



LEVERAGING TRANSFORMATION TO DRIVE GREATER SUCCESS

Global Insight From 12 Thought Leaders



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Foreword

*“What transforms this world is — knowledge.
... Nothing else can change anything in this world.”*

— Yukio Mishima

In today's workplace, people and organizations worldwide must strive to make sense of all the disruptive changes we are witnessing, whether economic, technological, or cultural. Such changes bring about a host of particular challenges, many of which have never been faced before. To navigate and advance through this new, ever-changing landscape — a perpetual terra incognita — organizations require foresight and innovation to generate the transformation that is vital to their success.

No transformation is possible without knowledge. And while knowledge may not be a rare commodity in the connected world, knowing where to find the best knowledge to meet challenges can be tricky. How then should organizations need to be thinking about transformation to survive and thrive?

That was precisely the question we asked several of our faculty members, and we are pleased to present their thought leadership to help guide us through these times of change. And because putting knowledge into practice is such an essential part of the learning process, we have also included questions, assessments, and activities for you to transform their insights into action, right now, in your life.

From agility to empathy, from employee experience to digital evolution, from diversity and inclusion to value creation through intangible assets, each of these articles has been specially written and prepared by our faculty for this publication. We are grateful for their unwavering dedication to helping us help you ensure sustainable growth and development of your people and your business.

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and download the whole publication.



Three Radical Steps for Transformation People Love: Empathy as a Key Driver

By Marie R. Miyashiro

"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."

— Maya Angelou, American Poet, Actress, and Activist

"Change" and "transformation" are not the same thing in organizations. Think about water. It can heat up for a very long time without it ever "transforming." But when it reaches a certain temperature and boils, it transforms from liquid into steam. In the same way, change in organizations is often like water just below the boiling point. Change initiatives disrupt the predictable status quo, create an environment that seems chaotic, and bring people's stress levels and emotions to their boiling points. This is "change." It is *doing* something different.

Transformation is *becoming* something different. Becoming something different as an organization involves changing not only what is going on around people in terms of operational realities, but also what is going on inside of them in terms of their thoughts and feelings. True transformation happens from the inside of people out. This kind of transformation is the kind of change that sticks to bring about desired outcomes.

"Change" is mapping out and training a new operational process with clearly defined steps for handling angry customers. "Transformation" is helping customer service team members understand how an angry customer thinks and feels underneath the anger and what kind of experience matters to them. They may want to be heard about their disappointment, understood about their inconvenience, and acknowledged for their efforts.

Since true transformation is an inside-out process, it requires the emotional and social competency of empathy — creating a mutual connection between people based on understanding how people think, feel, and act.

Let's clear up three common myths about empathy first. Empathy is not about being soft or nice. It is about being disciplined enough to listen to what really matters to someone by first putting what matters to us aside — temporarily. Second, empathy is not about only listening. Since it is about mutual connection, it is also about having the courage to speak up about what is true for us. Third, empathy is not sympathy. Sympathy happens when we turn our focus to ourselves, instead of remaining curious about what is happening for the other.

If empathy seems too conceptual, think of it as the ability to be curious. Curiosity and judgment cannot exist in the same mental and emotional space within us. When we are intentionally

curious, we are exercising our empathy competence. The good news is that everyone already knows how to be curious.

So, how do you make the agonizing process of change into transformation people love?

Principle No. 1: Turn Professional Development Into Personal Development

Giving trainings and new workplace initiatives a context that also applies to employees' personal lives achieves three benefits. First, people learn and integrate new ideas much faster because they can relate to it on a personal level.

I was working with a strategic planning group that were mostly in their 20s and 30s and I watched their eyes glaze over when their leaders talked about strategy. I took a risk by training a strategic visioning process focused on marketing to the ideal customer by making a parallel with how to find the perfect partner to date and marry. It requires similar steps like being clear about the desired outcomes, steps and timelines to achieve them, resources required, etc. They loved it. It was uniquely fun yet still professionally appropriate.

Second, when people understand that there is something in this just for them, they are self-motivated to practice and explore new skills on their own time. You can literally double the training outcomes and time.

Third, because personal development draws out personal stories, this supports group unity, trust, and relationship building.

Principle No. 2: Replace “Managing” with “Coaching”

Empathy is a key driver to one of the biggest trends in leadership — shifting “managing” to “coaching.” Managing is about giving answers. Coaching is about asking questions that lead to best-thinking solutions. Coaching relies on curiosity and being empathic so that a leader/coach can ask questions in a psychologically safe environment that is validating rather than judgmental.

Principle No. 3: Let People Bake the Bread They Eat

About 70 percent of all change initiatives fail, often badly, with the loss of resources, time, and — most difficult to recover — people's enthusiasm and support. The good news is that we know what is in the 30 percent that succeed: (a) emotional support and connection to the change, and (b) the people implementing the change are the ones who are developing the action steps.

- What are the implications for the final customer? For other units?
- What do you want from leadership to make this a success?
- How are you going to behave to make this a success?"
- Why does this project matter to you?
- Who are the people critical to involve to make this a success?

For teams to engage in a way that they are baking the bread they eat, or are implementing the plan they develop, empathy makes sense. You anticipate roadblocks and generate support in advance.

There is no transformation in an organization without transformation within the hearts of its people first. If we strive to be both open-minded and open-hearted, change and transition can become something people love.



Marie R. Miyashiro

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About the Author

Marie R. Miyashiro writes, gives keynote talks and, trains on communication, collaboration, and customer loyalty fueled by “practical empathy.” Guiding teams and leaders for decades, her field-tested approach transforms workplaces from the bottom up and the top down, bringing out the best in people and their thinking for strategic clarity, leadership development, and team agility. A Master Facilitator, she designs and delivers uncommonly transformative and enjoyable events. Her book *The Empathy Factor: Your Competitive Advantage for Personal, Team, and Business Success* has been translated into French, German, Dutch, and Chinese.

On a personal note ...



A perfect day for Marie has spaciousness of time, lots of connection to the feelings and human needs of herself and others, and an episode or two of *Hawaii Five-O* to remind her of home.



Marie is driven by wanting to love and contribute to others, being loved and given to, and having lots of moments of laughter and connection.



She'd like to learn Spanish because it's beautiful, and where she lives, it would help her as well as energize her brain.

This contribution is part of a publication including articles from 11 other members of the CrossKnowledge Faculty. If you'd like to receive a physical copy of the full publication, please send us an email at contact@crossknowledge.com



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