

Cultural Transformation is a Leadership Skill Everyone Can Learn

Culture transformation is an advanced [leadership](#) skill. The primary way to change a culture is to use your conversational [intelligence](#) to create an [environment](#) that infuses energy and commitment into relationships, [teams](#) and the whole organization. Too often we get stuck in habit patterns of talking about but not creating change.

The more we talk about change, the more we talk about all the problems and challenges that can emerge, resulting in negative mindsets, which trigger fear [hormones](#) and threat networks in our brains. No wonder change is so difficult. By the time we are ready to take action, we are frozen in place.

However, **you can shift the way you think about change the same way successful leaders do to navigate their own journeys.**

> 1st Success Factor: Be the Change for Transforming the Culture

The first skill is to **be the change for transforming the culture.** Realize that you have the power, influence and ability to see and understand the culture in which you work, and how you can play a role in transforming it into a healthier, more inspiring and thriving culture. Transforming culture can mean a culture that is so powerful it transforms itself, or it can mean that you play a role in activating the culture transformation.

Call to Action: Envision how you can play a catalytic role in transforming your culture. Envision how you can be accountable for co-creating transformation in your culture by the way you show up at work every day. When you put skin in the game, you become the change that transforms the culture.

> 2nd Success Factor: Step out of Your Comfort Zone

The second skill, **embrace the opportunity**, is the ability to step out of your comfort zone and, rather than allowing fear of the unknown paralyze you, embrace the opportunity with excitement and enthusiasm. Your shift in focus will create positive ripple effects on those you influence. By fully stepping out of your comfort zone into a new opportunity, you are activating your ability to transform yourself and inspire courage in others.

Call to Action: Embracing opportunity both encourages others and inspires courage in yourself. By seeing transformation and change as a way to grow, you influence how you experience the challenge in a positive and less [fearful](#) way.

> 3rd Success Factor: Open the Space for Conversations

The third skill, **create space for conversations**, is the ability to intentionally open up opportunities for feedback-rich conversations one-on-one, within teams, and across the

organization. By opening up space for and creating conversational journeys, you establish an environment in which employees have room to learn, grow and be nourished by new ideas and energy.

Call to Action: Creating spaces is a call to action you need to take every day to open the space for more innovative, generative and catalytic conversations to take place in your relationships and teams. This space signals our [brain](#) that we can discover and share new ideas we've never talked about before.

> **4th Success Factor: Practice Co-creating Conversations**

The fourth skill, **practice co-creating conversations**, is a core to conversational intelligence. In the previous steps, you learned to recognize and release old baggage filled with toxic experiences that negatively undermine and denigrate relationships, and replace them with new meanings that positively uplift and inspire relationships. This empowers a new sense of [optimism](#) and effectiveness.

As a leader, you can begin to have co-creating conversations. Co-creating conversations are conversations that have the ability to release the past and open space for the future with others — a psychological state of being that is powerful and transforms us.

Call to Action: Co-creating conversations means opening the space for new energy for co-creation with others. This is a space where you and others are open to think about what you don't know, what you don't know you don't know and to explore possibilities that you never thought about before.

> **5th Success Factor: Shaping Stories**

Finally, the fifth skill is **shaping stories**. Having moved from a place of [understanding](#) to challenging, then stepping out and releasing, and finally opening space for co-creating conversations, you have now mastered the most proactive and intentional skill of shaping the story of your team's collective success. This is what visionary leaders and organizations do. It's work you do with others, not on your own in isolation. What you co-create together are shared stories for success that envision and make possible the fulfillment of WE.

Call to Action: Shaping stories is a call to action that allows you to realize how you shape the stories' impact on how the future unfolds. Reflect every day in a conscious way on how you shape stories so that they are winning, inclusive and appreciative. These conversations have the ability to re-frame your view of the world, give you and others hope for the future and enable you to see the best outcomes for all of us. Both meanings have the power to transform.

How You Label Determines How You See

Empowering your team to work in concert to achieve your organization's [goals](#) and strategies requires flexibility of thought, agility of mind and speed of response. Most of all, it requires you to break out of old conversational habits and negative patterns of communicating and view the

impact you can have on your business in totally new ways.

Use conversational intelligence as a way to break from the past and create the future.

Rather than thinking about situations as problems, see them as challenges and opportunities, and communicate this point of view in your conversations with others. Until you challenge yourself to change old thinking and conversational habits, you will see little change from yesterday to today.

Once you do, you will find you become a catalyst for change wherever you go, and you will discover new energy appears around you for tackling big challenges and achieving the desired results and targets regardless of their size and difficulty.

>> [Read more from Judith.](#)