

# THE SEVEN LAWS OF TRANSFORMATION

## PROVEN PRINCIPLES TO ACCELERATE YOUR JOURNEY

A law is often described as a principle leading to a predictable result. The Seven Laws of Transformation described in this whitepaper are the principles that pave the pathway to transformation. Why seven? Well, it always seems to be seven. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People; The Seven Spiritual Laws; Seven Samurai; even Seven Minute Abs! Why mess with a proven formula?

Within law number seven “Transformation is 80% science and 20% art”, I’ll also share the five critical practices that bring the Seven Laws to life. Together, they constitute the science of transformation. Think about it like this, to transform, there are seven things you need to believe and five things you need to do.

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## About the Author

For two decades, Dr. Peter Fuda has been a Sherpa to leaders, teams and organizations across the globe as a consultant, coach, speaker, researcher, teacher and author.

Peter is the Founder and Principal of The Alignment Partnership (TAP), a management consulting firm founded in 2001; the Founder and Director of Enixa, a world first digital system for transformation; and an Adjunct Professor of Management at Macquarie Business School.

### 1. TRANSFORMATION IS NOT A PROGRAM. IT'S A WAY OF LIFE



For many of us, the intensity of disruption we face every day - to our industry, organization, business unit, team and own role - is immense. Most of us are struggling to survive, let alone thrive. The idea that we can somehow manage this disruption with a program or project plan is delusional. The challenge is beautifully articulated by one of the twentieth century's greatest poets and pugilists, Mike Tyson, who once proclaimed "every man has a plan to beat me, until I punch him in the face."

Our response to this disruption cannot be programmatic or transactional, it must be transformational. Transformation is typically described as a change in form, nature or character. I prefer to think about how transformation feels through the eyes of those who experience it. What they tell me is that they've achieved greater than they thought possible, much faster than they thought possible, with less effort than they ever imagined. At this point, transformation becomes a way of life.

### 2. ORGANISATIONS DON'T TRANSFORM PEOPLE DO



For a team or organization to transform, at some point, human beings need to change their behaviour; starting with the most senior leaders.

There is no organizational transformation without leadership transformation. You can have a great strategy, a great structure and great systems, but leadership is the accelerator or the handbrake.

How leaders motivate and encourage others to behave is at the root of almost every success or failure.

### 3. TRANSFORMATION IS NOT A MATTER OF INTENTION. IT'S A MATTER OF ALIGNMENT



We all have noble intentions. This may shock you, but I've never met the leader who aspires to destroy value, irritate customers and alienate staff (even though many are quite successful at doing so). Despite our noble intentions, many of us fall well short. Rather than feeling the elation that comes from reaching our aspirations, we feel fear, self-doubt and frustration.

That is because transformation is not a matter of intention, it's a matter of alignment. I may have an intention to be fit and healthy, but unless I step into my trainers every day, it will never be my reality. The scale of our actions must match the scale of our ambition.

### 4. TRANSFORMATION DOES NOT RESULT FROM ONE BIG THING BUT FROM THE AGGREGATION OF MANY SMALL THINGS



In 2010, David Brailsford faced a tough job. No British cyclist had ever won the Tour de France. As the new General Manager for Team Sky, he was asked to deliver a Tour de France within five years. He started by doing the same things that everybody else did, big things like optimizing nutrition, training, bike ergonomics, and so on. But he didn't stop there. He and his team started to look at much smaller things that most people didn't pay attention to. They hired a surgeon to teach the athletes about proper hand-washing to avoid illnesses during competition; they tested which massage gel created

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the fastest recovery; they travelled with their own mattresses and pillows so the athletes could sleep consistently. They made hundreds of small changes in an effort to gain a big advantage.

In the end, Brailsford delivered a Tour de France win within three years, not five, the same year he led the British Olympic cycling team to a staggering 70% of the cycling gold medals on offer.

Transformation does not result from one big thing, it comes from the aggregation of marginal gains; lots and lots of small changes, that collectively generate an unstoppable momentum over time.



#### 5. VERY SMALL CHANGES CAN HAVE AN EXPONENTIAL IMPACT

At the Olympics, a fraction of a second is the difference between immortality and irrelevance. Who won the men's 100m at the Rio Olympics? Usain Bolt. Who came second? The honest answer is that no one really cares. What was the difference? 0.08 seconds.

Very small differences can make a massive impact. Think of it like a Richter scale; the difference between 6 and 7 is not 1, it's 10x. The difference between 6 and 8 is 100x, and so on. As we raise our standards and our level of performance, the rewards increase disproportionately. This is why we can achieve greater than we thought possible and at the same time, exert much less energy than we imagined.



#### 6. ACTION IS THE EASY PART. ACCEPTING THE NEED TO CHANGE IS WHERE WE GET STUCK

In simple terms, think about change as a three-part continuum; awareness, acceptance and action. We become aware of the need to change something, we truly accept the need to make the change, then we act to make the desired change.

Most people assume that action is the really difficult part; they believe that the long journey is from acceptance and action. This is incorrect. Smart people always figure out the actions they need to take. The really difficult part is acceptance of the need to change; the really long journey is from awareness to acceptance.

Just think about it; why do we typically date someone for years before we decide to get married? We are trying to move from awareness to acceptance. We are thinking to ourselves; "can I really be with this person for the rest of my natural life?" Once we get to acceptance, a whole flurry of actions follows immediately. Will you marry me? When should we do it? What's the location? Who should we invite? And so on. Action is the easy part, acceptance is where we get stuck in any process of change.

The faster we accept things, the faster we can take positive actions leading to transformation.



#### 7. TRANSFORMATION IS 80% SCIENCE AND 20% ART

When I first started doing this work, I used to say that transformation was 20% science and 80% art. A few years ago, I said it was 50/50. In retrospect, those numbers were more a reflection of where I was on my own journey of research, practice and discovery at the time.

Over the last several years, I've come to understand that transformation is 80% science and 20% art. So, what's the science? It can be summarized in five key practices;

"Think about change as a three-part continuum; awareness, acceptance and action."

### A big 'why' and a big 'yes'

Why are we engaging in this work? We may begin our journey because of our fears and worries, but we will only sustain our journey because of our hopes and dreams. We need to cultivate an internal fire; the fire of a burning ambition.

Are we really up for it? We can't meet the challenge of transformation in a way that is safe and incremental. Some discomfort is necessary, usually in the form of curiosity, humility and vulnerability.

### A gap we're compelled to close

Do we have a crystal-clear picture of success? Our aspirations need to be free of jargon and stand up to scrutiny when tested. More often than not, however, they fall well short of this standard, so we are burdened before we even begin.

Where exactly are we starting from? If we want to get to London, the journey will be very different depending on whether we leave from Paris, New York or Sydney. Even if we want to determine a clear start point, we often lack the insight or objectivity to do it well.

Will we embrace the gap or reject it? The gap between our aspirations and start point creates a feeling of discord; psychologists call it cognitive dissonance. What we do with that dissonance determines whether we create value or destroy it, whether we encourage vitality or exhaustion. To transform, we must use dissonance as a fuel source.

### A playbook that is multi-functional

Are we exploring the intersection points in our journey? We have a professional and a personal life. We are an individual and a team member. Our playbook must be multi-layer.

Is our approach comprehensive? People, teams and organizations are dynamic, complex, living systems. To make change in those systems, we must come at them from multiple directions, at the same time.

There is no single framework, process or strategy that creates transformation. Our playbook must be multi-lever.

Are we speaking to the heart, the head and the hands? Transformation requires inspiration, insight and ingenuity in equal measure. Our playbook must be multilingual.

### A cadence and consequences

Do we have a cadence to keep us on track? To transform, we must interrupt our current rhythms and practices. The simplest way to do this is to determine what activities we must engage in every year, every quarter, every month, every week and every day; then schedule them. This is our drumbeat.

How can we replace decisions with habits? Many decisions we make in a day are not decisions at all, they are well worn habits, like brushing our teeth. The faster we replace decisions with habits, the faster transformation will become a way of life.

Who will keep us on track, and how? It's much easier to let ourselves down than someone else. We need a feeling of responsibility to others, feedback loops, and a sense of consequence for action or inaction.

### Measurement and momentum

How do we know if we're on track? When we feel a sense of progress, that fuels our journey of transformation over time. The more we measure our forward progress, the more desire we have to keep going.

Where is the tipping point in our journey? A tipping point occurs when a critical mass of actions, people, or both, build up to create an unstoppable momentum.

Embracing The Seven Laws of Transformation dramatically increases our chances of success - individually and collectively. These laws are the foundation upon which successful change efforts are built.

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