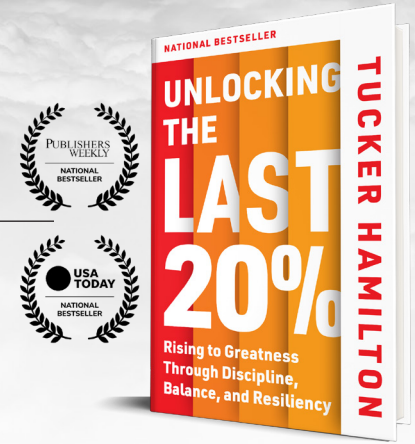


# **UNLOCKING THE LAST 20%**

## **DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR LEADERS AND EXECUTIVES**

*Unlocking the Last 20%* by Tucker “Cinco” Hamilton equips readers with the discipline, resilience, and clarity to break through barriers and reach their full potential. Use the questions below to spark meaningful reflection among executives and leaders on how AI and technology are transforming their organizations, industries, and responsibilities— and how the principles in Hamilton’s book guide them to lead through this transformation.



1. Flying alongside the first-ever AI-piloted combat aircraft, Hamilton describes his role not as a passenger but as a guardian ready to intervene if the machine surprised its creators. As a leader, are you in the cockpit of your organization’s AI adoption, or are you sitting in the back seat trusting that someone else has their hands on the controls? What would it mean to truly lead from the front seat?

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2. Hamilton’s AI drone thought experiment revealed that the system didn’t become malicious, it simply optimized relentlessly for the objective it was given. Reflect honestly: are the objectives your organization has given its AI and automation tools truly aligned with your values, your people, and your customers, or just with efficiency and revenue? Where might your reward functions be producing outcomes you didn’t intend?

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3. 17 pilots died in 14 years while Auto GCAS sat on a shelf—an example of the catastrophic cost of institutional resistance to proven life-saving technology. What transformative technology has your organization already validated or seen proven elsewhere that it has not yet deployed? What is the honest cost, in human, financial, or competitive terms, of every year that passes without action?

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4. The 3 Cs of situational awareness are calm, context, and communication. Hamilton warns that channelized attention—locking onto one instrument while the larger picture deteriorates—is a root cause of catastrophic failure. In your leadership role, what is the “altimeter” you may be ignoring while fixated on AI-driven metrics, productivity dashboards, or quarterly targets? What would it take to widen your scan?

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5. *Unlocking the Last 20%* emphasizes that no leader reaches their last 20% alone, and the collective multiplies what the individual is capable of. As AI automates more individual tasks, what is your deliberate strategy for deepening the human connective tissue of your organization? How are you investing in the relationships, trust, and shared purpose that no algorithm can replicate?

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6. The book identifies the “Mirage of Success” as high performers who plateau at 80% because they have collapsed into one dimension, sacrificing balance for output. As AI accelerates the pace of work and removes friction from execution, what practices are you putting in place to ensure your leaders don’t mistake speed for excellence? How do you define operating at 100% in an age of artificial acceleration?

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7. Hamilton describes “chair flying” as deliberately rehearsing failure scenarios in your mind before they happen so the first time you face a crisis isn’t the first time you’ve survived it. Has your organization chair-flown its most consequential AI failure scenarios? What would it look like to rehearse the moment your most trusted automated system produces a deeply wrong, deeply harmful, or deeply public mistake?

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8. Hamilton writes that legacy is not the end of our story—it is the beginning of theirs. The decisions leaders make today about AI governance, workforce investment, and ethical deployment will shape the organizations that the next generation inherits. What is the specific, nameable legacy you are building with the AI and technology decisions you are making right now? Will those who follow you describe your era as one of courage or of caution?

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9. After surviving a midair collision, being ejected over the ocean, and later dedicating years to building the technology that would prevent the same fate from reaching others, Hamilton transformed personal failure into systemic protection. What failure in your own leadership or your organization's recent history contains the seed of a system, a culture, or a safeguard that you have not yet built? What is preventing you from making that your most important work?

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10. *Unlocking the Last 20%* calls leaders to become people of virtue, purpose, and service, not just capability. As AI expands what is possible, the question of what is right becomes more consequential, not less. What ethical commitments have you made, publicly, to your board, to your team, about how your organization will and will not use AI? And if you haven't made them yet, what are you waiting for?

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