

Human-Centered Transformation Journeys of Journeys

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Supporters and Enablers

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Abstract

We use a short literature review, interviews with global HR consultancy experts focused on people and organizational development, and success stories with key transformation enablers in Fortune 500 companies to eradicate the notion that transformation journeys are vastly unsuccessful. We provide an alternative to prescriptive, process-heavy change management approaches via atrain's Human-Centered Transformation Journey of Journeys approach. Practical implications are shown, and implementation ideas are provided.

Keywords

Change, Management, Transformational, Human, Agility, Journey, Leadership, Developmental, Organizational, Psychology, Strategy, Culture.

Introduction

70% of Transformations fail. But do they?

Myth-Busting Time

Established views of organizational transformation and change often report low success rates when key steps are missed (e.g., Beer, Finnström, & Schrader, 2016; Beer & Nohria, 2000; Kotter, 1995; Jacquemont, Maor, & Reich, 2015). However, these views – often based on anecdotal research – and over-reliance on their specific advice produce a narrow view of transformation (By, Hughes, & Ford, 2016; Cândido, & Santos, 2015; Hughes, 2016; Stouten, Rousseau, & Cremer, 2018). Most definitions of organizational transformation agree it involves radical change to strategy, structures, and systems, fundamentally changing how people work and interact (Cha & Lee, 2013; Dagues & O'Shannassy, 2007; French, Bell, & Zawacki, 2005; Rothwell, Stavros, & Sullivan, 2016).

In order to achieve a successful transformation, this deep shift must be facilitated by the people within the organization; individuals and teams who evolve in mindset, develop in skill, react to dynamic external environments, and trigger cultural shifts (Goleman, Boyatzis, & Mckee, 2002; Rothwell et al., 2016). This sparks transformation that is ambiguous and recurring, an open-ended journey of continual transformation to fulfil potential (Anderson, 2016; Hughes, 2011; Manzoni et al., 2017; Tosey & Robinson, 2002).

Transformation is not simply planning and executing, it is a cyclical process of building ideas and assessing reactions in addition to learning and forming new ideas (Ries, 2011). When deeper reflection processes that allow for such ambiguity are used to evaluate transformation, most are regarded as successful (e.g., Jones et al., 2019).

Human-Centered Approaches

When undertaking a process as dramatic as trans-

formation, it is understandable that organizations may find comfort in established approaches. However, this too often becomes an exercise in ticking boxes (e.g., Jacquemont et al., 2015) while failing to consider the unique context of the organization in question (Burnes, 2011; By et al., 2016; Hughes, 2011; Jones et al., 2019). Following a prescriptive approach often means individuals, along with their capabilities and emotions, are ignored in favor of short-term “fixes” (Goleman et al., 2002; Senge, 2006; Stouten et al., 2018). The human-centered approach prioritizes these elements and gains the advantage of creating real change with long-term impact.

The Human Being at the Heart

The importance of leaders in transformation is a common element even among competing views of transformation (Beer et al., 2016; Dagues & O'Shannassy, 2007; Jacquemont et al., 2015; Kotter, 1995). Leaders creating and communicating a transformative vision and strategy, acting as critical “early adopters,” and providing the necessary resources to achieve the transformation is nearly ubiquitous in anecdotal accounts and case studies of successful transformations (e.g., Canterino, Cirella, & Shani, 2018; Manzoni et al., 2017). However, this is again a limited view—not only do the leaders themselves require development support to keep the journey going (Anand & Barsoux, 2017), they must create opportunities to influence across the organization (Jones et al., 2019). A crucial opportunity is via co-creation.

Co-Creation

Co-creation is a process by which stakeholders engage with each other to create an “ecosystem” that supports open communication, learning, and continuous improvement (Ramaswamy, 2009; Ramaswamy & Ozcan 2014; Ramaswamy & Ozcan 2019). In human-centered transformations, co-cre-

ation is between the senior leadership and the rest of the organization's employees, using positive platforms that encourage productivity and emergent change.

Using this approach, transformation is not a hierarchical, results-oriented process; instead, it is participatory and values the journey over the outcome (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013; Tosey & Robinson, 2002). Case studies of successful transformations repeatedly cite collaborative processes as essential (e.g., Manzoni et al., 2017; Pevcin, 2015; Serrador & Pinto, 2015; Stichler, Colombo, & Poeltler, 2017), while the active participation at the heart of co-creation builds new interpersonal processes that amplify the transformation.

Hopes and Fears

Effective co-creation relies on hopeful thought, which is belief in (1) finding pathways to a goal or vision and (2) stakeholders (individuals and teams) having the agency to successfully leverage those pathways (Adams, et al., 2015; Snyder, 1995; Snyder, Rand, & Sigmon, 2002). A challenge in building hopeful thought is understanding and overcoming primal emotions, like fear, which are automatically activated in uncertain situations (like transformations) and limit openness to new ideas and pathway generation (Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006; Lord & Harvey, 2002). Attempting to suppress fear depletes cognitive resources, which impedes pathway creation and agency and activates avoidance strategies which may provide feelings of relief, but little else (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Jarymowicz & Bar-Tal, 2006; Pugh, 2002).

Leaders must instead resolve fear by communicating how the transformation, vision, and strategy will lead to outcomes everyone finds desirable and worth working towards, thus unlocking motivation and authentic positive behaviors (Carver & Scheier, 1998; Goleman, 2002; Pittig, 2019; Pittig et al., 2018). By focusing co-creation efforts on hopes for these outcomes and capitalizing on strengths and capabilities (instead of "fixing" perceived shortcomings), stakeholders build confidence in their ability to effect the transformation positively. In

doing so, pathway creation, agency, and general well-being at work are bolstered (Block, 2000; Carver & Scheier, 1998; Cooperrider & Sekerka, 2006; Rath & Conchie, 2008; Tasler, 2017). When leaders manage this, hopeful thinking and the associated positive emotions accelerate generation of even more pathways to transformation and create even stronger motivation to utilize those pathways (Snyder et al., 2002).

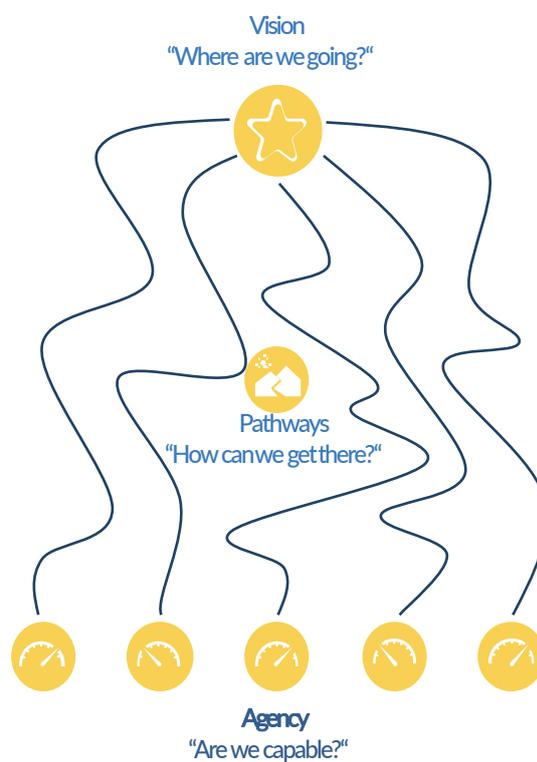


Figure 1: The Hope Model. Adapted from: Snyder, C. R. (1995).

atrain's Approach

Based on empirical research, transformations are more successful when they are open-ended, invite participation, managers inspire rather than direct, and where leadership behaviors are flexible with regards to the situation and needs of the people (Hughes 2011; Jones et al., 2019; Serrador & Pinto, 2015; Stouten et al., 2018). Change is rarely static, but rather dynamic and emergent, which makes it difficult, if not impossible, to plan and control in a volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and global world (Eoyang, 2012). Therefore, it is critical to use an emergent approach—one with the flexibility to adapt to the unique needs of the people in the organization and to utilize imminent energy for the respective initiatives. Participative approaches might take more time, as there is no one-size-fits all approach with pre-defined boxes to tick, but, based on atrain's experience, organically developing transformation journeys create a more sustainable impact and evolve faster than overly structured change processes (Knill, 2019).

atrain co-created the Transformation Journey of Journeys approach iteratively, working with different clients from various industries. The following goals emerged as part of the learning journey that atrain was (and is) on with numerous customers: reaching every level of the organization. Creating a movement from within that fuels a shift in mindset, culture, and behavior as well as processes and structures. Embracing the uncertainty and messiness that come with transformations. And lastly, diving below the surface to fundamentally transform the DNA of the organization.

The DNA Model of Transformations

"[...] transformation is a transformation of the DNA. We're looking at an upgrade to the operating system. You can't put a new app on an old operating system. And that's a congruence model: mindset, behavior, culture, leadership, all of it

needs to change in sync. And that requires a vision and a purpose. And we have the strong belief that this cannot be created top-down. This does need to be created from the depth of the organization" (Stempfle, 2019).

However, it is not enough to update the software. The hardware will also need an 'upgrade.' Running the latest software edition on an outdated computer will simply not work. And building the best computer imaginable to use the calculator function is a tremendous waste of resources. Which is why existing processes and standard operating procedures need to be scrutinized. Some will stay the same, others might be adapted, and a few probably discarded completely. Hardware also refers to the physical environment; workplace designs might need to change to nudge people to, for example, increase interactions, communication, and collabo-

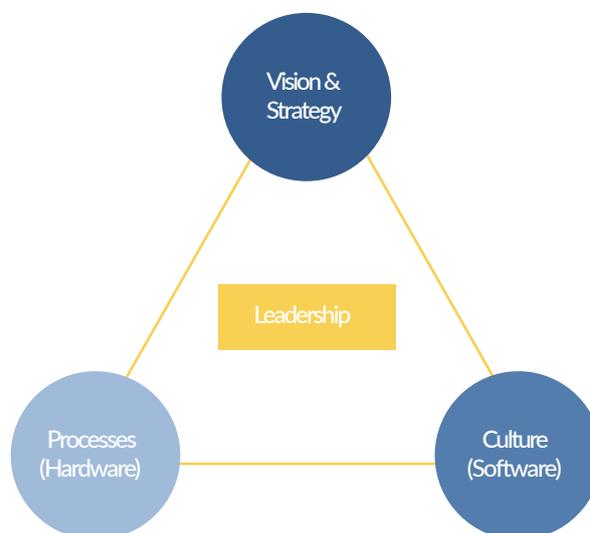


Figure 2: The DNA Model of Transformation

ration. It is worth noting that this is nothing that happens "by the book." Each organization needs to find out how to transform its hardware itself.

In this model, leadership holds a central place but is not centralized: Leadership is the kit that holds everything together, living the vision, communi-

"The essence of the discipline of systems thinking lies in a shift of mind: seeing interrelationships rather than linear cause-effect chains and seeing processes of change rather than snapshots."

Peter M. Senge (2006).

cating the strategy, transforming workplaces, eliminating unnecessary processes, and developing behavior and culture. In their roles, leaders hold the key to either blocking or enabling an entire transformation journey. In more traditional and hierarchically structured organizations, managers hold a lot of power, which is why it is extremely important to work with them. In more future-oriented organizations, leadership is typically more distributed which brings challenges in its own right and again highlights the central part that leaders play in sustainably evolving the DNA of an organization.

All Levels

In organizational transformations the challenge is to engage and empower people on every level of the organization to propel change forward (Gleeson, 2017). Touching the organizational, leadership, team, and individual contributor level is essential to avoid disconnection and them vs. us dynamics. By using formats that take each level on interconnected and co-created developmental paths, all parts will be inspired and engaged for the journeys that lie ahead before experimenting with new ways of working, evolving capabilities and embedding the transformation in their DNA.

Within this approach, flexibility is critical, as no single intervention, format, or tactic will work in all cases (Burnes, 2011; Jones et al., 2019; Stouten et al., 2018). Concrete initiatives need to be based on the unique needs of the specific organization (Hughes, 2011; Jones et al. 2019). As organizations are complex, adaptive systems, an intervention might have unintended and unpredictable consequences on the system as a whole (Senge, 2006). Awareness of said system and an iterative and flexible approach are paramount to build, measure, and

learn (Ries, 2011). Therefore, while atrain can provide rough blueprints on how to reach the different parts of the system, these must be adapted constantly throughout the transformation journey.

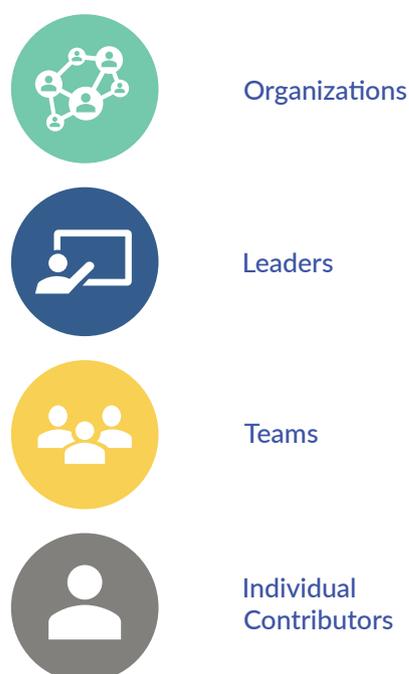


Figure 3: The Four Levels.

Journeys of Journeys

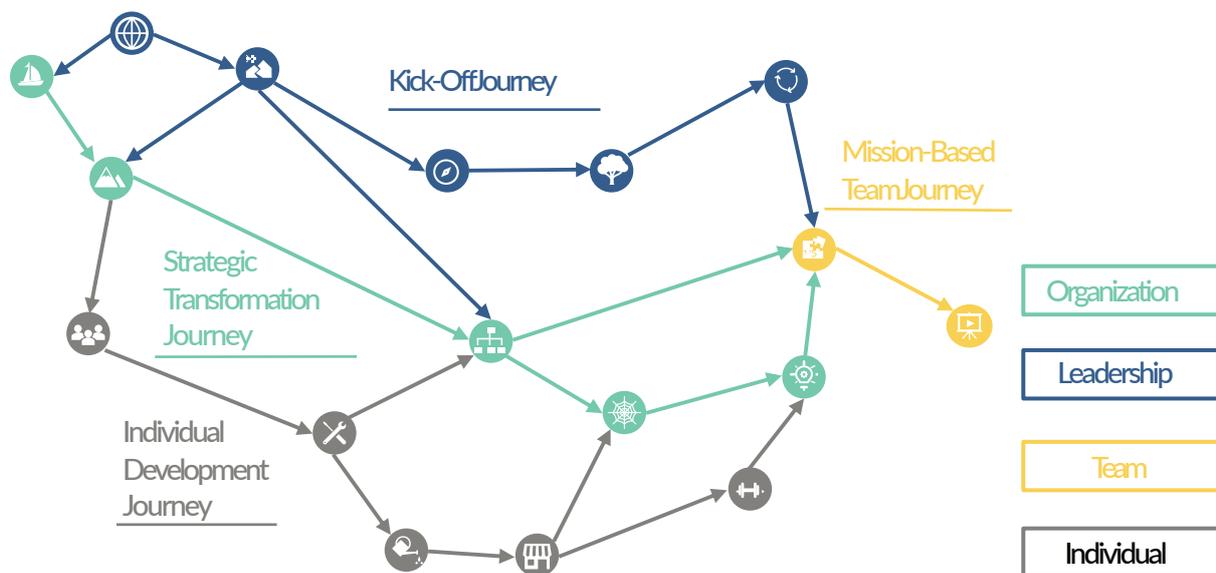


Figure 4: The Transformation Journey of Journeys.

As previously emphasized, transformation is deep work—it goes beyond superficial or cosmetic changes and must go beyond the leadership team to involve all members of the organization to rally around the vision, develop strategies, and effect real changes in both procedural hardware and cultural software. In order for an organization to reach its true and full potential, they will need to go beyond isolated interventions, such as a leadership development off-site, an individual skills training, and a townhall. Our Journey of Journeys approach is intended to support determined, co-created transformation.

The power of the Journey of Journeys approach lies within its interlinkage of the various measures and initiatives driven by the people in the organization. Due to the complexity of organizations (Senge, 2006), every transformation journey needs to be unique (Dunphy & Stace, 2001). Still, the core logic of our approach is consistent: On the most granular level, our transformation approach consists of analyses and co-created initiatives. Interlinked analyses and initiatives represent a journey. The combination of multiple journeys at all levels of the organization creates a Transformation Journey of

Journeys.

The attempt to depict an approach that is driven and, therefore, uniquely shaped by each organization, leader, team, and individual is a paradox. Which is why it is of the utmost importance to highlight that while an organization's transformation might contain certain elements depicted in Figure 4, it is not an actual representation. It must not be misunderstood as a 'master plan' or a prescriptive approach. The Journey of Journeys depicted is one of many possible versions and a necessary abstraction of reality to simplify complexity. It is, in its most fundamental way, a model with the purpose of trying to help humans grasp the concept itself.

Below, we detail some examples of journeys to make our approach more tangible. These examples follow the logic of transforming the DNA of an organization by touching all levels but make no such claim as to be generalizable. In fact, it is quite the opposite; journeys are re-invented by every leader, team, and individual working on their Transformation Journey of Journeys.

“The organization can’t grow faster than its leaders.”

Joachim Stempfle (2019)

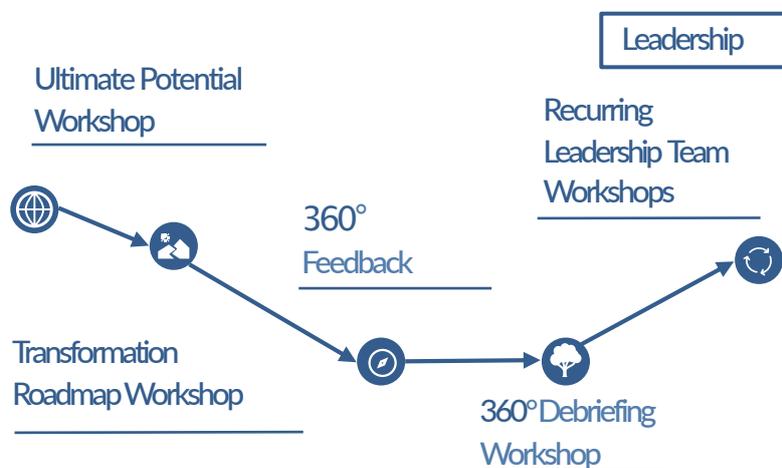


Figure 5: The Kick-off Journey.

The Kick-Off Journey

One of the most important journeys starts on the leadership level, as leadership is central to enabling or blocking the fundamental shift in mindset and behavior that needs to take place to enable the organization to transform and continuously develop (Jones, Firth, Hannibal, & Ogunseyin, 2019). The purpose of this journey is to enable the senior leadership to reach a new level of consciousness, characterized by full awareness of oneself and a shift towards a mindset of choices. Once the awareness materializes (quite literally in the neural connections of the brain) that every human being can choose to be driven by fear or to act out of hope, untapped potential starts to emerge.

The depicted Kick-Off Journey consists of the Ultimate Potential Workshop, the Transformation Roadmap Workshop, a 360° Feedback, a 360° Feedback Debriefing Workshop, and Recurring Leadership Team Workshops. After some preparation consisting of building trust and creating a functional team, the Ultimate Potential Workshop starts off with the creation of the purpose and vision as well as an understanding of what it takes to transform an organization and how the leadership roles might evolve over time. The Transformation

Roadmap Workshop introduces human-centered transformation approaches and supporting methods. With a 360° Feedback tool and a corresponding Debriefing Workshop, leaders can advance on the path towards the next level of consciousness and leadership effectiveness. Ongoing Recurring Leadership Team Workshops support the deep dive into both individual and collective roles while simultaneously ensuring shared learning and collaborative leadership during the transformation. Over time, trust deepens, and leadership teams often become more courageous, actively wanting to reshape the initially set purpose, vision, or ultimate potential.

“Structures of which we are unaware of hold us prisoner.”

Peter M. Senge (2006).

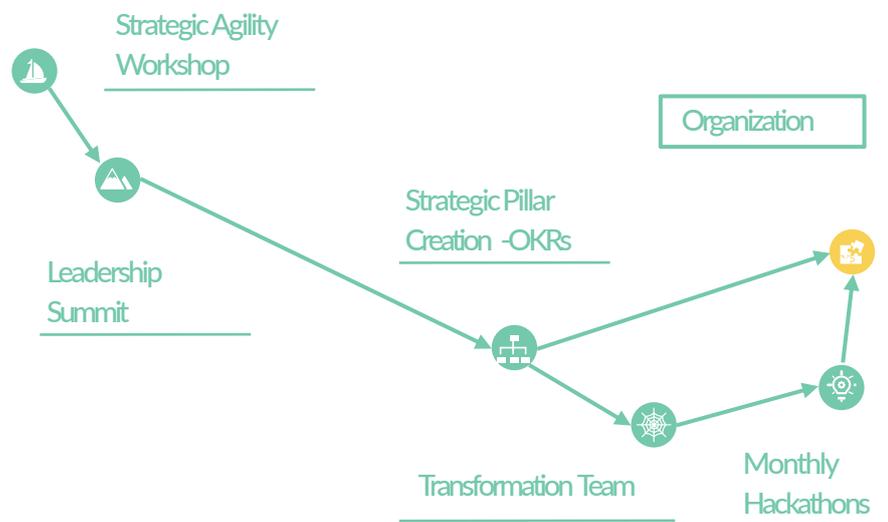


Figure 6: The Strategic Transformation Journey

The Strategic Transformation Journey

The journey depicted shows a starting point at an organizational level. The journey connects leaders with individual contributors and teams and translates the collectively-set strategy into concrete outcomes. Using the purpose, vision, and initial strategy considerations, this journey dives into creating a strategy for the coming years and executing it in an agile way. As communication and participation are key on a transformation journey (Jones, Firth, Hannibal, & Ogunseyin, 2019; Cooperrider & Sekerka, 2006), the process is a combination of top-down and bottom-up: the overarching vision and objectives are set by the leadership team and the organization breaks it down into tactics.

Strategic pillars emerge out of the strategy and are translated into company objectives for the year. Agile methodologies are used to structure and execute; objectives and key results (OKRs) (Niven & Lamorte, 2016) are implemented and company objectives are allocated to owners that hold accountability for those yearly objectives. Mission-based teams are formed and work in design sprints (Knapp, Zeratsky, & Kowitz, 2016) to define and execute quarterly OKRs. Monthly hackathons en-

sure that the most important priorities are tackled and brought into the organization in a structured way. In parallel, a Transformation Team, not to be mistaken for a Project Management Office, is formed. The Transformation Team builds a bridge between employees and senior leadership and “[...] acts as the spider in the web” (Stempfle, 2019), connecting initiatives and people in a networked environment. Since the Transformation Team tunes into the organization to understand realities and needs, it is comprised of individual contributors rather than leaders.

Individual Development Journey

The journey focusing on the individual contributor level includes All Hands Summits—to foster understanding of the vision and strategy and engage all levels of the organization—as well as leader-led Bottom-Up Strategy Workshops—in which all employees can contribute to OKR and initiative creation.

Doing and being are layers to consider when transforming the organization, as the doing part of tools, processes, and practices help to bring the being part of underlying principles, values, and mindsets

to life (Powers, 2017).

One way of approaching the being part is a Growth Mindset Workshop based on Dweck’s work (2012), which enables individuals to challenge their thinking and creates the spark that might turn a fixed mindset into a growth mindset which allows both the individual and organization to start realizing their full potential. Individuals are encouraged to sign up for strategic projects and participate in mission-based teams and are equipped with methods that support an agile, iterative approach of doing to transform the organization from the ground up.

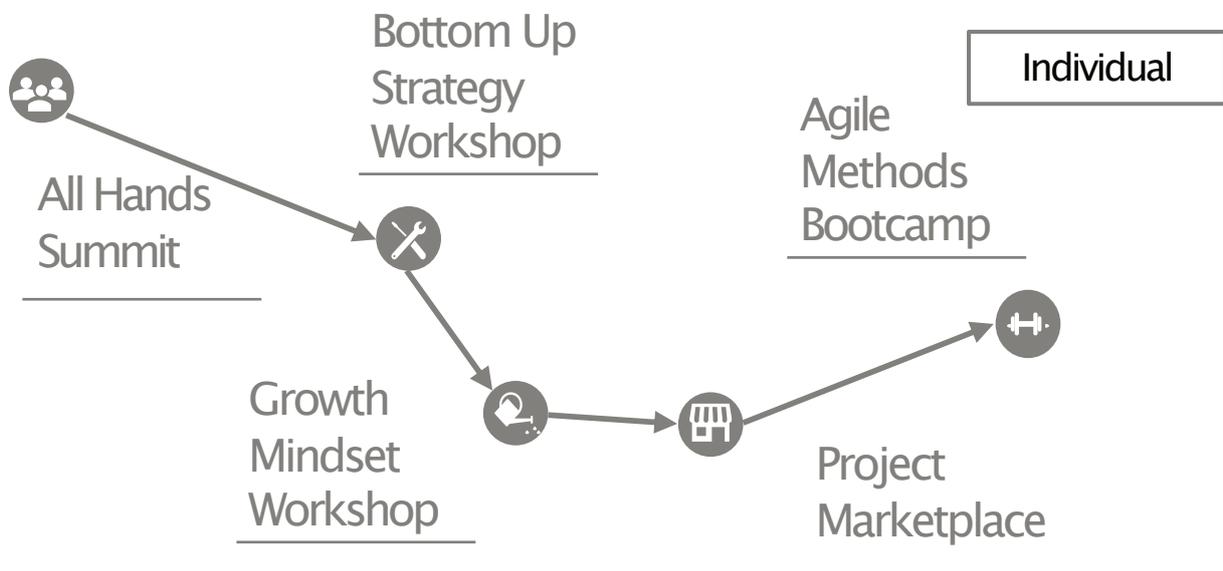


Figure 7: The Individual Development Journey.

Mission-Based Team Journey

The short yet intense Mission-Based OKR Team Journey starts with forming cross-functional teams that have the necessary capabilities to work on specific quarterly OKRs. Following Jeff Bezos’s two pizza rule (Hern, 2018), the teams have an ideal size of five team members and will kick the OKR cycle off by coming together for four days to work in a design sprint following the design thinking approach (Knapp, Zeratsky, & Kowitz, 2016). The execution will start during the sprint and will be continued throughout the quarter before evaluating the completion rate and (re-) defining the OKRs for the next quarter.

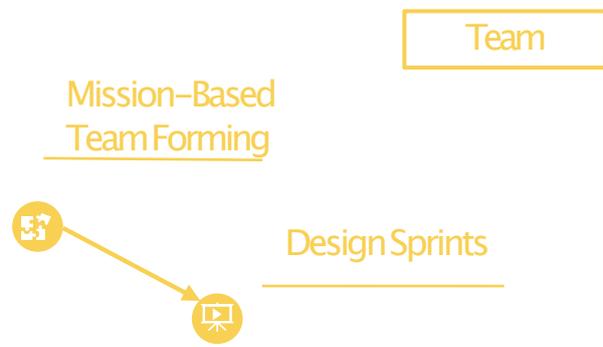


Figure 8: The Mission Based Team Journey.

Success Stories

Transformation Journeys at EnBW

Energie Baden-Württemberg (EnBW), a German Fortune 500 company, is on a fundamental transformation journey to reach the “next level of sustainable growth.” By building on its past strategic efforts, which concentrated on restructuring the business from the traditional energy generation to smart infrastructure provision, EnBW is now focusing on becoming an infrastructure partner beyond energy.

The magnitude of this transformation becomes tangible when looking at the complex environment EnBW is operating in, the mere size of more than 20,000 employees and its role as a critical infrastructure provider. So how do they go about transforming the company?

“Give the people the power to create the change. Enable them to be the architects of the change”

Knill (2019).

The overall 2025 company strategy was already set when the HR department of approximately 300 people embarked on their hybrid journey. This meant that the HR department was faced with two objectives: transforming themselves in order to match the speed of change in the overall organizational transformation and supporting the transformation journeys of all segments and departments within the organization.

To do so, multiple strategy and leadership development workshops were conducted with atrain to build trust amongst the HR leadership team. The workshops also focused on helping the individuals find themselves, understand that they were on a development journey, and enabled them to build a growth mindset.

Once the leadership team started this journey, it became evident that the HR department would embark on a co-creative, open-ended journey with

atrain’s support. One of the first steps was to conduct several large-scale summits and smaller meetings in which the leadership team and all employees co-created the strategy and corresponding tactics. atrain provided the platforms and formats to leverage people’s knowledge and engage them in the process. Seven months after the first kick-off, the HR strategy was presented to the executive board as well as the supervisory board and signed off on. Three weeks later (!), OKRs were set and the first design sprints were up and running in order to execute them. *“People are not yet 100 percent convinced but they are impressed and astonished about how fast we are.”* (Knill, 2019)

The remarkable thing for Maria Knill (2019), Lead HR Strategy, Controlling, and Transformation at EnBW, is that almost no stakeholder management was needed since everyone had been involved in the process already. Concerns were heard, ideas were captured and integrated, and energy created. People reported everything moving extremely fast and that there was a fear of “missing something.” But Maria Knill (2019) emphasizes that “[i]t’s a living process, a living strategy, a living thing. We don’t have a problem to change things in the process. And people realize this. That’s what gives us the commitment.”

Although the team is just starting the journey and more robust measures of success will come in at a later point in time, Maria Knill (2019) noted that her initial estimation of how many people would sign up for the voluntary sprints was at roughly five per cent. She was astonished when 20% of the entire department wanted to get involved directly. Maria Knill is excited about the future and convinced that EnBW will be successful if they keep “tak[ing] the people in the center of interest because they will do the transformation that we need in our times. It’s not numbers, it’s not companies, it’s not AI, it’s not digitalization—it’s the people who do it.”

Transforming Roche Diagnostics Belgium

Introduction

As a division of the world's largest biotech company, Roche Diagnostics is a global market leader for in vitro and tissue-based cancer diagnostics and a frontrunner in diabetes management. As a key partner within the Belgian healthcare sector, Roche Diagnostics Belgium (RDB) offers innovative diagnostic solutions and consulting services that enable people and healthcare professionals to receive results more quickly, reliably, and efficiently than ever before. In turn, healthcare professionals rely on the data derived from these results to make confident medical decisions with and for their patients at every stage of life.

When Anna-Maria Heuchel-Reinig arrived at RDB as General Manager in 2017, she was determined to build on past business successes and transform it into a truly customer-centric organization. This transformation was not only going to focus on new ways of working and increased collaboration across departments, but also – if not mainly – on different mindsets and beliefs which enable the organization to constantly evolve.

In partnership with atrain, RDB embarked on an open-ended journey of journeys, touching all levels of the organization and all four components of the DNA Model of Transformation (vision & strategy, processes, culture, and leadership). So how did this evolve?

Acknowledgement and Envisioning

During a first off-site meeting, the RDB Leadership Team (LT) addressed differing realities about the business potential and internal needs to fulfil this potential. As a key outcome, the team members created behavioral commitments to guide their everyday actions. In front of the entire organization, they courageously acknowledged a gap between the aspired and current levels of customer focus.

The LT continued their journey of clarifying their

roles and responsibilities with an emphasis on organizational needs during times of transformation. atrain facilitated summits with all leaders on the topic of strategic agility, including a shared sense-making of the current reality, envisioning of the future state, prioritizing actions, and agile execution.

Behavior, Mindset, and Leadership

In January 2018, Anna shared the vision of a truly customer-centric Roche Diagnostics Belgium with all colleagues. This marked the next big step in the transformation journey. She also reinforced her message by focusing on the actions of clarity and professionalism as well as an underlying mindset that enable an open and welcoming culture. During multiple sessions facilitated by atrain, the LT began the deep dive development journey with the help of 360° feedback results, accompanying debriefing workshops, and continuous alignment sessions.

Structure & Strategy

Relying on the data derived from in-depth empathy interviews with customers, RDB colleagues were informed about what their customers were truly looking for: a more unified approach and seamless experience. This direct and empathic interaction created a sense of urgency to genuinely put the customer at the heart of all efforts. To do so, RDB realized that they needed to redefine the structure of the organization in order to create a truly seamless customer experience. To support this restructuring, the extended LT co-created a new strategy with support from atrain, focusing on empowered teams that drive change, business effectiveness, and efficiency to solidify themselves as a true healthcare partner.

Structure, Strategy, Leadership, and Culture

Starting in 2019, the LT redefined all leadership roles, formed a strategic community consisting of leaders and experts, and developed a series of cultural commitments for the entire organization. The employee engagement score went up from 64% in 2017 to 69%, indicating that RDB was on the right track, yet still has some way to go. Tough and engaging discussions in the strategic community led

to clear strategic objectives for 2020. A key take-away for the organization is that the “softer” developmental parts of the journey - such as organizational culture, mindsets, and commitments - are of utmost importance, as these are the foundation for engaged collaboration and long-term business success.

In late 2019, when RDB moved from its premises in Vilvoorde to a new shared office space in Diegem – known as the “GreenHouse” - the entire organization reached a key milestone and physical transition. This new work environment encourages in-depth exchange and collaboration via co-working areas and “high focus” zones (Intervest, 2019).

Closing

The RDB driver for 2020 is “Raising the Bar” by continuing to change the way of working and moving towards collective leadership, thus marking a new phase of the journey. Anna notes that *“the beauty of a transformational journey is that it is an ongoing adventure where we regularly adapt our itinerary based on what we learn along the way.”*

Heuchel-Reinig (2019).

Ready, Set, Go!

“You cannot convince people to go on a transformation journey that they are not ready for—unless they trust you.”

Neha Sharma (2019)

When to Start

Some Transformation Journey of Journeys kick off when a newly appointed general manager realizes his/her organization is in deep trouble and needs a fundamental change. Other Transformation Journey of Journeys just happen, with one thing leading to another—as mentioned by an atrain consultant, “We didn’t know that this was going to be a transformation journey” (Sharma, 2019). For others it becomes evident that a new initiative here or there to mask the need for change is simply not good enough anymore. The development of a conscious decision to embark on a journey differs widely, but the supporting mindset is often guided by true transformational principles.

Transformation Principles

At least four different dimensions interplay and need consideration when starting:

- **Pressure to Transform:** Pressure can be proactive or reactive based on forces both internal and external to the company; understanding and managing that tension during the transformation process is critical.
- **Awareness of Transformation Continuity:** True transformation is open-ended and not fixed in time or linked to a specific pressure point.
- **Depth of the Transformation:** Transformations go beyond superficial changes, changing the DNA of the company—outcomes of such deep change are naturally open-ended and change how the company interacts internally and with the external environment.
- **Attitude:** Transformations should be guided by

hope-based principles to drive for deep, open-ended change that meets internal and external goals and pushes away from fear-based change that superficially reacts to immediate threats.

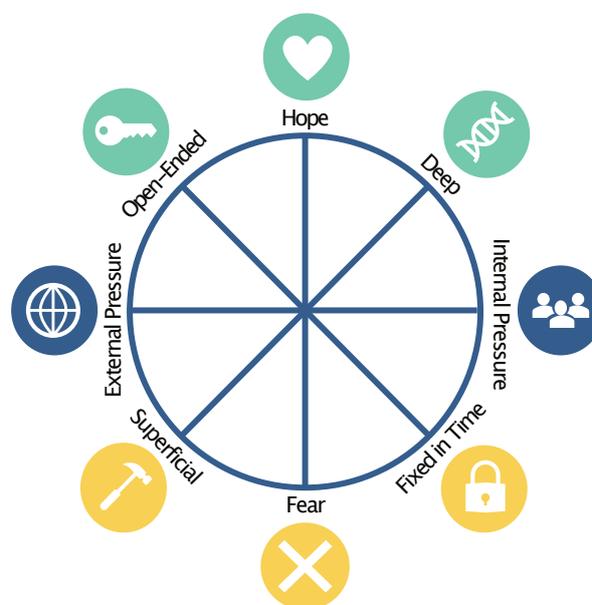


Figure 9: The Transformation Principles Model.

“Control is a basic human need. Senior leaders are responsible for the results of their organization and their people—it is very difficult for them to accept the truth that in their role they cannot actually control anything. They can only inspire, create the framework and conditions for people to break through.”

Joachim Stempfle (2019)

How to Start

Transforming an organization to reach its full potential can be daunting but it is not as complex as some consultancies might want you to believe (Hughes, 2011). Overstating transformation complexity can prompt fear-based investment in equally complex plans, ticking boxes (e.g. Jacquemont, Maor, & Reich, 2015), which conveniently offers consultancies the opportunity to blame mistakes and unintended outcomes on a) not having followed their plan or b) not having completed all initiatives. While transformation is not necessarily complex, it is also not easy—particularly when it comes to developing doing and being. atrain’s approach embraces the fact that Transformation Journey of Journeys are ambiguous, messy, iterative, and might take time (Stempfle, 2019)—we are committed to this truth and ready to accompany you on that journey. We believe that the people have everything it takes to transform the organization. If we engage those people, they will find answers to the most pressing questions.

Understanding, internalizing, and embracing this reality creates a generative force, “[...] just as vision becomes a generative force” (Senge, 2006). Leaders need to realize this before other transformation efforts are put into practice. Paradoxically enough, transforming the vision and software (see above) is often only possible after having worked on the business and strategy side. Leaders are more accustomed and open to start the journey on the ‘harder’ business side (Stempfle, 2019).

At some point during the strategy creation process it might become evident that the vision and purpose are not reflecting the ultimate potential of the

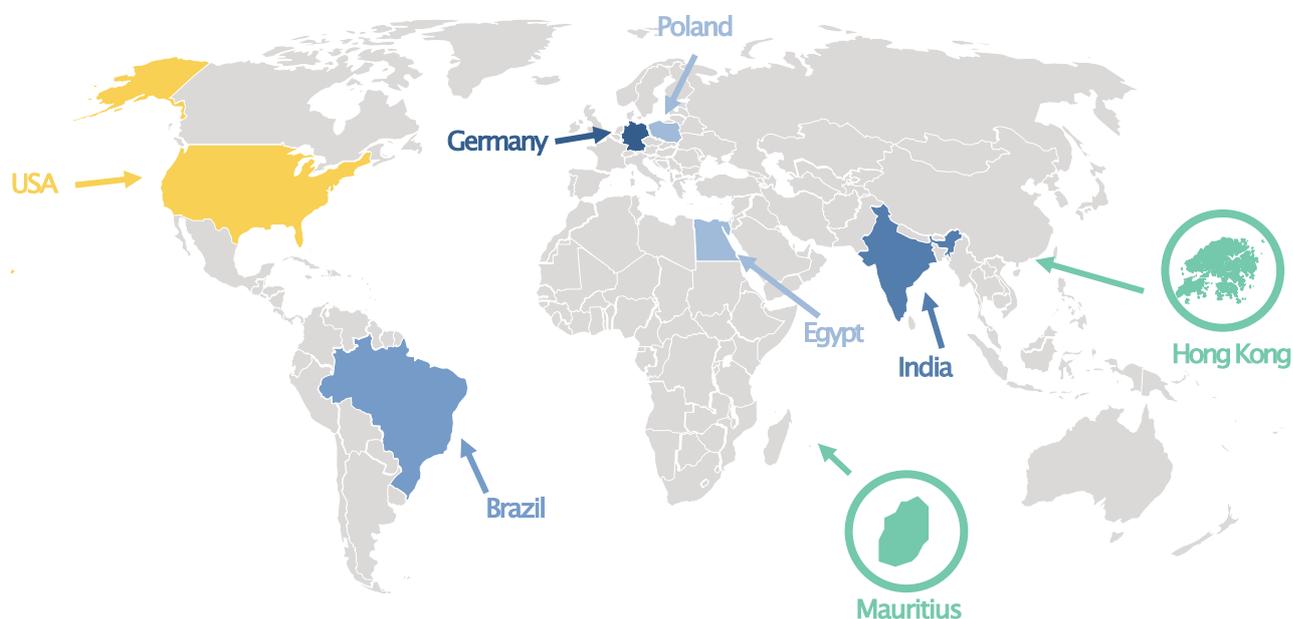
organization. Clarifying this as an intermediate step before re-visiting the strategy will bring the needed direction. It might also create the realization that a fundamental transformation is needed that goes hand in hand with genuine investment of the organization to create the space for the people to actively shape the journey. It’s a dynamic process, it’s messy, it’s iterative. It’s a Transformation Journey of Journeys.

Conclusion

We believe in a true transformation that focuses on the potential of the organization and the people in it. Such transformations are characterized by a human-centered approach, where early adopting leaders live and co-create the transformation with the rest of the organization. atrain's transformation approach leverages these beliefs, drawn from research and direct experience with clients. Our DNA Model of Transformation codifies the importance of leadership and total change—vision, strategy, hardware, and software. Co-creation processes include all levels of the organization and ensure each journey is unique. Our examples of different journey possibilities and real success stories only scratch the surface of what is achievable with a mindset that embraces transformational principles.

If you worry that changes at your own organization are missing the deep issues and not fully preparing you and your colleagues to meet future challenges, let us help you transform your anxiety to excitement through authentic transformation that unleashes everyone's true potential.

About atrain



We realize true potential. In People. In Organizations. In Society.

atrain is a global HR consultancy with a focus on people and organizational development as well as talent selection and development. With a local presence in Brazil, Egypt, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Mauritius, Poland, and the USA, atrain serves North and South America, EMEA, Eastern Europe,

India, and APAC by understanding business and people needs, co-designing, facilitating, and implementing holistic initiatives that create a sustainable impact.

We realize true potential. In people. In organizations. In society.

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