

When the Writing is on the Wall

A CAREER SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR IM/IG PROFESSIONALS



Session Description

After building Workday's information governance program from the ground up and preparing the company for AI, Melvin Baskin found himself part of a 1700+ person reduction in force. In this candid session Melvin shares the warning signs he saw before the layoff, the strategic pivots that extended his relevance, and what he wishes he had done differently. Whether you're sensing shifts in your own organization or simply want to future-proof your career, you'll leave with practical strategies for demonstrating value, diversifying your skillset, and knowing when it's time to walk away.



My Reality Check

Even High Performers are Not Immune

- ▶ Built a global Information Governance program
- ▶ Aligned IG with AI readiness and enterprise strategy
- ▶ Delivered measurable business value
- ▶ Still impacted by a **1,700-person RIF**



Why This Matters Now...

The IG Profession is at an Inflection Point

- ▶ AI reshaping data & governance expectations
- ▶ Cost optimization driving organizational decisions
- ▶ IG is often viewed as **overhead vs. strategic enabler**



The Warning Signs I Saw

Signals You Should Never Ignore

- ▶ Reduced executive engagement / sponsorship
- ▶ Shift from **investment** → **cost containment**
- ▶ Delayed or paused governance initiatives
- ▶ Increasing overlap with Data, AI, and GRC teams
- ▶ Clear ownership of “who owns governance”



Subtle Signals (The Ones You Feel)

Cultural & Behavioral Indicators

- ▶ Fewer invites to strategic conversations
- ▶ Decisions happening **without IG at the table**
- ▶ Leadership language shifts (“efficiency,” “streamlining”)
- ▶ Your roadmap starts getting questioned—not supported

Gut Check: 🖐️ If your influence is shrinking, your runway may be too



Strategic Pivots That Extended My Relevance

What Bought Me Time

- ▶ Positioned IG as **AI Enablement**, not compliance
- ▶ Aligned to **Data Governance & Enterprise Data Strategy**
- ▶ Focused on **business outcomes vs. frameworks**
- ▶ Built relationships across **EA, GRC, Security**

Lesson: 🖱️ Reinvention is not optional—it's survival



Where I Could Have Moved Faster

What I Wish I Did Differently

- ▶ Earlier pivot into **AI Governance leadership**
- ▶ Stronger **quantification of business value (ROI)**
- ▶ More aggressive **external brand building**
- ▶ Diversified beyond a single organizational dependency

Hard Truth: 🖱️ Your role can be eliminated - your brand cannot



The Value Equation

How to Make Yourself Indispensable

Shift from:

“We manage records”

To:

“We reduce risk exposure by X%”

“We accelerate AI adoption safely”

“We enable trusted data for revenue decisions”

Formula: 👉 $\text{Visibility} + \text{Measurable Impact} = \text{Relevance}$



Future-Proofing Your Career

Strategic Moves!!

Expand Your Skillset

- ▶ AI Governance
- ▶ Data Governance Platforms (Atlan, Collibra)
- ▶ Analytics & Data Literacy

Align to Business Value

- ▶ Revenue enablement
- ▶ Risk reduction
- ▶ Operational efficiency

Build Your Ecosystem

- ▶ Cross-functional influence
- ▶ Industry presence
- ▶ Personal brand



Know When It's Time to Walk Away

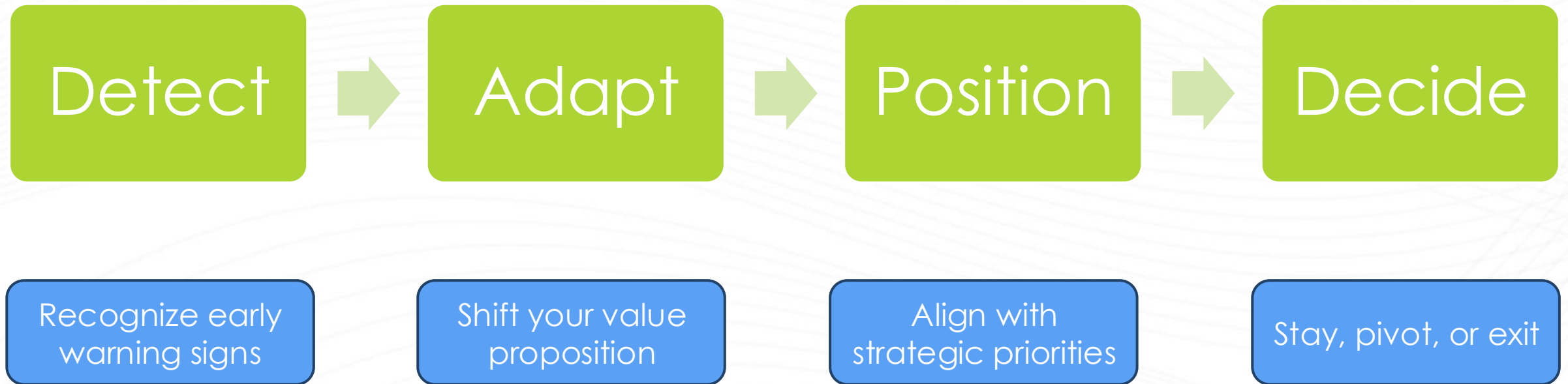
Don't Wait for the Decision to Be Made for You

- ▶ No executive sponsor
- ▶ No funding or roadmap traction
- ▶ Role becomes reactive vs. strategic
- ▶ Repeated organizational misalignment

Reality: 👉 Staying too long can cost you momentum



The Career Survival Framework



What You Should Do Starting Tomorrow

- ▶ Audit your current **perceived value**
- ▶ Identify **adjacent skills** to develop
- ▶ Strengthen **executive alignment**
- ▶ Invest in your **personal brand**

My Closing Thought: 🖱️ *Don't wait until the writing is on the wall, rewrite the narrative.*



THANK YOU!



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