

Transformational Leadership: A Quick Start Guide



Growing, Supporting,
and Empowering People
to Amplify Change in
Organizations



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IT Revolution Press, LLC, 25 NW 23rd Pl, Suite 6314, Portland, OR 97210

Produced in the United States of America

Cover design and interior by Devon Smith

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Preface

In March of this year, we at IT Revolution once again had the pleasure of hosting leaders and experts from across the technology community at the DevOps Enterprise Forum in Portland, Oregon. The Forum's ongoing goal is to create written guidance to overcome the top obstacles facing the DevOps enterprise community.

Over the years, there has been a broad set of topics covered at the Forum, including organizational culture and change management, architecture and technical practices, metrics, integrating and achieving information security and compliance objectives, creating business cases for automated testing, organizational design, and many more. As in years past, this year's topics are relevant to the changing business dynamics we see happening across all industries and the role technology has to play within those changes.

At the Forum, as in previous years, participants self-organized into teams, working on topics that interested them. Each team narrowed their topics so that they could have a "nearly shippable" artifact by the end of the second day. Watching these teams collaborate and create their artifacts was truly amazing, and those artifacts became the core of the Forum papers you see here.

After the Forum concluded, the groups spent the next eight weeks working together to complete and refine the work they started together. The results can be found in this year's collection of Forum papers.

A special thanks goes to Jeff Gallimore, our co-host and partner and co-founder at Excella, for helping create a structure for the two days to help everyone stay focused and productive.

IT Revolution is proud to share the outcomes of the hard work, dedication, and collaboration of the amazing group of people from the 2018 DevOps Enterprise Forum. Our hope is that through these papers you will gain valuable insight into DevOps as a practice.

—Gene Kim
June 2018
Portland, Oregon

Introduction

At some point in our careers, most of us have likely experienced working for a truly great leader. How do we know when this happens? When we are truly inspired and feel like we are able to unleash all of our talent, energy, creativity, and capacity for work. If you were asked what level of ability and effort that leader got out of you, you would probably say, “More than 100%!”

Teams and organizations with these kinds of leaders have an advantage. They perform better, deliver better business results, and in many cases, do truly great and amazing things. Sometimes we attribute the “secret sauce” of success to technology or product, but what if a truly strategic advantage originated from the team or organization’s leadership style?

The characteristics and attributes of “transformational leadership” have been shown to do just that. Recent research¹ has shown the following:

- Organizations and teams with transformational leaders obtain better business results.
- Transformational leadership is a predictive factor in software delivery and organizational performance, with high-performing teams having leaders with the strongest transformational leadership traits.
- Strong transformational leaders also create a good work climate and culture for their teams, with their employees reporting the highest employee Net Promoter Scores.

Said another way, “A transformational leader’s influence is seen through their support of their teams’ work...The positive (or negative) influence of leadership flows all the way through to software delivery performance and organizational performance.”² Thus, transformational leadership becomes both a tactical and strategic asset to an organization.

¹ Nicole Forsgren, Jez Humble, and Gene Kim, *Accelerate: The Science of Lean Software and DevOps—Building and Scaling High Performing Technology Organizations* (Portland, OR: IT Revolution Press, 2018).

² Forsgren, Humble, and Kim, *Accelerate*, p. 120.

If this isn't enough to convince you, in a 2015 analysis by Gartner they predict that by 2020 half of the CIOs who have not transformed their teams' capabilities will be displaced from their organizations' digital leadership teams.³

Being a leader, wouldn't you want that for your team and organization? If you are driving a DevOps transformation, wouldn't you like to increase its chance for success?

Leaders generally fall into the following three "maturity states":

1. The leader already exhibits transformational leadership characteristics but wants to continue to improve and grow.
2. The leader exhibits behaviors that are counter to transformational leadership principles, thereby diminishing the results of the organization.
3. The leader has the desire to improve but is unaware or inadvertently employing certain behaviors that inhibit the team or individuals in specific ways.

One of the greatest advantages of a transformational leadership style is that it prioritizes creating an environment and interactions that allow a person to truly grow. In his seminal article in *Harvard Business Review*, "How Will You Measure Your Life?," *The Innovator's Dilemma* author and Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen observed the following:

... the powerful motivator in our lives isn't money; it's the opportunity to learn, grow in responsibilities, contribute to others, and be recognized for achievements. I tell the students about a vision of sorts I had while I was running the company I founded before becoming an academic.

In my mind's eye I saw one of my managers leave for work one morning with a relatively strong level of self-esteem. Then I pictured her driving home to her family 10 hours later, feeling unappreciated, frustrated, underutilized, and demeaned. I imagined how profoundly her lowered self-esteem affected the way she interacted with her children. The vision in my mind then fast-forwarded to another day, when she drove home with

³ Gartner. *Gartner Predicts*. 2016. <https://www.gartner.com/doc/3165520/predicts--new-technologies-business>.

greater self-esteem—feeling that she had learned a lot, been recognized for achieving valuable things, and played a significant role in the success of some important initiatives. I then imagined how positively that affected her as a spouse and a parent. My conclusion: Management is the most noble of professions if it’s practiced well. No other occupation offers as many ways to help others learn and grow, take responsibility and be recognized for achievement, and contribute to the success of a team.⁴

The following guide to transformational leadership can help leaders in these different states identify behaviors, attributes, and areas for improvement.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is an approach in which leaders “motivate followers to achieve performance beyond expectations by transforming followers’ attitudes, beliefs, and values.”⁵ Through authentic engagement and persuasion around a shared vision, leaders coach and mentor their employees to drive toward the common good. Transformational leaders offer choice and motivate the right behavior by appealing to their employees’ self-interest. This allows employees the freedom to look for innovative solutions.

Transformational leadership stands in stark contrast against transactional leadership, which rewards employees for “complying with a leader’s wishes. Transactional leadership encompasses contingent reward and management-by-exception.”⁶ Transactional leadership is better suited to cultures that prize maintaining the status quo, depending on preset processes and measurement to drive behavior.

We note that servant leadership is another popular management style. While there are some similarities between servant and transformational leadership, a key difference lies in the focus of the leader. Servant leaders focus on their followers’ development and performance, while transformational leaders focus on achieving

⁴ Clayton M. Christensen, “How Will You Measure Your Life?” *Harvard Business Review* (July-August 2010).

⁵ Alannah E. Rafferty and Mark A. Griffin, “Dimensions of Transformational Leadership: Conceptual and Empirical Extensions,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 15, no. 3 (2004): 329–354.

⁶ Rafferty and Griffin, “Dimensions of Transformational Leadership.”

mission goals while also encouraging and supporting followers’ development and performance. It is this focus on mission goals and outcomes that makes this leadership style compelling and particularly important in organizations today. Indeed, transformational leadership has been found to be predictive of performance outcomes, while servant leadership has less evidence of driving performance outcomes.⁷

Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

Vision

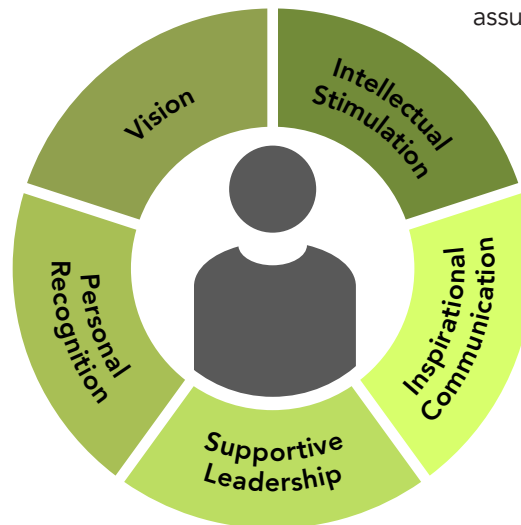
- Understands organizational direction
- Understands team direction
- Understands 5-year horizon for team

Intellectual Stimulation

- Challenges team status quo
- Challenges team to constantly ask new questions
- Challenges team on basic assumptions about the work

Personal Recognition

- Commends team for better-than-average work
- Acknowledges improvement in quality of work
- Personally compliments individuals’ outstanding work



Inspirational Communication

- Inspires pride in being part of the team
- Says positive things about the team
- Inspires passion and motivation; encourages people to see that change brings opportunities

Supportive Leadership

- Considers others’ personal feelings before acting
- Is thoughtful of others’ personal needs
- Cares about individuals’ interests

Figure 1: Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

(adapted from the 2017 State of DevOps Report)

⁷ Forsgren, Humble, and Kim, *Accelerate*; Rafferty and Griffin, “Dimensions of Transformational Leadership.”

⁸ Rafferty and Griffin, “Dimensions of Transformational Leadership.”

It is very likely that you may find yourself in a culture or environment that sometimes embraces an encouraging, motivational, transformational leadership style while at other times exhibiting a leadership style that is very transactional in nature. The change from transactional leadership to transformational isn't an immediate one. It takes time, and some parts of the journey will go faster than others. Measuring your progress can help you know if you're moving in the right direction.

Measuring Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership can be measured. How? By using carefully written and validated surveys. In their article "Dimensions of Transformational Leadership: Conceptual and Empirical Extensions," Rafferty and Griffin provide a great fifteen-item measurement survey for transformational leadership that is predictive of organizational outcomes.⁸ The *2017 State of DevOps Report*, conducted by DORA and Puppet, validated that this model of transformational leadership drove key capabilities in the context of technology work, which in turn contributed to software delivery and organizational performance.⁹

So the next question you may be asking yourself is this: How do I rate on this scale of transformational leadership? Answer the questions in the assessment below (Table 1) to get a quick look at your or your leader's transformational leadership behaviors.

Transformational Leadership Assessment Instructions

Each aspect of transformational leadership has three questions. Answer each one on a scale of 1 to 7, where:

- 1 = Strongly disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Slightly disagree
- 4 = Neither agree nor disagree, or neutral
- 5 = Slightly agree
- 6 = Agree
- 7 = Strongly agree

⁸Rafferty and Griffin, "Dimensions of Transformational Leadership."

⁹Nicole Forsgren, Jez Humble, Gene Kim, Alanna Brown, and Nigel Kersten. *2017 State of DevOps Report* (Portland, OR: Puppet and DORA, 2017), <https://www.ipexpoeurope.com/content/download/10069/143970/file/2017-state-of-devops-report.pdf>.

When you read and answer these questions, you can answer them for:

- Your leader: In this case, answer the questions as they are written.
- Yourself: In this case, there are two ways you should think about answering the questions:
 - First: Directly for yourself. Every time you see the prompt “My leader or manager,” change it to “I” or “me.”
 - Second (and probably the most insightful): For yourself as others would rate you. Every time you see the prompt “My leader or manager,” change it to “My team or those that I lead would say that I...”

Average the three scores in each category to come up with a composite score that provides a measure of your leader’s or your own transformational leadership behaviors across the five dimensions. In all categories, a higher score indicates stronger demonstration of transformational leadership behaviors. And as you’ll read below, the more we see transformational leadership, the more support we have to do the work and the better outcomes we get.

Table 1. Transformational Leadership Assessment

(Adapted from Rafferty and Griffin’s

Dimensions of Transformational Leadership: Conceptual and Empirical Extensions).

Vision	<p>My leader or manager:</p> <p>___ Has a clear understanding of where we are going.</p> <p>___ Has a clear sense of where he/she wants our team to be in five years.</p> <p>___ Has a clear idea of where the organization is going.</p> <p>___ Average Score</p>
Inspirational Communication	<p>My leader or manager:</p> <p>___ Says things that make employees proud to be a part of this organization.</p> <p>___ Says positive things about the work unit.</p> <p>___ Encourages people to see changing environments as situations full of opportunities.</p> <p>___ Average Score</p>

1 = Strongly disagree; 4 = Neutral; 7 = Strongly agree

Intellectual Stimulation	<p>My leader or manager:</p> <p>_____ Challenges me to think about old problems in new ways.</p> <p>_____ Has ideas that have forced me to rethink some things that I have never questioned before.</p> <p>_____ Has challenged me to rethink some of my basic assumptions about my work.</p> <p>_____ <i>Average Score</i></p>
Supportive Leadership	<p>My leader or manager:</p> <p>_____ Considers my personal feelings before acting.</p> <p>_____ Behaves in a manner which is thoughtful of my personal needs.</p> <p>_____ Sees that the interests of employees are given due consideration.</p> <p>_____ <i>Average Score</i></p>
Personal Recognition	<p>My leader or manager:</p> <p>_____ Commends me when I do a better than average job.</p> <p>_____ Acknowledges improvement in my quality of work.</p> <p>_____ Personally compliments me when I do outstanding work.</p> <p>_____ <i>Average Score</i></p>

1 = Strongly disagree; 4 = Neutral; 7 = Strongly agree

The Five Dimensions of Transformational Leadership

Now that you have your score, what does it really mean? Why is it important? What additional insight can we pull from this framework of transformational leadership? How can we use this to help improve? Next, we present some additional thoughts about each of the five dimensions of transformational leadership.

1. Vision

Vision is the expression of a desired picture of the future based around organizational values and should answer this basic question: What do we want to become? In addition to knowing and understanding direction, transformational leaders must be able to clearly communicate the vision and validate that it was understood as intended.

...the CEO needs to become “the storyteller in chief,” says Aetna’s Mark Bertolini. That means telling different aspects of the same transformation narrative to all the constituencies and stakeholders in the company.”¹⁰

2. Inspirational Communication

Inspirational communication is the expression of positive and encouraging messages about the organization, and statements that build motivation and confidence. Transformational leaders continually seek to understand changing factors that motivate people to do their best work.

Inspirational communication seems to be particularly important when expressing a vision for the future. In the absence of encouragement and confidence building efforts, articulating a vision may have a neutral or even negative influence on employees.¹¹

3. Supportive Leadership

Supportive leaders express concern for their followers and take into account their individual needs. Gallup’s *State of the American Manager Report* (2017) states that employees are more engaged when their managers are open and approachable and not focused solely on work-related items.¹² This recognizes that we bring our whole selves to work and that it is difficult, if not impossible, to leave our personal concerns at the door.

While transformational leaders don’t have to be managers, they will be more successful when they adopt these attributes.

¹⁰ Scott Anthony and Evan Schwartz, “What the Best Transformational Leaders Do,” *Harvard Business Review* (September 20, 2017.) <https://hbr.org/2017/05/what-the-best-transformational-leaders-do>.

¹¹ Anthony and Schwartz, “What the Best Transformational Leaders Do.”

¹² Gallup, *State of the American Workplace Report* (Washington, DC: Gallup, 2017). http://news.gallup.com/reports/199961/7.aspx?utm_source=gbj&utm_campaign=StateofAmericanWorkplace-Launch&utm_medium=copy&utm_content=20170215.

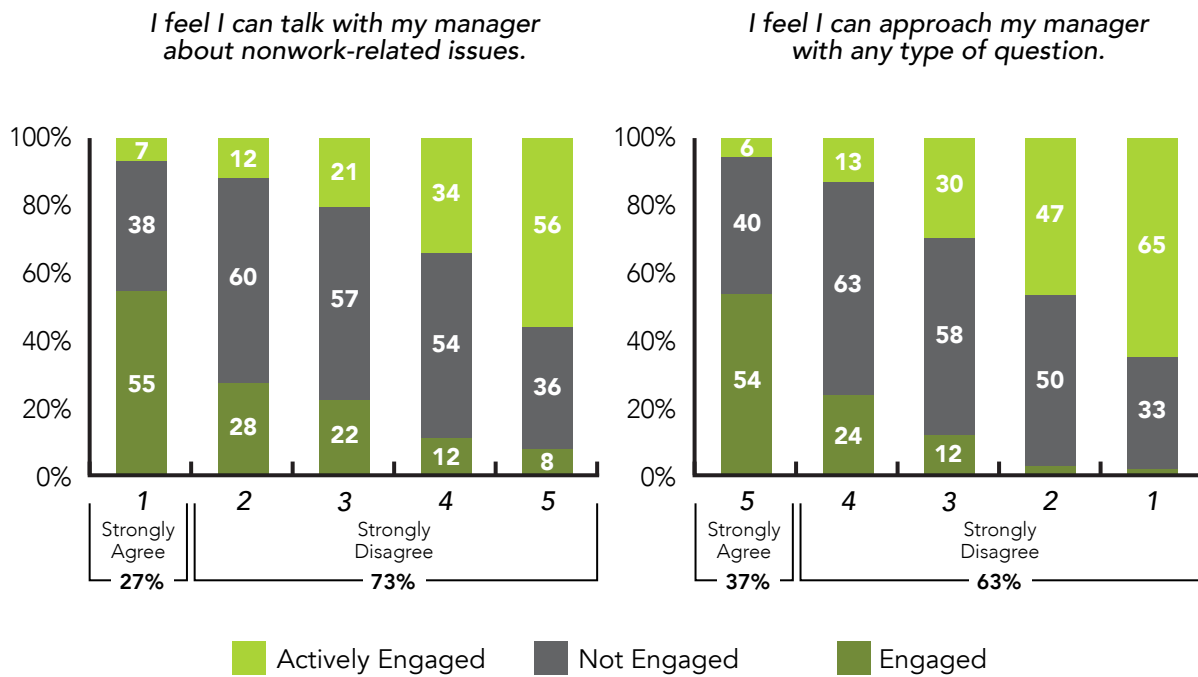


Figure 2: Employees Whose Managers Are Open and Approachable Are More Engaged¹³

4. Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation enhances employees’ interest in and awareness of problems, and it helps to increase creative problem-solving skills, encouraging them to think about problems in new ways.

In order to spur employee interest in problems and problem-solving, one must accept the fact that problems do and will continue to exist. Despite the proverb stating an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, believing that you can prevent all problems often leads to being caught without the skills to solve a problem when one does arise. As with all things, balance is key. By embracing the opportunity to involve employees in a problem’s life cycle, a transformational leader can be a key catalyst for turning a company into a learning organization.

¹³ (Gallup, State of the American Workplace Report [Washington, DC: Gallup, 2017]. http://news.gallup.com/reports/199961/7.aspx?utm_source=gbj&utm_campaign=StateofAmericanWorkplace-Launch&utm_medium=copy&utm_content=20170215.)

Learning organizations are skilled at five main activities: systematic problem solving, experimentation with new approaches, learning from their own experience and past history, learning from the experiences and best practices of others, and transferring knowledge quickly and efficiently throughout the organization. Each is accompanied by a distinctive mindset, tool kit, and pattern of behavior. Many companies practice these activities to some degree. But few are consistently successful because they rely largely on happenstance and isolated examples. By creating systems and processes that support these activities and integrate them into the fabric of daily operations, companies can manage their learning more effectively.¹⁴

5. Personal Recognition

Giving employees personal recognition through the use of such incentives as praise and acknowledgement of effort upon the achievement of specified goals can be a minefield, but traversing it is a necessary act. The key is to understand how incentives can affect employees' motivation and engagement, and to find out which behaviors drive them so that you encourage the right behaviors and keep employees inspired and wanting to pursue the vision. Transformational leaders use incentives that align with their employees' self-interest to encourage a culture of learning and collaboration.

Today, the old ways of running a workplace—annual reviews, forced rankings, outdated competencies—don't get the intended results. Leaders must gain scientific insight into employees' evolving wants and needs and learn how to build an exceptional workplace.¹⁵

Also according to Gallup, 21% of employees strongly agree that their performance is managed in a way that motivates them to do outstanding work.¹⁶

¹⁴ David A. Garvin, "Building a Learning Organization," *Harvard Business Review* (August 01, 2014). <https://hbr.org/1993/07/building-a-learning-organization>. A version of this article appeared in the July–August 1993 issue of *Harvard Business Review*.

¹⁵ Gallup, *State of the American Workplace Report*.

¹⁶ Gallup, *State of the American Workplace Report*.

Growing Transformational Leadership

Becoming a transformational leader isn't something that's accomplished overnight, nor is it something you achieve and then sit back on your laurels. Transformational leaders embrace learning and have a growth mindset. To help you get started in your journey to becoming a transformational leader, we have provided a Quick Start Guide that identifies the following:

- Key concepts that are necessary to truly understand each dimension of transformational leadership.
- Behaviors often seen in transformational leaders that reinforce the key concepts for the dimension.
- Tools or techniques that can help you implement good practice behaviors.
- Common missteps that you can avoid.

Transformational Leadership Quick Start Guide

Here is our quick start guide on how to apply transformational leadership. While it is by no means all encompassing, it is a good start to get you on your way. We've broken down each aspect of transformational leadership and provided things you need to know about each one, good practice behaviors, tools that may help, and things to avoid. While this transformation won't occur overnight, this guide will get you on your way.

Vision

Need to know:

- Intent-based leadership.¹⁷
- Your vision and mission.
- Your organizational values.
- Your competitive landscape.

¹⁷David Marquet, "Intent Based Leadership | David Marquet," YouTube video, 10:18, posted by Speakers' Spotlight, June 6, 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nzynH2BmoJM>.

Good practice behaviors:

- Build a story.
- Articulate why this is a better future state.
- Ensure the vision has been understood as intended.
- Create or refine the vision and mission if one doesn't exist.

Tools that may help:

- Briefing/back briefing templates.

What to avoid:

- “Buzzword bingo” vision and mission statements.
- Sharing the “what” of the vision but not the “why.”
- Assuming intent was understood without verification.

Inspirational Communication

Need to know:

- Intent-based leadership.
- Theory X versus Y (motivation).¹⁸
- Fixed versus growth mindset.¹⁹

Good practice behaviors:

- Evangelize both the “what” and “why” of the vision.
- Ensure that desired change will help achieve the vision.
- Visualize and celebrate progress of various scope and size.
- Use storytelling and parables.
- Communicate on a regular cadence.
- Focus on the future.

Tools that may help:

- “Trophy case” of group-level successes.
- Metrics dashboard highlighting metrics in tension.
- “Story Catalog”: a collection of internal and external stories that highlight successes or challenges that helped the group learn.

¹⁸ “Theory X and Theory Y,” Wikipedia, last modified May 30, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theory_X_and_Theory_Y.

¹⁹ Reza Zolfagharifard, “Growth-Mindset Vs. Fixed-Mindset,” *Positive Psychology Program* (January 30, 2018), <https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/growth-vs-fixed-mindset/>.

What to avoid:

- Using “us” versus “them” messages.
- Focusing on failure stories only, excluding success stories.
- Ruminating over the past or past success.
- Gossipy stories.
- Dancing around or sugar-coating problems/obstacles that need to be overcome.

Intellectual Stimulation

Need to know:

- Your current state problems.
- Systems thinking.²⁰
- Blameless post-mortem cultures.²¹
- Fixed versus growth mindset.
- Learning organizations.²²
- A3 thinking.²³
- Lean/Agile leadership.²⁴

Good practice behaviors:

- Encourage the identification of and open communication about problems on a regular cadence.
- Approach problems as issues with the system not the people.
- Be seen learning and encouraging others to learn; make cross-training a priority.
- Distribute decision-making to those closest to the knowledge and situational awareness.
- Encourage regular cadences of self-directed exploration and experimentation.

²⁰ Peter Senge, “What is systems thinking?” by Peter Senge, Author of *The Fifth Discipline*, YouTube video, 1:08, posted by Russell Sarder, June 4, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V38HrPnYkHI>.

²¹ Daniel Schauenberg, “Practical Postmortems at Etsy,” *InfoQ*, August 22, 2015, <https://www.infoq.com/articles/postmortems-etsy>.

²² “Learning Organization,” Wikipedia, last modified May 30, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning_organization.

²³ John Shook, “Lean Summit 2008 - John Shook - How can lean leaders develop their people through A3 thinking?” YouTube video, 27:12, posted by Lean Enterprise Academy, April 25, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZK_WTT2JpY.

²⁴ “Lean-Agile Leaders,” ScaledAgileFramework.com, last modified November 17, 2017, <https://www.scaledagileframework.com/lean-agile-leaders/>.

Tools that may help:

- Visual representations that highlight problems, such as kanban boards and CI/CD dashboards.
- A library of various retrospective facilitation techniques.
- A3 problem-solving template.²⁵
- Skills liquidity matrix.²⁶
- 20% time, hackathons, bug bashes, or similar.

What to avoid:

- Punishing people for making mistakes without first addressing systemic causes.
- Putting people in situations that are beyond their risk tolerance (via a lack of safety measures).

Supportive Leadership

Need to know:

- Emotional intelligence.²⁷
- Lean pillar of respect for people.²⁸
- Conflict resolution/crucial conversations.²⁹
- Risk culture.³⁰

Good practice behaviors:

- Be available and approachable.
- Learn about the people themselves, not just about their work.
- Invite people to bring their “whole self” to work.
- Learn what people want/need from you in any given context.
- Teach behaviors that enable individuals to grow into leaders themselves.
- Run team building exercises—particularly that help build understanding/culture/morale/cohesion.

²⁵ Durward K. Sobek, II, *Toyota-Style Problem-Solving A3 Reports* (Bozeman, MT: Montana State University, Accessed April 29, 2018), <https://www.lean.org/Search/Documents/406.pdf>.

²⁶ “FocusedObjective/FocusedObjective.Resources,” GitHub.com, last modified February 28, 2017, <https://github.com/FocusedObjective/FocusedObjective.Resources/blob/master/Spreadsheets/Capability%20Matrix%20v2.xlsx>.

²⁷ Daniel Goleman and Richard E. Boyatzis, “Emotional Intelligence Has 12 Elements. Which Do You Need to Work On?” *Harvard Business Review*, February 6, 2017, <https://hbr.org/2017/02/emotional-intelligence-has-12-elements-which-do-you-need-to-work-on>.

²⁸ Doug Bartholomew, “How to Lead with Respect,” Lean Enterprise Institute website, October 21, 2015, <https://www.lean.org/common/display/?o=3095>.

²⁹ Joseph Grenney, “Crucial Conversations | Joseph Grenney,” YouTube video, 14:57, posted by VitalSmarts Speakers, December 14, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuJgqTs-G44>.

³⁰ Deloitte, “Risk Culture: Three Stages of Continuous Improvement,” *The Wall Street Journal, Risk and Compliance Journal*, May 21, 2013, <http://deloitte.wsj.com/riskandcompliance/2013/05/21/risk-culture-three-stages-of-continuous-improvement/>.

Tools that may help:

- Office hours (scheduled availability on a regular basis).
- Personality activities (e.g., business chemistry,³¹ StrengthsFinder,³² SSI, etc.) to build awareness of how others think.
- Allocate time during one or two staff meetings per period for team-building/trust-building games.

What to avoid:

- “Forced fun” initiatives—required team activities that no one enjoys.
- Displaying a preference for particular people or personality styles.
- If you’re a manager, continually deprioritizing/moving one-on-one meetings.

Personal Recognition

Need to know:

- Theory X versus Y (motivation).
- The too-much-talent effect.³³
- Open source/inner source engineering models.³⁴

Good practice behaviors:

- Ensure recognition drives desired behavior (e.g., reward-sharing, collaboration, and peer recognition).
- Establish a regular cadence of recognition—even small things that recognize a standout performance over the past number of weeks. (Note: a leader should be careful that it should rotate somewhat to avoid the “rockstar” problem and should also celebrate group-facilitating and collaborating behaviors.)
- Give handwritten thank you notes expressing appreciation and recognition and one-on-one verbal communication sincerely expressing gratitude, appreciation, and well-done work.

³¹ Suzanne M. Johnson Vickberg and Kim Christfort, “The New Science of Team Chemistry,” *Harvard Business Review*, July 25, 2017, <https://hbr.org/2017/03/the-new-science-of-team-chemistry>.

³² Gallup, “StrengthsFinder 2.0,” Gallup Strengths Finder 2.0 website, accessed April 29, 2018, <https://www.gallupstrengthscenter.com/home/en-us/strengthsfinder>.

³³ Roderick I. Swaab, Michael Schaerer, Eric M. Anicich, Richard Ronay, and Adam D. Galinsky, “The Too-Much-Talent Effect: Team Interdependence Determines When More Talent Is Too Much or Not Enough,” *Psychological Science* 25, no. 8 (2014): 1581-591.

³⁴ “Open-Source Software,” Wikipedia, last modified May 30, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source_software; “Inner Source,” Wikipedia, last modified May 30, 2018, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inner_source.

Tools that may help:

- Skills liquidity matrix (shows goals and progress regarding skills acquisition).³⁵
- Incentives analysis canvas.³⁶
- Peer recognition platforms.
- Cultural totem (part of the recognition/symbol of pride for the team), like college football helmet stickers. Find an icon that matches your culture. This can be applied to individuals or teams.

What to avoid:

- Providing recognition that makes people choose between their individual success and the success of the overall team or organization, including an appreciation of “rockstars,” “firefighters,” or “heroes.”
- Comparisons pitting team members against each other.
- Offering incentives that haven’t been analyzed for risk versus reward (i.e., Will they hurt more than they help?)

Transformational Leadership in Action

So, what does transformational leadership look like? Below are a few examples of transformational leadership in action.

- **Bill Palmer, Parts Unlimited:** As the seminal character in book *The Phoenix Project*, Bill provides an excellent case study into applying transformational leadership.
- **Gregg Popovich, San Antonio Spurs Coach:** Read about how Gregg’s leadership style has led to 5 NBA Championship rings: <http://fortune.com/2014/06/16/gregg-popovich-leadership/>
- **Edwin Catmull, Pixar:** Read this great article about how Pixar co-founder has empowered others to achieve the extraordinary: <https://hbr.org/2008/08/how-pixars-ed-catmull-empowers>

³⁵ “FocusedObjective/FocusedObjective.Resources,” GitHub.com, last modified February 28, 2017, <https://github.com/FocusedObjective/FocusedObjective.Resources/blob/master/Spreadsheets/Capability%20Matrix%20v2.xlsx>.

³⁶ “Incentives Analysis Canvas,” Intentionally Adaptive website, accessed April 30, 2018, <https://www.intentionally-adaptive.com/incentives-analysis-canvas>.

- **Satya Nadella, Microsoft CEO:** Check out this great article on how Satya revived a tech giant: <https://www.geekwire.com/2017/review-microsoft-ceo-satya-nadellas-candid-book-hit-refresh-goes-inside-tech-giants-turn-around/>. You can also check out his book on the subject, *Hit Refresh: The Quest to Rediscover Microsoft's Soul and Imagine a Better Future for Everyone*.
- **W. Edwards Deming:** William Edwards Deming is known as the father of statistical quality control. His institute, The W. Edwards Deming Institute, has a host of resources to explore: <https://deming.org/>.

Conclusion

Transformational leadership is something that all of us can do, and teams with transformational leaders have better outcomes, helping to amplify the work of those they work with and direct. It can be described along five dimensions (vision, inspirational communication, intellectual stimulation, supportive leadership, and personal recognition) and can be measured.

In this paper, we provided you with an overview of transformational leadership and some tips to help you grow your own capabilities, as well as pointers to some of our favorite resources. We wish you luck in your journey and encourage you to continue learning and growing, both yourself and your team.

Additional Reading

- *Accelerate: The Science of Lean Software and DevOps—Building and Scaling High Performing Technology Organizations*, by Nicole Forsgren, Jez Humble, Gene Kim.
Research in DevOps, including culture and transformational leadership.
- *Radical Candor* by Kim Scott.
Leadership communication.
- *XLR8 (Accelerate: Building Strategic Agility for a Faster-Moving World)* by John P. Kotter.
Organizational structure/dynamics.
- *Culture Code* by Daniel Coyle.
Describes three key elements of team and organizational leadership culture that drives high performance and excellent results.
- *Multipliers* by Liz Wiseman.
Behaviors that either amplify or diminish employee growth and engagement.
- *The Leadership Code* by Dave Ulrich.
Key activities that leaders do to grow people.
- *Turn the Ship Around* by David Marquet.
Articulating vision, intent-based leadership.
- *State of the American Manager Report*, Gallup.
What makes a good manager.
- *Primal Leadership: Unleashing the Power of Emotional Intelligence and/or Emotional Intelligence 2.0* by Daniel Goleman.
A foundation of effective leadership is emotional intelligence.
- *The Leader-Manager* by William B. Hitt.
Holistic/structural overview of leadership and management combined along with coaching advice/tips.
- *Four Disciplines of Execution* by Sean Covey, Chris McChesney and Jim Huling.
Means of tracking progress toward achieving mission/vision in a visible way.

- *Managing to Learn* by John Shook.
A3 thinking model for problem-solving; building an entire organization of problem solvers and critical thinkers.
- *The Human Side of Enterprise* by Douglas McGregor.
Theory X versus Theory Y styles of motivation.
- *How Will You Measure Your Life?* by Clayton Christensen.
The realization that management and leadership is a noble profession that can better the lives of people, their families, and their communities. Also, being able to apply critical business and management theories to your personal life.
- *First, Break All the Rules: What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently* by Gallup.
- *Leading Change* by John P. Kotter.
- “The Real Reason People Won’t Change” by Robert Kegan and Lisa Lahey, *Harvard Business Review*, <https://hbr.org/2001/11/the-real-reason-people-wont-change>.
- *Clarity First: How Smart Leaders and Organizations Achieve Outstanding Performance* by Karen Martin.
- *Strategic Management: A Competitive Advantage Approach, Concepts and Cases* (16th Edition) by Fred R. David and Forest R. David.

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