

Transformational Organization  
Phlunte' Riddle, Consultant  
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Kelly Peterson, Psy.D  
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### Introduction

As a consultant facilitating an organizational transformation, the consultant must have the ability to come into an organization and assist the leaders in order to execute a paradigm shift of how they see the organization and forecast change. The consultant should say, "I'm fundamentally going to help the leaders rethink how they view and operate their organization."

The purpose is not to bring a specialist, such as a MBA consultant who will only look at a specific area. Transformational consultants have a broad view and depth of experience to objectively look at all areas of the organization.

#### Definition

Organizational Transformation is a process of profound and radical change that orients an organization in a new direction and takes it to an entirely different level of effectiveness (Kubr, 2002). This does not necessary mean that the culture of the organization is abandoned, but a consultant has been hired to assist the organization through their transformation. This will help management assess the culture for areas of compatibility for transformation (Schein, 2004).

Transformation of an organization is not a turnaround or rebranding, which implies incremental progress or change of the same plan. Transformation is a change of character and can have little or no resemblance with the past alignment or structure.

#### Transformational Leadership

Burns (1978) stated that in order to accomplish true transformation, the task requires a transformational leader. This visionary leadership must inspire others toward a higher cause or calling. Transformational leaders seek to help others attain their own personal goals in addition to helping them achieve their professional fulfillment. Burns indicated that transformational leaders, often charismatic, are mobilized to make a difference for the larger good, i.e. goals beyond themselves. Any consultant would find this type of leadership invaluable.

#### Consultant's role

A consultant's role in assisting an organization in transformation must begin with the consultant understanding their purpose is not to teach, or change the management/leader. The consultant is not necessary the change agent. The consultant makes inquiries vs. advocating. The consultant's role is to build relationships of trust and provide constructive feedback to help guide and educate the client and the organization through their transformation for sustainable change (Block, 2011). This, however; doesn't mean that the consultant is an advisor with no defined role. According to Kubr (2002), clients and consultants are wise to define the roles and responsibilities clearly to avoid dissatisfaction and confusion.

Kubr (2002) describes transformation as beginning after a three-stage process of:

1. Restructuring "the awakening" stage
2. Revitalization "focus on improving growth and profitability"
3. Renewal "Identifying and eliminating waste, building and sharing new capabilities".

Transformations are not just about increased revenue streams, changing of programs or even day to day business concepts. Experience has taught that in order to have true organizational transformation it's a paradigm shift of ideas and strategies without forgetting about the people and the potential impact of the transformation (Kubr, 2002).

While collaborating with the leadership the consultant must ask these questions that help drive the kind of answers to help them realize and ensure the right people are on the team for a successful transformation (Block, 2011). The consultant should retain their objectivity in order to contribute as a facilitator in the creation of the new vision and mission plan when needed. The consultant must perform and exercise training with leaders to recognize and support short-term wins with employees, while providing training in a multitude of areas for growth and long term buy-in is a positive way to help with the transformation.

## **Interview**

On June 11, 2013, I interviewed Steve Tobia, who is the owner and publisher of 'The Magazine.' This is a monthly publication and with weekly video shows. Prior to owning his own company, Mr. Tobia started his own consulting company after graduating from the CORAL Community Foundation.

Mr. Tobia spoke about how consultants can play a role in assisting organizations through the transformation process and how difficult it is for CEO, CFO's and Board of Directors to act upon trends that can impact their companies forever. Mr. Tobia said print media communications has changed the media world forever. Tobia has been in the magazine business for 15 years and initially spoke from a historical perspective. He said, "No more town crier warning people of what's happening, no more newsboys screaming, EXTRA! EXTRA! to the current status of no more morning newspapers on every corner".

Mr. Tobia believes the Internet has changed the world forever. He said, people don't need one editor sitting on his perch and preaching to the masses about what people want to know. Nor are people relying upon morning newspapers to "tell us" the news. Black and white printing presses are history, just like the horse & buggy is history and postal letters are becoming history. The world has become comfortable with emails & texting as their new source of mail. Mr. Tobia said many large organization leaders failed to see the trends and also failed to make the transformation in a timely matter and now many of them are out of business.

Mr. Tobia elaborated on the lack of vision/forecasting. Other companies other than print media that failed to make the transformation are bookstores and some community libraries. The internet is now the largest library and book store within the reach of a button.

There are millions of websites now that give us up to the minute news and information. Citizen Blogs, Facebook, and other social media shape and define opinions and keep people connected and talking. Instant videos and pictures capture the moment and are shared instantly around the world in seconds. "How," he asked, "is the newspaper going to compete with that type of technology?"

As a consultant Mr. Tobia used the same strategy when collaborating with clients / leaders to help them develop a comprehensive strategic business plan when following the 4 P's

- > Product – what is it and who wants it
- > Pricing – what will the market allow /who is the client
- > Placement – distribution
- > Promotions – how do you get your product out

## **Transformational Success**

**Huffington Post** – In May 2005, Arianna Huffing launched The Huffington Post, a news and blog site that quickly became one of the most widely-read, linked to, and frequently-cited media brands on the Internet. The owner of Huffington Post saw the internet trend and merged with AOL for daily 24/7 news coverage. The merger now includes Time Warner. This organization / business was able to successfully make the transformation based on a visionary leader who understood where the media trend is headed.

## **Transformational Failure**

Newsweek magazine was founded in 1933. Newsweek established a venerable place in the American media landscape week in and week out to bring the top news stories to several million readers. Newsweek attempted to make the transformation to a digital magazine prior to being bought out, but failed. In 2012, the Daily Beast, who acquired the magazine, announced that Newsweek would cease print publication at the end of the year and move to an all-digital format. The end of the print edition will help stem Newsweek's estimated \$40 million in annual losses.

## **Media Trends**

According to the Newspaper Association of America, (NAA), of all of the U.S. newspaper media industry, they earned \$38.6 billion in 2012 compared with \$39.5 billion in revenue in 2011. This is a steady decline over the past 10 years. Caroline Little, the NAA President and CEO says, "America's newspaper media are transforming themselves. In virtually every community they serve, newspapers have the biggest newsrooms, the best-known brands and significant audience market share. Now they are building on those to find new ways to serve

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Based on data from newspaper companies that provided detailed breakdowns, circulation now makes up 27% of total newspaper media revenue, new revenue sources 8%, digital advertising 11%, niche publishing and direct marketing 8%, and print advertising 46%.

*Digital agency and marketing:* Revenue from digital agency and marketing services 91% during the 2012.

- *E-commerce and transactions:* Many analysts think the digital realm one of the biggest potential growth areas is not traditional but e-commerce and transactions by assisting businesses connect directly with consumers. E-commerce revenue jumped 20% in 2012.

Ms. Little described the move as bowing to the inevitable digital future. She said, “You cannot actually change an era of enormous disruptive innovation, no one single person can reverse that trend. You can’t turn back what is an unstoppable trend.”

## Reflection

How consultants work with leadership teams in helping them understand who, what, when, where, how and why there is a need for transformation is essentially the consultants purpose. The consultant doesn’t have a vested interest in the organization and therefore will not be resistant to the transformation nor connected to personnel. I believe consultants must always try and to look at situations through someone else’s lens and try and remain objective in their perceptive. I know that having an open mind, capacity to think critically, and being knowledgeable in the application of emotional intelligence as a change manager is imperative for success. Even though a client hires a consultant, they may be in denial with your assessment of the magnitude of the transformation required, therefore; being able to communicate clearly market trends, advancement in technology and then provide targeted and specific data is crucial.

I understand how important it is to ask the right questions and build a relationship of trust so the client can fully explore and realize the depth and scope for an organizational transformation.

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