

Excellerate 2025 Focused on Central Oregon Business Continuity

by MICHAEL SIPE, Mergers & Acquisitions Advisor, Executive Coach — 10xGroups.com

On September 11, 2025, hundreds of the top business leaders in Central Oregon filled the Riverhouse Convention Center for the fourth annual Excellerate Central Oregon Business Forum to focus on business continuity, contingency planning and disaster preparedness. The timing was appropriate. We live in uncertain times. Wildfires, drought, earthquakes and tsunamis off the coast, the increasing risk of the Cascadia event, economic instability, tariffs, cyberattacks, terrorist attacks, gun violence, addiction, mental illness and suicide risks with employees, civil disorder. The number of potential risks to business owners, even in seemingly safe Central Oregon, is actually very high. We all need to be prepared to respond, survive and thrive to the unexpected.

The overarching message to the leaders attending was:

- Be Prepared
- Be Proactive
- Build a Team
- Learn Resilience
- Have a Mindset to Prevail

Speakers included:

• Jordan Smith, local IT expert and VP of CMIT, who spoke on the dangers of cyberattacks on small businesses, especially those increasingly

driven by artificial intelligence. Practical guidelines for preventing devastating attacks were offered.

• Jennifer Donhue, retired Naval Commodore and local executive coach, discussed how to build resilient teams.

• Laurence Kennedy and Christie Hutcherson, nationally renowned physical security experts, explored contingency planning and disaster preparation in their presentation: Preparing for the Risks You Don't See Coming.

Each speaker was followed by robust roundtable discussions in which business peers shared best practices and lessons learned on the topic presented. As always, these discussions were vibrant and valuable, as Excellerate offers a once-a-year opportunity for top business leaders to engage in practical discussions with a range of other leaders on shared challenges.

Excellerate is produced by Michael Sipe, 10x Catalyst Groups and Vistage with a purpose to bring leaders of the regional business community together for meaningful interaction and relevant learning opportunities. Attend



SPEAKERS LAURENCE KENNEDY AND CHRISTIE HUTCHERSON | PHOTO COURTESY OF 10X CATALYST GROUPS

next year and join us in the conversation!

Michael Sipe is a local mergers and acquisitions advisor and executive coach.

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Wealth Management

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combined 200 years of professional experience.

The shared client experience is intentionally seamless. "We're creating brand standards," Swank said. "It's like walking into Starbucks; you know what you're getting. Whether you're in a Heritage Wealth Advisors office or a Capstone office, you know there will be a team working hard for you, pulling in the best resources, and creating the best strategies."

As financial lives become increasingly complex, the alliance between Heritage Wealth Advisors and Capstone represents a significant evolution in the professional

services landscape. Clients benefit from coordinated specialization, seamless collaboration, and a strategy designed to last across generations.

Or as Swank summarized: "Coordinated financial care allows an amazing experience for the clients, as opposed to them chasing down service providers and trying to make sure everyone's communicating. We do that in one place via our coordinated model."

For families and businesses seeking clarity and confidence in their financial future, that may be the most valuable service of all.

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October 16, 2025

COCC Wille Hall

8:00 am - 9:30 AM

Register at cityclubco.org



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