predictable mistakes. Look out for these four and the ways to avoid them.

- **Letting your authority bias** inform your behavior. It can hurt if you are either too compliant or too independent.

💡 **Not putting yourself** in your boss' shoes. Instead, ask yourself, "what is she seeing, thinking and feeling as she carries out *her* day?" What's her map of the world?

- **Insisting on your own** work preferences instead of adjusting to his. How does he like to receive information and make decisions?

💡 **Competing for visibility** instead of helping them achieve it. Stop complaining that they take credit for your work. That's why they hired you!

💡 **The bottom line:** Think of your boss as a person with a set of personal characteristics, needs and motivators as well as task related goals, KPIs and career aspirations of his or her own.

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- See you in November!

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