Elevating Performance
Across the Enterprise:
How to Ignite
Business
Transformation.

The achieve Institute

Corporations are racing to innovate and transform at a pace never seen before. Yet the odds of success are stacked against them: research has consistently shown that roughly 70% of business transitions fail.

Meeting the challenge of disruptive change comes down to *how* an organization is operationalized to achieve positive transformation. And by how, we don't mean *what* strategies, tactics, technologies or processes are adopted or deployed.

We mean *how* people and teams are trained and empowered to deliver the kind of performance that's proven to boost innovation and transformation, especially in the midst of change – and to do it reliability and systematically on a daily basis.

Strategy development, technology training, process improvements, even soft skills training like contract negotiations or conflict resolution – these are the *WHAT* required for innovation and transformation.

High Performance is the *HOW.*

Change Happens.
Transformation is *Achieved*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has put the flexibility and resiliency of many corporations and institutions to the test. It's also revealed just how many are not yet ready for the future of work.

The most critical insight? *That traditional ways of managing business and talent performance are not up to the task of driving rapid innovation and transformation, especially as organizations grapple daily with myriad forces of disruptive change.*

But there is good news: the pandemic has elevated the visibility of key elements that are essential to human performance (i.e. capacity, adaptability, creativity, momentum). These are the levers by which organizations can drive innovative breakthroughs across the enterprise – new products that redefine markets, strategies that slay the competition, operational performance that optimizes ROI ─ while adroitly navigating the process of change.

What an organization does to transform its business and *how* people perform that *what* are not the same thing.

Companies and organizations that fail to capitalize on the full performance potential of their people and processes are rarely nimble enough to adapt, pivot and create the innovative business models needed to thrive in the new normal.

Many of today's major companies are not operationalized for the future of work, and they know it. This has made business transformation a top priority, with CEOs signaling their intent to accelerate efforts through 2022 and beyond.

To be sure, the focus is on **digital** transformation. But success here requires shifting entire business and operational models – something that adopting new digital technologies will not achieve alone.

Yet the typical training and tools used to drive transformation are almost always "capability-building" drills specific to the adoption of a new technology or process. The individual's or team's subsequent technical ability to execute the new process is the desired outcome. Even leadership training is often based on improving a specific functional competence.

At the same time, such capability-building programs are often ineffective. According to a recent survey of 1,240 business leaders, almost two-thirds believe that capability-building programs are frequently ineffective or fail to achieve their objectives and business impact.

Effectiveness notwithstanding, this kind of training is literally required for an organization to technically do *what* is needed for business transformation – that is, competently execute new strategies, adopt new technologies and processes, or improve skills like conflict resolution, time management and contract negotiation.

But it's not the same as teaching people *how* to elevate their ability to perform. Nor does it have the same power to impact the outcome of a major transition.

Upgrading human performance is the *how.*

Unlike capability-building investments, the focus of human performance training is not on developing proficiency with a new technology or process, or improving planning and leadership skills, or increasing efficiency on a production line (*although these sorts of gains may be downstream benefits*).

Rather, when you invest to upgrade levels of human performance, the focus is on something much more fundamental, with more profound consequences: *employees, teams – and ultimately your entire organization – become proficient at making better choices to drive higher levels of engagement and effectiveness.* The result is a shared experience of consistently higher performance on a daily basis regardless of externalities.

When you show people how to upgrade their capacity to achieve daily high performance, it significantly enhances the entire organization's ability to achieve innovation and transformation.

Organizations usually place great emphasis on transition planning and strategizing to ensure both successful adoption and optimal ROI for major initiatives such as digital transformation. But unless they also teach their people how to recognize and manage the attitudes, relationships and behaviors that dictate human performance, these organizations will be unable to derive full horsepower from their workforce and may even join the ranks of the seven in 10 companies whose transformations fail.
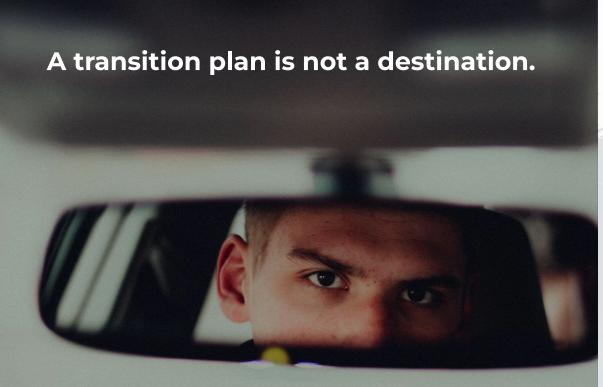
You might say that human performance training gives your people the missing instruction manual on the **how** … *how* to successfully absorb and leverage new data ... *how* to smoothly execute strategy pivots ... *how* to quickly embrace new technologies and processes.

Yet the power of upgrading human performance doesn't come just from directly enhancing people's abilities to do new things. **At its very core, effective human performance training requires a *fundamental shift in the relationship people have with change.***

This is why creating a high-performance culture can dramatically increase the odds of a highly successful business transformation.

Done right, human performance training takes the fear out of change.

A transition plan is not a destination.

It's hard to drive transformative change forward if people are only looking in their rearview mirror.

Any large-scale organizational change is likely to engender widespread anxiety and fear of the unknown. After all, who's going to abandon the security and stability of doing things the way they've always been done and take a leap into something new? No one – unless they are confident that the leap will move them toward a positive future rather than over a cliff.

Yet very few plans for transformative change specifically define and describe the future which is expected to come about. Absent a clearly defined future, people default to obsessing over details of the plan's execution – especially if those details center on fixing past problems. Fixing problems almost always appears to be the safer choice than creating something new, at least in the short term.

This is why a focus on fixing problems is endemic to many transformation efforts. It's not unusual to see entire change initiatives bog down as people repeatedly attempt to fix old problems rather than create new solutions. The inevitable result: teams hesitantly inching forward while looking backward. The Achieve System™ offers the antidote: a forward-looking methodology that empowers people to replace *fixing* with *creating*.

When business leaders model **how** to achieve change, transformations are more than **five times more likely** to succeed.

When you teach people how to upgrade their daily performance and empower them to co-create a culture to support that, something remarkable happens: employees begin to show up each day as the "best actual" version of themselves.

Realizing they have the power to determine their own destiny, employees move from fear to enthusiasm. Previously insurmountable barriers to change give way, markedly improving an organization's chances of a positive business transformation.

And as with most large transitions, successful change starts at the top. When senior leaders model the behavior changes they're asking employees make, transformations are more than five times more likely to be successful.

This is why the Achieve Institute™ typically advises senior leaders to include themselves among the very first enrolled in performance training, and to be highly visible about their participation. Senior leaders have an outsized influence on culture – this is a good place to exercise it.

As one cautionary aphorism observes, **_"Culture eats strategy for breakfast."_** That's because culture helps create both the prevailing mindset and approach of your organization's day-to-day operations – which can either facilitate or derail the business transformation you seek.

For far too long, achieving and maintaining high performance - especially during periods of disruptive change - has been conflated with the endurance, raw grit and determination of the workforce. "No pain no gain" became a pervasive attitude not simply toward athletic performance but toward any mental or physical endeavor, including "doing more with less" on the job.

In reality, pushing through the pain only further tasks our already exhausted mental capacities, leaving us feeling depleted, discouraged and unequal to the challenges that never stop arriving in our inboxes as we struggle through rapid change. "We are not robots," as the values statement of one company reads, and the current employment shift that's been dubbed _The Great Resignation_ is partly a response to organizations treating employees as emotionless automatons.

Clearly, the mindset, habits, attitude and mood of our workforce impact our business performance, individually and collectively. And it's a two-way street: our workplace culture impacts the mindset, habits and attitudes of our workforce.

Fortunately, with our innovative system and methodology, daily high performance is achievable by virtually every individual at any organization, and can scale to virtually every team and across the entire enterprise.

The Achieve System has repeatedly proven that this *how* can be learned, and once learned, is able to both ignite and drive business transformation that succeeds every time.

achieve it.

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ABOUT THE ACHIEVE INSTITUTE

During his years' training as an elite decathlete, Achieve Institute founder and CEO Mark Cunningham's unique personal journey led him to uncover truths about performance that were directly transferable to the business world.

These truths came from his successes and – equally as necessary – from his failures and setbacks. It's now been 20 years since Mark founded The Achieve Institute and the proven methodology he built enables some of the world's best companies, organizations and teams to reach their full performance potential. The leadership team assembled to advance, support, and deliver the revolutionary Achieve System spans the nation and includes former Olympic-caliber athletes, Major League baseball draftees, fearless corporate and military leaders, digital and business transformers and peak-performing executives at the top of their game.

Visit us at https://www.achieveinst.com

ABOUT THE ACHIEVE SYSTEM

The Achieve System is a remarkable, proven methodology that helps organizations shape and develop a performance culture to drive innovation transformation and peak performance by helping companies upgrade their most valuable asset: their people.

Through licensing, consulting, workshops, online learning, and team engagements, organizations apply the system to unlock their full capacity, optimize their talent capitalization and deliver breakthrough results.

Learn more at achieveinst.com/the-achieve-system/

*"The **Achieve System** applies our knowledge of what truly drives high performance to provide organizations and leaders with a framework proven to help change the behaviors, actions, mindsets, and fundamental results of their people."*
– Mark Cunningham, Founder & CEO