

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

# MANAGING WHEN NO ONE WANTS TO WORK

HOW LEADERS CAN FIX THE #1 BUSINESS CHALLENGE—RETENTION



"Ralph doesn't just deliver a keynote — he changes how leaders think."

-Conference Attendee

# RALPH PETERSON

Dear Planning Committee,

The workforce crisis in senior care is not a staffing problem. It is a leadership design challenge.

Across the country, senior care leaders are being asked to solve retention issues while balancing regulatory pressure, financial constraints, and growing resident complexity.

Too often, the message they hear is that “no one wants to work anymore.” But what if the real issue isn’t willingness – it’s workplace culture, leadership clarity, and organizational systems?

In my keynote, **Managing When No One Wants to Work**, I help leaders reframe workforce challenges and rethink how engagement, accountability, and retention are built into everyday operations.

This keynote blends honest conversation, practical leadership strategy, and highly engaging storytelling to help leaders understand not only why workforce challenges exist – but what they can realistically do about them.

Through memorable real-world examples, relatable leadership scenarios, and visual metaphors that make complex workplace dynamics easy to understand, attendees walk away energized, equipped, and ready to lead differently.

This is not a motivational talk about working harder.

This is a strategic conversation about leading smarter.

This keynote is intentionally designed to resonate with leaders and team members across departments – from clinical and operations teams to support services and administrative leadership – creating a shared leadership conversation that strengthens alignment across the entire organization.

I would be honored to bring this message to your conference.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'R' followed by a series of loops and a final downward stroke.

Ralph Peterson

# MANAGING WHEN NO ONE WANTS TO WORK

How Leaders Can Fix the #1 Workforce Challenge

The senior care workforce crisis is not simply a staffing problem – it is a culture and leadership design challenge.

Across the healthcare industry, organizations face rising turnover, increasing resident complexity, and growing regulatory demands. Leaders are expected to maintain stability while navigating workforce fatigue, communication breakdowns, and retention challenges.

In this highly engaging and story-driven keynote, Ralph Peterson combines real-world leadership experience, powerful visual metaphors, and practical leadership strategies to help organizations rethink how culture, engagement, and accountability influence workforce stability.

Through relatable scenarios, humor, audience interaction, and memorable storytelling, this keynote helps attendees see workforce challenges through a new leadership lens while providing realistic and actionable solutions.

This keynote is intentionally crafted for mixed conference audiences – from frontline caregivers and department leaders to administrators, executives, and owners – creating alignment rather than fragmentation. The message resonates across roles while elevating the leadership conversation organization-wide.

By the End of This Keynote, Attendees Will Be Able To:

- Understand the critical role organizational culture plays in workforce retention
- Identify cultural and leadership behaviors that contribute to turnover
- Recognize early warning signs of disengagement and burnout
- Apply practical leadership strategies that improve staff engagement and morale

Key Takeaways

- Culture is the #1 underlying factor influencing employee retention in healthcare
- Workforce stability improves when leadership behaviors reinforce respect, communication, and trust
- Retention improves when engagement is intentionally designed into daily operations

## Managing When No One Wants to Work

**This is not a lecture about staffing challenges.**

This is an experience that helps audiences rethink leadership, culture, and engagement through powerful storytelling, humor, and real-world insight.

Ralph Peterson's signature keynote blends professional expertise with an engaging and memorable delivery style that keeps audiences energized, laughing, reflecting, and learning simultaneously.

### **A Story-Driven Leadership Experience**

Using relatable real-life scenarios from senior care and healthcare leadership, Ralph brings workforce challenges to life in ways that feel authentic, practical, and immediately recognizable.

His storytelling approach allows audiences to see themselves, their teams, and their organizations in the message – creating moments of clarity that traditional presentations rarely achieve.

### **Memorable Visual Metaphors That Make Leadership Stick**

Ralph is widely known for using stuffed animal characters and visual leadership metaphors during his keynote presentations.

**These lighthearted yet powerful visuals:**

- Break down complex leadership behaviors
- Make difficult workplace conversations easier to understand
- Create shared language teams continue using long after the conference ends
- Reinforce learning through humor and emotional connection

Attendees frequently describe these moments as both entertaining and unforgettable – helping them remember and apply leadership lessons long after the session ends.

### **High-Energy Audience Engagement**

Ralph creates an environment where audiences feel comfortable participating, reflecting, and connecting.

From pre-session interaction (including his well-known candy bowl tradition) to in-session audience dialogue, Ralph intentionally builds trust and energy throughout the presentation.

This interactive approach helps attendees remain fully engaged while encouraging reflection on their own leadership behaviors and workplace culture.

### **Designed for Cross-Department Impact**

One of the unique strengths of this keynote is its ability to resonate across all levels of healthcare organizations.

**The message is intentionally crafted to connect with:**

- Clinical leaders
- Department heads
- Executive leadership
- Support service professionals
- Emerging leaders and frontline supervisors

By focusing on leadership behaviors and workplace culture rather than job-specific tasks, the keynote creates a shared leadership conversation that unifies organizations.

### **Practical Strategies Attendees Can Use Immediately**

While highly engaging and entertaining, this keynote is grounded in practical leadership application.

Attendees leave with:

- Clear strategies for improving engagement and retention
- Tools to strengthen communication and accountability
- Leadership behaviors that improve workplace culture
- A renewed sense of purpose and confidence in leading teams

A powerful keynote starts the conversation.  
A breakout session deepens it.  
A shared book experience sustains it.

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Ralph's keynote experiences are designed to unify and energize mixed audiences across senior care. For organizations seeking deeper implementation, extended learning sessions are available when paired with a keynote engagement.

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## Available Breakout Sessions

### Mastering QAPI

(60-90 Minutes)

A deeper, application-focused session that helps leaders move from reactive problem-solving to proactive system design. Participants learn how to evaluate key work processes, identify root causes, and design preventative leadership systems that reduce recurring operational issues.

Provided through a required book sponsorship for all attendees.

### The Burden of Leadership

(60-90 Minutes)

An interactive leadership session focused on accountability, cultural alignment, and the invisible weight leaders carry in today's workforce environment. Designed to help managers reset expectations, strengthen clarity, and lead with disciplined consistency.

Provided through a required book sponsorship for all attendees.

### Investment

Breakout sessions are available as an extension of the keynote and can be supported through an additional session fee or a book sponsorship program for attendees.

## ★ Why Organizations Invite Ralph Back

Conference planners and organizations frequently describe Ralph's presentations as:

- Memorable
- Relatable
- Highly engaging
- Practical and actionable
- Emotionally impactful
- Energizing and motivating

Most importantly, audiences leave not just inspired – but equipped to lead differently.

*“Ralph doesn't just deliver a keynote — he changes how leaders think.”*

*— Conference Attendee*

## @ Ideal Conference Fit

This keynote is particularly impactful for conferences seeking to:

- Energize multi-disciplinary audiences
- Open or close conferences with a unifying leadership message
- Deliver high engagement without sacrificing strategic depth
- Provide immediately actionable leadership takeaways



*Eye opening, motivating, and inspiring. By far, the most beneficial presentation series I've attended. I left excited to return to my community and apply what I learned."*

– Nursing Home Administrator

"Ralph supports his message with both data and real-world experience."

– Conference Attendee

"Ralph Peterson's "Managing When No One Wants To Work" Keynote is both a poignant and engaging conversation on the 'tug of war' of being a manager. He delivers his message with meaningful pictures and anecdotes from his experiences that are both thoughtful and relatable, all building to support his "5 Rules for Managers."

-Emma Cooke, Director

"Ralph presented an excellent presentation to the West Virginia Chapter of the American College of Health Care Administrators. His presentation style is intense and holds the audiences attention. He received rave reviews from the group. He is an excellent speaker who uses humor to discuss issues such as leadership and motivating employees. His book is also excellent!"

-Phillip Donnelly Executive Director

"Great motivation for leadership and highly relevant to long-term care."

– Nursing Home Administrator

"The session was so engaging and enjoyable I was surprised when it ended."

– Conference Attendee

"Funny, relatable, and packed with valuable leadership lessons."

– Director of Nursing



*Ralph validates the challenges of management while inspiring leaders to stay in the profession. His message reminds you why leadership matters.”*

– JoAnn Kay

“In a world where being a leader isn't always easy, Ralph uses humor and real life examples in his trainings that have proven to be successful when I have implemented them . If you ever get the chance to attend one of Ralph's trainings or have him in your center you will not be sorry! He is inspirational, witty, and an experienced leader. Read his books!”

-Jessica Jennings, LNHA

“Excellent, entertaining, thought-provoking speaker.”

- Kierstin Reed, CEO LeadingAge Nebraska

“Eye opening, motivating, inspiring. Themes were excellently connected. By far, the most beneficial presentation series I've attended, resulting in excitement to get back to my community. Thank you!!”

-LeadingAge Kansas attendee

“Comprehensively informative and helped translate QAPI and leadership concepts into action.”

– Conference Attendee

“Very entertaining with powerful real-world examples and outstanding crowd engagement. Ralph shows how how we treat people creates a ripple effect across the entire organization.”

– Crystal Lake Attendee

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## Keynote Engagement

### 60-90 Minute Keynote

For audiences up to 300 – \$7,500

For audiences over 300 – \$10,000

Travel: Actual business travel expenses

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## Extend the Impact

Breakout sessions are available as an extension of the keynote and can be supported through an additional session fee or a book sponsorship program for attendees.

## Ralph Peterson, MSOL

Leadership Keynote Speaker | Senior Care Strategist

Ralph Peterson is a nationally recognized leadership speaker who has spent more than 20 years working exclusively in senior care. Unlike many keynote presenters who translate lessons from other industries, Ralph speaks directly from within the long-term care profession—bringing real-world experience with administrators, DONs, executive teams, and frontline caregivers.

A Master Examiner for the AHCA/NCAL Quality Award Program, Ralph has helped senior care centers across the country design leadership systems that improve workforce stability, strengthen culture, and elevate operational performance. His work is grounded in the Malcolm Baldrige framework and informed by decades of direct industry involvement.

Because he understands the pressures of survey readiness, staffing instability, regulatory oversight, and leadership fatigue, Ralph's keynotes resonate across all roles—from CNAs to owners and operators. His sessions are designed to unify mixed audiences, delivering insight that is strategic enough for executives and practical enough for frontline leaders.

A United States Marine Corps veteran, Ralph brings a disciplined, systems-oriented approach to leadership development. He is also the author of multiple leadership books and served as Past President of the National Speakers Association – New York City Chapter, reflecting his commitment to professional speaking excellence.

Conference planners consistently describe Ralph as engaging, practical, and uniquely relevant to senior care — a speaker who connects with every level of the audience.