SPEAKER · DESIGN LEADERSHIP

Michael Knauer

Pronounced **“Can-hour”**

Talks on why design teams stall, and how they recover.

A design leader with over three decades in design: leading design teams on major products at Amazon and Lowe’s, then leading design organizations at ATD and Provenir. Michael builds the structure, practice, and people that let design teams connect their decisions to outcomes. MS, Human-Centered Design & Engineering, University of Washington.



SIGNATURE TALK

A tool solves a task. A process solves a problem.

When a design team stalls, the usual fixes are new hires, new tools, or a reorg. They rarely work, because the problem is typically how the team is set up, not people or software. This talk lays out three things that have to change in parallel (structure, practice, and people), drawn from teams Michael has led.

YOU’LL LEAVE WITH

- A way to tell a talent problem from a process problem
- The three things to put in place together, and where to start
- One change you can make in the next 30 days

FOR

Executives, board members, CPOs, and heads of product and design

FORMATS

Keynote (30–45 min) · Workshop (half or full day) · Fireside chat

MORE TOPICS

01 **The first six months of a design turnaround**
What to change, and what to leave alone so the team keeps its footing. For new design leaders.

02 **Review gates, not taste**
Replacing critique based on taste with explicit review gates, so design decisions hold up. For design and product teams.

03 **AI won’t fix your design process**
Where AI tools genuinely help a design team, and where judgment has to stay human. For leaders adopting AI.

04 **Structure, practice, and people**
What the research on effective teams says, and what it means for design leaders. For design and product leaders.

WAYS TO BOOK

Keynote	30–45 min
Workshop	Half or full day
Panel	Moderator or panelist
Podcast	Any length
Meetup or fireside	Local or virtual
Internal session	On site or remote

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

> “What set Mike apart from other leaders I’ve worked with was his ability to interact with the business, all the while keeping user-centered design a central focus and never failing to let the user inform his direction.”
>
> **Michael Duve**
> Senior UX Designer · Lowe’s Companies, Inc.

LOGISTICS

- In person or virtual
- Based in Charlotte, NC
- Standard A/V: microphone, screen (HDMI or USB-C), clicker

Book a talk

Keynotes, workshops, panels, podcasts, meetups, and private sessions.

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