



BPO BULLHORN

Straight talk. Smart insight. No bull.

Thursday, February 26, 2026

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Hello there

This week, Cheryl Paarwater questions the **language we've normalized**: "bums in seats," "agent mentality," and whether these terms let us avoid examining behavior that contradicts our stated values. Read it [here](#).

Two posts still need your take. Which [metrics does everyone defend](#) but nobody actually trust? And with cost pressure confirmed as [2025's biggest resilience test](#), what is it [changing on the ground](#) right now? Both are live on LinkedIn.

Tuesday we're asking **where your time is actually going** right now. Not the roadmap. Not the deck. Watch this space.

This week:

- 33,000 Tech Jobs Moved to India as H-1B Fees Hit \$100K
- Costa Rica Proposes Dollar Payments After 30% Currency Hit
- Anthropic Drops Safety Commitments After \$200M Ultimatum

Let's get moo-ving! 📣🐮

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Editorial Team

Bullseye: The Essentials

Industry News

→ **H-1B Restrictions Drive 33,000 Jobs to India as Tech Giants Expand Offshore**

FAAMNG companies added 33,000 workers in India in 2025, an 18% increase, with 4,200 current open positions, as [H-1B visa fees jumped](#) from \$5,000 to \$100,000. Google is leasing 2.4 million square feet in Bengaluru for up to 20,000 additional employees, while Amazon and Microsoft have committed \$35 billion and \$17.5 billion respectively, to India's AI infrastructure. University of Pennsylvania research found companies hire 0.4-0.9 employees abroad for every H-1B rejection, with most roles concentrated in India, China, and Canada.

→ **Costa Rica's New President Plans Dollar Payments to Counter 30% Currency Hit**

President-elect Laura Fernández is proposing dollar-denominated tax and social security payments after the colón strengthened 30% (from 700 to 500 per USD), [cutting profit margins by roughly 30%](#). With a legislative majority of 31 out of 57 seats, her administration plans regional expansion incentives outside San José that could cut operational costs up to 7%, plus workforce training modernization and a 4x3 work schedule for 24/7 operations. The measures respond to capacity constraints and competition from Colombia and the Dominican Republic as Costa Rica faces office space shortages and talent recruitment challenges.

Vigilance

→ **Anthropic Abandons Binding Safety Policy After Defense Secretary's Ultimatum**

Anthropic replaced its Responsible Scaling Policy with a nonbinding "Frontier Safety Roadmap" the same week Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth gave CEO Dario Amodei a Friday deadline to [drop AI safeguards](#) or lose a \$200M Pentagon contract. The company removed its commitment to pause

training more powerful models if safety controls couldn't keep pace, arguing that "responsible AI developers pausing growth while less careful actors plowed ahead could result in a world that is less safe." Anthropic maintains two red lines: AI-controlled weapons and mass domestic surveillance.

→ **Microsoft's Copilot Exposed Confidential Emails to Enterprise Users**

A [configuration error caused the AI tool to surface confidential emails](#) marked with sensitivity labels, affecting enterprise customers, including NHS systems. Microsoft says access controls remained intact, but the bug processed protected content anyway. Gartner warned, "This sort of fumble is unavoidable," given the speed of AI feature releases.

Governance

→ **Philippines BPOs Face 15–20% Cost Spike as Local Governments Override Tax Exemptions**

Local government units are [collecting taxes despite national CREATE MORE Act exemptions](#), with some areas adding 25% withholding tax plus 12% VAT under BIR Circular 05–2024. IBPAP says the inconsistencies are being escalated to global headquarters and influencing location decisions. The industry also lacks legal standing to prosecute cybercrime cases that affect foreign clients.

→ **Fewer Than 1% of Organizations Have Operationalized Responsible AI**

[Fewer than 1% of organizations have operationalized responsible AI practices](#), per World Economic Forum research. The UK AI Regulation Bill proposes mandatory AI Officers, while the EU AI Act enforces compliance across the bloc. Without governance infrastructure built from the start, AI tools risk repeating past enterprise tech failures: poor data quality, opaque decisions, weak accountability. The Microsoft Copilot breach this week shows what happens when governance comes late.

Media Field Guide

Video

Mental Resilience in High-Pressure Operations - [YouTube](#)

Kaushik Das introduces the Four Cs framework for building resilience: Clarity (directing attention wisely), Control (managing internal responses), Connection (meaningful relationships), and Compassion (avoiding self-criticism after setbacks). Drawing from 19+ years of leading talent transformations, he argues that technical skills collapse under pressure without mental strength.

Why watch: a practical resilience framework for managing high-pressure teams where burnout drives attrition.

Podcast

The Big Problem! What Happens When AI Becomes The Customer? - [Spotify](#)

Colin Shaw examines what happens when AI agents act on behalf of customers searching, filtering, recommending, and buying without direct brand interaction. The conversation explores how brands remain visible when customers stop visiting websites and apps, which parts of today's customer journey risk disappearing, and why differentiation strategies must shift when AI becomes the primary filter of choice.

Why listen: challenges assumptions about customer discovery and brand visibility in AI-mediated interactions, critical for CX leaders whose strategies assume direct customer engagement.

Books

The Unfinished Continent - [Amazon](#)

Mark McCord examines why well-funded development initiatives in Africa often collapse while locally driven efforts thrive, exploring how history, culture, and power dynamics shape program outcomes. Drawing from years of on-the-ground experience, the book challenges assumptions about external intervention. It makes the case for partnerships rooted in respect and local agency rather than imposed solutions.

Why read: a framework for understanding why local efforts succeed where imposed models fail, relevant for leaders building delivery centers and partnerships in African markets.

What media would you like to see more of? **Hit reply** and let us know. We'll give you a shoutout if we include it.

[Continue the conversation](#)

Resource Rodeo 🤠

Featuring NEW releases:

Genesis GBS 2026 East & Central Africa GBS Benchmarking & Market Report

Comparative benchmarking across six East and Central African markets, examining service maturity, talent pools, cost competitiveness, and infrastructure readiness. The report identifies where markets can scale delivery today versus longer-term opportunities requiring infrastructure development, with focus on impact sourcing and ESG-aligned growth models - [Download](#)

Also spotted:

- KPMG 2026 Global Third-Party Risk Management Survey - [Download](#)
- Peopleware's State of WFM Report 2026 - [Download](#)
- EY Union Budget 2026-27 Highlights - [Download](#)
- Industry Report: State of AI in the Enterprise - [Download](#)

Toro's Timetable

March

4 - [CX Alliance Workshop](#) | London

10 - [Enterprise Connect](#) | Las Vegas, NV

18 - [CCW Digital](#) | Sydney, AU

25 - [4th BPO Confex & Awards 2026](#) | Bengaluru, India

April

21 - [Customer Service & Experience West 2026](#) | San Diego, CA

The Tail End

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Thanks for reading. See you next Thursday.

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Maistro UK Limited

Rowan House North 1 The
Professional Quarter, Shrewsbury
Business Park, Shrewsbury

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