

Transformation: Delivery, Innovation & Growth for realism



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Driven by economic realities in an increasingly volatile economy, companies recognising the need for agility and change continue to undertake transformation. Tactix Consultancy commissioned research to ascertain the critical factors on how transformation can be successfully and smoothly delivered within organisations in these difficult and unpredictable times. We approached University College, London's Institute for Security and Resilience Studies (ISRS) with a brief, and the result is our research paper, Transformation: Delivery, Innovation & Growth for realism, which was launched in March 2012.

The new ideas driving transformation within the workplace adopt a more tactical, rather than 'strategic' approach. While 'strategy' continues to be important for a big-picture overview in any transformation effort, the actual nuts and bolts of delivering tangible innovation and measurable growth from a transformation is what counts in gaining competitive corporate advantage.

Research affirms that people are the cornerstone to any successful transformation initiative. The best strategies for organisation, execution and follow-up all hinge on the people. Our concept of 'Graceful Creative Destruction' looks at how an organisation can effectively move from existing, entrenched methods of working in a coordinated way. Staff are 'bought in' rather than imposed upon so change becomes smoother and more organic. Linked to this is the evidence we found that transformation is not just fuelled by people 'learning together' the act of 'unlearning together' is equally important, and we have developed expertise in helping organisations identify the specifics that need 'unlearning'.

Of course, 'resilience' is a primary requirement for any transformation project. However, 'resilience' goes beyond being able to endure and to prevail what is required is the ability to progress. One of our breakthrough findings is how organisations should not simply 'bounce back' post-transformation, but how they should 'bounce forwards'. Companies must be capable of continuously moving forward while thriving on uncertainty. Those are the rules for doing business in this economic era, and the old idea of hunkering down and staying the course is no longer sufficient. Again, no corporation is soulless, and such resilience requires what we call 'Dynamic Change Capability'. To be successful, transformation programmes must address the logical and emotional dimensions of change equally. Plans for systems, checks and balances are imperative, but without taking the human dimension into account, the transformation will be 'hobbled' as you will likely be dragging people along, often against their will, and that impairs the long-term resilience of the corporation.

For too long, transformation has been considered a mechanistic endeavour to ensure the continued viability and success of organisations. Our research proves that the 'people' aspects are crucial. An 'Entrepreneurial Manager' is a key asset to any organisational transformation. It is common for people to think of entrepreneurs as the visionary big-idea thinkers and associate entrepreneurship with CEOs, the Chair Person, and others in such leadership roles, and relegate managers to the realm of people who have primary responsibility for overseeing execution.

However, research shows that despite the pressures of quarterly reporting, managers who are entrepreneurial are a company's strongest resource because they are able to merge 'on the ground' knowledge with ideas 'from the top' they are the conduit that links vision with execution, and it therefore makes sense to encourage managers to explore ways of doing their job that would bring in some of the vitality and creativity associated with entrepreneurship.

Ultimately, the good news is that the definition of 'transformation' itself supports the idea that organisations can survive. Many have not, and many more will not but within our research lies another significant finding, which is that organisations need to develop new types of partnerships in order to thrive. Large multinationals can cooperate with not co-opt SMEs (small and medium enterprises), or even with small independent outfits, in order to mutually benefit. For too long, acquiring expertise has been the norm but what tends to happen is that the nimble way of working that made the acquired outfit so attractive is subsumed and crushed by a lumbering organisational structure. New types of partnerships will make it realistically possible to achieve Delivery, Innovation and Growth through Transformation.

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6 KEYS TO SUCCESSFUL TRANSFORMATION

Go for 'Graceful Creative Destruction' : Create new ways of working by ensuring that everyone in an organisation moves on in a positive and coordinated way (rather than in a chaotic, abrupt and piecemeal fashion)

Transformation is fuelled by 'learning together' and 'unlearning together'

Resilience is more critical than ever and the challenge is up-skilling the organisation so that it is capable of continuously moving forward and thriving on uncertainty – bouncing forwards, rather than simply bouncing back

Entrepreneurial Management rather than Entrepreneurial Leadership can encourage innovation in the body of the organisation identify and develop entrepreneurial managers to do the reengineering and innovating

Dynamic Change Capability is key, and means addressing both the logical and the emotional dimensions in change programmes

Develop New Types of Partnership: Understand how large multinationals can and should cooperate with SMEs, and even small independent outfits