Embracing and Leading Perpetual Transformation
Brightline Initiative’s Strategy@Work Conference
Brought Strategists, Leaders & Thinkers Together

Read their detailed profiles here
Widespread economic uncertainty, the global pandemic, and climate change are fueling greater need for organizations to deliver on the transformation agenda. The ever-changing world is sparking big changes in how organizations are transforming. Leaders are on the frontline of driving change through organizations. Even amidst upheaval, leaders at Strategy@Work expressed optimism and hunger for innovation. They felt a real need for the intentional pursuit to keep humanity at the center of this rapid transformation.
Agenda

THURSDAY 28 Oct

09:30am 10:00am
The End of Competitive Advantage
Rita McGrath

10:15am 10:45am
Overcoming Barriers to Digitizing Your Strategy
Jeff Fahrenwald | Andrea Gibbs

10:15am 10:45am
The ABCs of Transformation Strategy: ‘A’ is for People
Claudio Garcia | Jeroen Tas

10:15am 10:45am
An Inside-Out View of Perpetual Transformation
Isaac Getz | Jeff Westphal

11:00am 11:45am
Thriving in the Age of ‘Trivergence’
Don Tapscott

12:00pm 01:00pm
Driving Radical Turnarounds by Unleashing Creative Culture
Mark King | Nick Sonnenberg

01:15pm 01:45pm
Navigating What’s Next: Tools to Successfully Manage the Dilemmas of Hybrid Work
Tom Wujec

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PPM Is Dead. Long Live Strategic Portfolio Management!
Ben Chamberlain

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Overcoming the Resistance to Transforming
John Hagel | Ed Hoffman

01:50pm 02:20pm
The Strategic Portfolio Planning Journey
Victoria Voinigescu

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Secrets of Transformative Organizations
Behnam Tabrizi | Stuart Crainer

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Secrets of Transforming from Traditional to a Digitally Driven Organization
Robin Speculand

02:30pm 03:15pm
Orchestrating Perpetual Transformation
Tahirou Assane | Tony O’Driscoll

02:30pm 03:15pm
Transforming in the Age of Hype
Sinan Aral | Todd Weaver

FRIDAY 29 Oct

09:15am 10:15am
8 Implementation Habits for Leaders
Robin Speculand

10:30am 11:00am
How To Unmask The Hidden Forces Leading Your Company
Luisa Ferrario

11:45am 12:45pm
Open Mic: Learnings from Perpetual Transformation at Strategy@Work 2021

12:45pm 01:45pm
How to Overcome the Immune System in Your Organization
John Hagel

02:30pm 03:15pm
How to drive Perpetual Transformation around gender, inclusivity and culture
Patricia Foster | Ade McCormack | Megan Speight

03:30pm 04:00pm
Haier’s Transformation Story
Zhang Ruimin

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The ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to push us into a continued state of uncertainty, chaos, and volatility. How can organizations adapt, rebuild, and grow? Leaders need a compelling vision, a motivated team, and superior execution capabilities in addition to an ability to manage risk and transform. The sign of the times read clearly: Transformation is not a one-time effort. To survive and win in the brave new world, leaders must adapt and embrace continual transformation.

Through expert-led exchanges, Strategy@Work showcased more than 30 global experts who provided actionable insights on how leaders can perpetually transform their organizations and deliver transformational outcomes. Over 260 leaders from around the world interacted via Brightlines custom-built event platform.
The End of Competitive Advantage

Prof. Rita McGrath has been teaching Strategy and Innovation at Columbia. She has been a leading global strategist. Her talk at Strategy@Work 2021 emphasizes how the idea of guarding your competitive advantage has undergone a transformation. The competition can no longer be divided into neat boxes of ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’. As mass markets face turbulence, leaders need to embrace the reality of ‘transient competitive advantage’. Finding your competitive advantage is not enough—how do you retain and grow it?

"In a world of uncertainty, this idea that a leader could sit on a horse somewhere and tell everybody what to do doesn’t make much sense."

– Prof. Rita McGrath
Jeff Westphal is a CEO who transformed his small private company into a large public one. Prof. Isaac Getz observed one hundred perpetual transformations.

"Altruistic companies make more profits than those who are chasing the profits through their business processes."

– Isaac Getz

In a candid and insightful discussion, they talk about the common barriers and effective strategies in scaling and transforming enterprises.
What do leaders need to know about creating systems, incentives and culture that are truly people-oriented? Leaders can shape the culture of their organizations to inspire and grow their people, even in tough times. Jeroen Tas and Claudio Garcia share their insights about how organizations can nurture transformation from their extensive experience in scaling up global companies.

"A mechanistic mindset goes against people"
– Claudio Garcia

"The more we take an organic system view of an organization and its environment, I think the better we can understand it and the more we can influence it."
– Jeroen Tas
There has been no doubt that technological developments have guided most transformations. Specifically, the trinity of AI, IOT and Blockchain have emerged as the three areas of interest for a lot of C-level initiatives. Leading expert, Don Tapscott illustrates how their confluence will give birth to newer business models, pathbreaking innovations and ways of working. In his talk, he brings forth the 10 themes of the new social contract based on trust, decentralization, and digitalization. If you intend to rebuild your organization, you need these 10 themes the new social contract in mind.

“The world needs courage from the leaders around the world. Leaders who take on transformation in their own environments and fight for change”

– Don Tapscott

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**LEADERSHIP FOR TRANSFORMATION**

Paradigm shifts involve dislocation, conflict, confusion, uncertainty. New paradigms are nearly always received with coolness, even mockery or hostility. Those with vested interests fight the change. The shift demands such a different view of things that established leaders are often last to be won over, if at all.
Driving Radical Turnarounds by Unleashing Creative Culture

Pursuing a transformation agenda is no longer optional; it is essential for business survival. Nor is it a six-week program or an initiative; it is a state of mind, a part of organizational DNA and its culture. Mark King, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Taco Bell Corp and CEO of Leverage and Inc Columnist, Nick Sonnenberg exchange insights on how leaders can empower individuals within organizations to challenge the status quo and transform for growth.

"What really defines culture are those things that you allow that aren't necessarily spoken about. To me, the real barometer is walking around in the hallways (really hard to do today) and feeling the energy of people."

– Mark King

"What do companies need to start paying attention too now to be able to transform and grow? What should they be investing in?"

– Nick Sonnenberg
"It’s better to make a wrong decision fast, than a correct decision slow. In today’s world, speed wins over perfection."

Mark King
Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Taco Bell Corp.
We live in a world in which speed and flexibility are at the center of business transformation and innovation. Organizational structure has become a strategic matter for many CEOs. In this fireside chat, two global senior executives will share experiences and cover opportunities and challenges to evolve organizational structure focusing on better transformation outcomes and business results.

"Unless you have a coalition between the leaders and the people that will be driving the transformation, it's very unlikely that your transformation will be successful."

– Edivandro Conforto

"You need to ensure that you know what kind of values you have in your organization. Make sure that you and your leadership team really understand that."

– Przemyslaw Kotecki
Navigating What’s Next: Tools to Successfully Manage the Dilemmas of Hybrid Work

Tom Wujec
Technology pioneer, TED speaker, Entrepreneur, Writer, and Facilitator

As the crisis triggered by the pandemic continues to shape work, it is forcing leaders to ceaselessly revise their plans and adopt a hybrid model of work. But hybrid introduces many thorny dilemmas: the patchwork of in-person and virtual meetings generates difficult trade-offs affecting virtually every aspect of business, from the cost of real estate to safe office layouts and from vaccination policies to fostering a culture that is healthy, productive, and inclusive. In this talk, Tom Wujec shows how to successfully navigate these dilemmas using the Wicked Problem-Solving framework.

"It’s important to design a variety of both virtual and physical experiences that are super easy to navigate."

– Tom Wujec
The dominant human emotion in the past few years of crisis has been of Fear. John Hagel, futurist, and best-selling author says that spreading emotion of fear is certainly understandable given the forces that are creating mounting performance pressure on all of us, but the emotion is very limiting. Fear, one of our primal instincts, acts as an antidote to change. Can leaders eliminate fear of change?

"A narrative allows us to explore where we're going in the future"
– Ed Hoffman

"It's about forcing yourself to look ahead and say, 'what's really driving me?'"
– John Hagel
Traditional brick-and-mortar organizations have a different experience of transformation than digitally native or digital-first counterparts. With the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been no choice left for traditional organizations, but to transform perpetually. Robin Speculand shares incredible experiences from his extensive research and latest book to provide vital lessons on how to transform successfully.

"Older organizations struggle to overcome their legacy systems and cultures, and these become barriers to digitalization."

– Robin Speculand
"You don’t want your customers to like you. You want them to love you and sing your praises."

– Behnam Tabrizi

In this session, Prof. Behnam Tabrizi and Stuart Crainer talk about how the most innovative organizations in the world transform to innovate continuously to an ever-changing world. The conversation answers the question how they set their leadership and culture apart? Get an insight on how leading organizations transform and lead.
Technology is created by humans, for humans but how do we keep humanity at the center of this great transformation? Sinan Aral is joined by Todd Weaver, CEO of Purism, a company that is trying to build a global movement of secure computing that respects digital rights. As societies move towards a digital future, the reality of growing cyber-threats is bringing in new questions about privacy, control, trust, and digital rights. Two experts discuss these topics in an insightful fire-side chat.

"The real leaders of this new social age are going to be the ones that realize that shareholder value in the future is going to be maximized when it aligns with society’s values."

– Sinan Aral

Sinan Aral
MIT Professor and Director of Digital Economy Initiative, Founding Partner at Manifest Capital

Todd Weaver
CEO and Founder of Purism
“Companies and their leaders need to think: How can we be transparent to benefit the advancement, can we go through some additional pain by releasing and verifying code or claims. How can we trust and verify? What is it we can release for the public good?”

Todd Weaver
CEO and Founder of Purism
"It doesn't matter how many processes and structures you put in place if the people are not a part of it."
– Tony O’Driscoll

It is a common misconception that a business transformation has a beginning and end. However, the truth is that a successful transformation will never truly “end.” Instead, it sets in motion the ever-evolving culture, strategies, and agility needed to grow sustainably over time.

It takes a different set of leadership qualities to do this. Transformation leaders need to be constantly aware of the market trends, disruptors, and best strategic practices. They also need to approach the transformation from a people-centered standpoint with a healthy tolerance for failure while demonstrating humility and empathy.

In this session on orchestrating perpetual transformation, we will be looking at the ways a successful transformation is led – through market awareness, strategy, culture, and people.
Driving accountability around gender, inclusivity, and diversity initiatives is an important area of transforming culture today. Our panelists discuss how and why these are areas needing greater attention and action from the C-suite.

"You do not want to have a homogeneous workforce. You want to have a mixture of people that have got different life experiences."

– Ade McCormack

"If you don't follow up with concrete actions in your organization to create more equity, you're selling yourself and your employees short."

– Patricia Foster
"C-suite executives are a key component in advancing DEI initiatives."
Haier is the world’s number one home appliance manufacturer with more than 70,000 employees. Chairman & Group CEO, Zhang Ruimin takes us through Haier’s transformation journey as part of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Since the 1980s, Haier has transformed from being like an empire (with a traditional, closed pyramid) to being more like a rain forest (with an open networked platform).

“Products will be replaced by scenarios. Industries will be repeatedly enveloped by ecosystems.”

– Zhang Ruimin
“Feel the questions. Be the questions. When we do not judge, we let go.”

Luisa Ferrario
on reflecting as transformative leaders:

Luisa Ferrario
Rebel Transformative Leader & Hidden Leading Forces Ninja

Embracing and Leading Perpetual Transformation
Jennifer Moss on tackling employee burnout:

“Workplace Stress left unmanaged is a WE problem to solve.”
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Acknowledgements
Thank you for supporting us through a challenging year. We are working on your feedback to build another year of exciting programming.

Continue your reading and reflection on transformation with our new ebook.

Stay tuned for Strategy@Work2022