

The Transformational Leader

What We've Learned at the Transformation Collaborative



Definition of a Transformational Leader

A transformational leader is someone who, despite significant human and institutional inertia against change, questions everything, leading the organization in a *radical departure* from the status quo. Transformational leaders are revolutionary rather than evolutionary and their commitment to change is strategically connected to things that *matter* such as sustainability, purpose, growth, social impact, innovation, and global relevance among others. Ultimately, transformational leaders leverage human capital by supporting human connection to build community.

Transformational Leadership Behaviors

- Embraces:
 - Risk
 - Ambiguity
 - New, even radical ideas
- Creates the energy behind change/inspiration
- Actively manages change
- Empowers others
- Supports innovation and entrepreneurialism
- Promotes a vision that is more attractive than the status quo
- Aligns strategy, operations, and resources with the change agenda
- Models desired behaviors (listening, accountability, teamwork, risk-taking, trust, etc.)

Choosing to do what's hard/right/transformational requires not only courage, but the *conviction* to challenge often powerful interests who will dedicate themselves to preserving the status quo.

No leader possesses all or even most of these behaviors, traits and skills. The best leaders are the best because they fully leverage the most valuable elements of who they are, in the present context, in pursuit of the most valuable outcomes.

Transformational Leadership Traits

- Self-Aware
- Vulnerable
- Courageous
- Humble
- Authentic
- Confident
- Collaborative
- Adaptive

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Transformational Leadership Skills

- 360 Degree View
- Business Development
- Revenue Generation
- High Return Deployment of Capital
- Change Management
- Meaning Making & Communications
- Team and Community Building
- Enterprise & Value Creation/Partnerships/M&A
- People Leadership
- Branding



Transformational Leadership Values

- Sustainability
- Humanism
- Diversity
- Honesty
- Integrity
- Fairness
- Generosity
- Doing Well by Doing Good

Transformational Leadership Outcomes

- Innovation
- Transformation
- Sustainability
- Organizational Resilience
- Growth and Value Creation
- Organizational Health and Wellness
- Positive Social Impact

Most leaders are transactional and tactical, relying on strengths and patterns of the past to produce recognizable, predictable, low-risk and low-return results.

Why? Because it is safe and comfortable.

Genuine transformative change is a very high-risk proposition for the leader, who even if successful, may threaten established centers of power and traditional ideas of “value.” For example, investors who value short term margins over long term sustainability, will not support leadership that drives sustainability. Similarly, boards that favor rankings or status will not support leadership that drives innovation or prioritizes social impact.