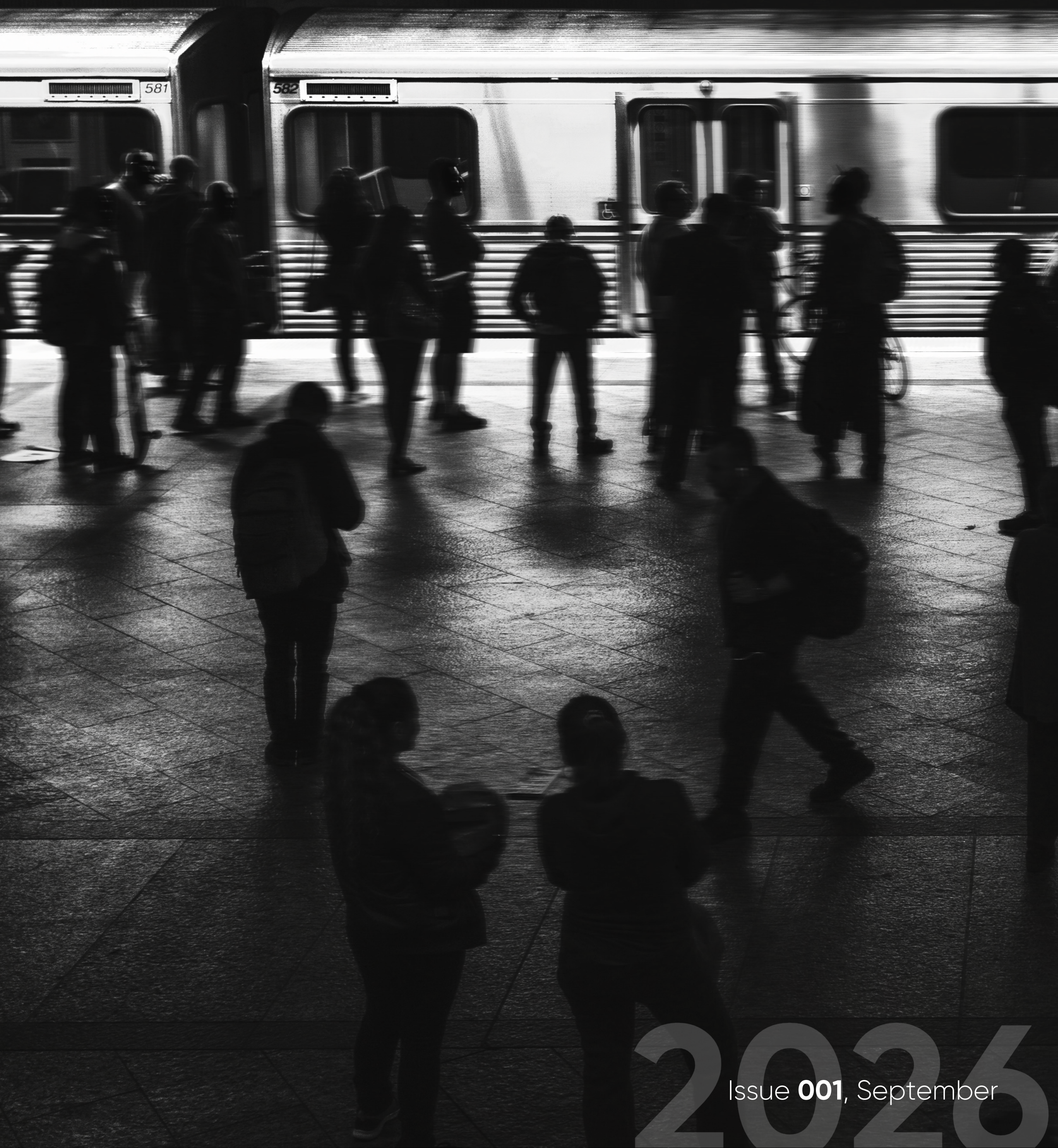
# Mikhael Lalwani | The Business of Uncertainty

Practical Insights on Business, Risk, Growth And Resilience

## Why Leaders Are Paid to Decide Without Certainty



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## Executive Summary

In uncertain environments, deciding with poor data visibility and fragmented information, even waiting for complete information, creates more risks. Adaptive leaders do not seek to eliminate uncertainty. They build the organizational capability to navigate it, transforming risk management into a strategic decision advantage.

Early in my career, whether I was building business ventures, managing investments, or leading group strategy, I realized that waiting for 100% of the facts before acting is a critical strategic mistake. By the time you gain full clarity on a market trend, a shift in consumer behavior, or an emerging technology like AI, the opportunity has already vanished, the competition has moved forward, the dynamic has changed, and your diligence has turned into inaction.

## Calculated Agility: Lessons from the Mat

My background in martial arts, training the Indonesian Marines, and functional training has significantly shaped my perspective on strategic leadership. In martial arts, if you wait to analyze every detail of an opponent's stance before responding, you've already lost. You need to learn how to read intent, process incomplete signals in milliseconds, and adapt instantaneously.

Business Requires The Same Operational Agility:

1. Analysis paralysis costs more than imperfect execution: A goal decision executed today with velocity beats a "perfect" decision executed six months too late.
2. Agility is your cushion: You do not need to predict the future perfectly if your organization built to adapt rapidly when conditions change.
3. Discipline Under Pressure: Grounded leadership requires maintaining clarity when everyone else around you is paralyzed by volatility.

## Risk vs Uncertainty: The Executive Distinction

| Dimension | Risk | Uncertainty |
|---|---|---|
| Definition | That can be measured and managed | Incomplete data where variables change and outcomes are unpredictable |
| Strategy | Mitigation, compliance and risk registers | Scenario readiness, decision discipline and agility |
| Leadership Focus | What is the plan? | What has changed? What are we not seeing? |

## The Hidden Costs of Decision Delay

Inaction is an active strategy choice that erodes organization valve. As decisions are delayed:

1. Fewer Options: Good choices disappear as time runs out.
2. Higher Costs: Money, time, and reputation losses grow quickly.
3. Loss of Control: You end up reacting to problems instead of events.

## The Simple Standard

Stop waiting for 100% of the facts. Ask, "Do we have enough information to responsibly take the next step?”

## Four Ways to Build a Decision Advantage

Risk Management should not be a background paperwork routine. Pairing it to the executive level by focusing on four habits :

1. Spot Warning Signals Early: spot real problems before they turn into full crises.
2. Pass News Up Fast: make sure hard truths move quickly to senior management.
3. Stay Flexible: plan for different paths instead of guessing just one future.
4. Decide with Discipline: be clear about what you know, what you guess and what might change your plan.

## The Strategic Takeaway

Leadership is easy when answers are obvious. Adaptive leader shows up when you must pick between several hard choices under pressure. The best organizations do not predict everything correctly: they see changes, make choices, and act quickly. The key to effective leadership during a crisis lies in an engine driven by a commitment to **adaptive, responsive** and **proactive** behaviours, guided by a clear code of conduct that ensures timely decisions, agile responses and proactive planning.

# About the Author

**Mikhael M. Lalwani is a business leader and practitioner in business risk, crisis management and strategic resilience, with more than two decades of experience spanning security, operations, corporate risk, crisis response, entrepreneurship and investment.**

As Founder & Group CEO of CORIM Group, he leads a multi-sector business ecosystem and works with corporate leaders on complex, high-stakes situations where decisions must often be made before the picture is complete.

His perspective is grounded in real-world operating environments. His career has moved from security and high-risk operations into corporate risk advisory, crisis management, strategic business leadership and investment—giving him a practical view of how risk develops, how organisations respond under pressure, and how leaders can build the visibility, readiness and decision discipline required to act under uncertainty.

His thought-leadership focus is the business of uncertainty: risk before crisis, decision-making under pressure, organisational resilience, human risk, leadership, and the relationship between risk and opportunity.


mikhaellalwani@corimgroup.com

@m.lalwani

Mikhael Lalwani

www.corimgroup.com