

# People-driven Transformation

How to make your  
organisation thrive?



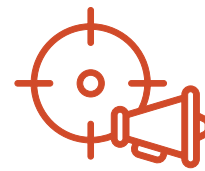
# People-driven Transformation

Continuous transition has become the new standard. Standing still is treading backwards. Many leaders wrestle with finding an answer to the question of how they can give their results a new and sustainable impulse. How do you create a different and deeper kind of focus, increase adaptive capabilities and make sure that transitions succeed? How do you ensure your organisation will flourish and starts thriving again? And how do you increase the thriving in an organisation?

## 1.0

### What a thriving organisation can bring you

People thrive when they grow, make progress, contribute to a meaningful ambition and feel energised. As a result, organisations have more focus, higher productivity, vitality and explorative behaviour. We intuitively feel that this leads to better results, more agility, relatedness and passion. This starts with leadership, having a vision of what is needed in our world and how your organisation will contribute. Subsequently initiating a movement within your organisation towards the realisation of this vision. And this is all about people! How do you ensure that within your organisation the true potential of people is unleashed, and everybody thrives? How do you ensure that your people - despite fear and insecurity of operating outside their own comfort zone - take ownership for the continuous improvement and innovation?



**‘If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.’**

—  
John Quincy Adams

After the industrial age companies tried to motivate their employees in many different ways, but mainly by managing productivity using extrinsic rewards. This led to a form of organised irresponsibility. Due to bad results, management introduced even more control and steering instruments to make sure people would do what was expected of them. Companies introduced all kinds of effectiveness programs to increase responsible behaviour. All based on Implementing a dominant logic and flawless execution.

Somehow, leaders in organisations seem to have forgotten that deep down people want to take ownership, that they love to contribute to something that is meaningful to them, and that they are passionate to explore new ways. The cornerstone of this is the belief that people are very aware of their thriving state. And if made explicit, they will take the right action to foster their own development and wellbeing in order to perform. In other words, people are able to self-regulate, based on what they feel and sense (Spreitzer, 2005). Unfortunately, there are still many organisations where people are mainly concerned with what they have to do, instead of doing what is necessary on the basis of self-regulation and personal leadership. As a lot of people have delegated this responsibility to their organisation, it's essential to facilitate them to take ownership of their own thriving and results again. This includes expressing and discussing emotions and feelings, that what motivates them intrinsically.

When people are thriving together, they feel progress and momentum. This is marked by a sense of learning, vitality and desire. If an organisation experiences a powerful desire to act, a deeper sense of learning and an increasing flow of energy, it will give an organisation the impactful manifestation, agility, attractiveness, and health needed to perform sustainably. We are passionate to activate humanity in the world of work, by advocating people-driven transformation, building organisations that are fit for the future.

## 1.1 Our vision on organising and organisational development

Let's dive a little deeper into our vision on organising for the future and our view on organisational development. During the last few years we developed a people-driven methodology to help people and organisations thrive sustainably. The steps in our approach are not necessarily new, yet we clearly emphasise that reversing the order of these steps is vital and that there is a strong underlying coherence between the steps. This way of organisational development has a positive influence on the energy, development, and ownership of your employees, and thus on the effectivity and agility of your whole organisation.

By working from “what is”, searching for the intrinsic motivation, we highlight the qualities people have, actively aiming towards a new way of collaboration. And by connecting this to a meaningful ambition, you initiate an unstoppable movement forward. We make a clear distinction between implementation and activation. Both are necessary and must reinforce one another in turn to optimise the effect. The table below gives a clear representation of what we view as the most important differences.

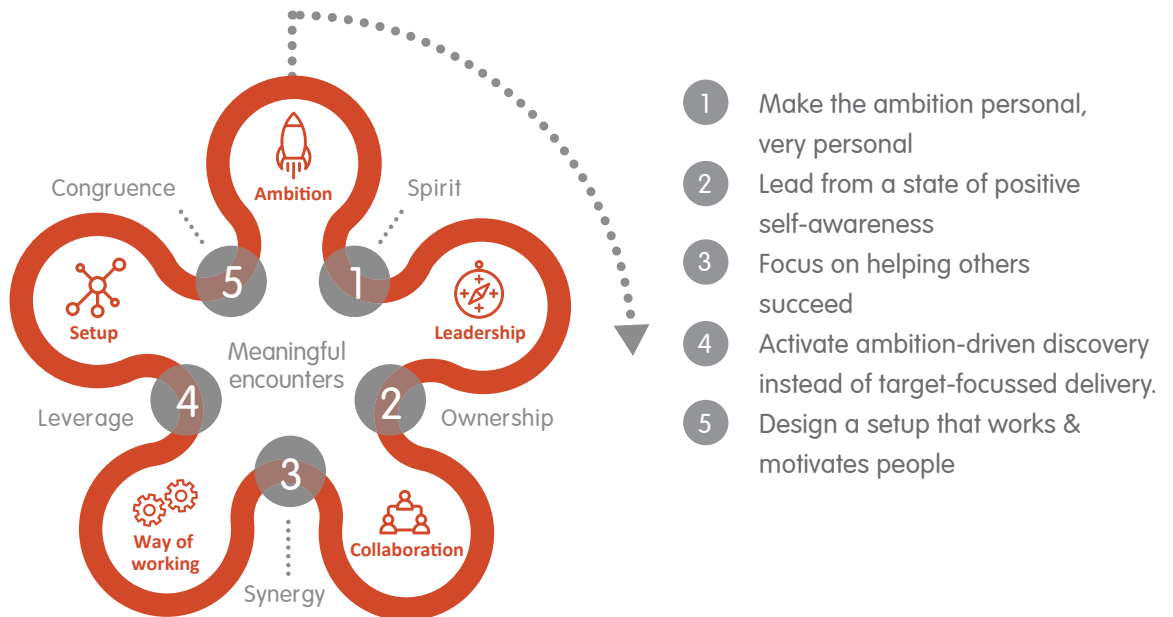
	Implementation	Activation
<b>Emphasis on</b>	Executing the plan	Mobilising people
<b>Leadership needs to</b>	Keep people focussed	Keep people in a growth mind
<b>Change is</b>	Deliberate planned steps	Ambition driven discovery
<b>Orientation</b>	Designing a process	Co-creating a journey
<b>Concentrated on</b>	Unifying people's behaviour	Mindful relatedness in teams
<b>Basic attitude</b>	Work the plan	Work with 'what is'
<b>Core quality</b>	Aligning people (extrinsically)	Empowering teams (intrinsically)
<b>Underlying conviction</b>	Transition is an outside-in & individual process	Transition is an inside-out & team process
<b>Guiding principle</b>	Start with the plan	Start with the people
<b>Preferred tools</b>	Compelling presentations, induction programs & reporting	Pilots, in-context learning & story telling
<b>Common pitfall</b>	Rigidity: "My way or the high way"	Impatience: "We need to go faster"

More and more research has been done on the strong relationship between the inner state of people and their performance. People who are thriving at work are more creative, productive, engaged, and resilient. And those people experience aliveness and are healthier as well. To make that inner state explicit, people need to address and discuss it. To have meaningful encounters, beyond ego or position. These are the kind of encounters that give oxygen, new insights, inspire and connect. In these encounters you discuss your inner state through which you feel human again, understand who you are, what you can do, and what you have to do to make the difference in your organisation. And because people are perfectly capable of self-regulation, they then start moving intrinsically again. Meaningful encounters are therefore a fundamental ingredient to reactivate humanity in the world of work.

"When people are thriving together, they feel progress and momentum, marked both by a sense of learning and a sense of vitality"

(Spreitzer, 2005)

Making this inner state explicit is therefore a very important condition for reigniting stagnated organisations. This inner process of continuously calibrating your inner state in a rapidly changing environment is, in our opinion, the critical competence to keep on thriving together. When people are being left out or feel as if they are being left out, they will physically experience a sense of pain. Also, most people that experience this pain, externalise it by blaming it on their organisation and management. Therefore, it is essential to support them in taking ownership of their own story again. The image below provides five steps you can take clockwise to make your organisation thrive again.



## 1.2 The five steps of people-driven transformation

### 1. Make the ambition personal, very personal

To get to intrinsically motivated development, it's crucial to formulate a profound ambition together and make sure that everybody personally feels it. Connecting with each other, and to something larger than ourselves, stimulates a profound and creative sense making process. The organisation noticeably starts developing its full potential. And you get a deeper sense that your personal contribution matters. A sense of energy, pride and spirit that almost becomes tangible when you talk about your organisation. Through interactive and experiential development sessions, you work towards a profound ambition in the organisation. This embodied ambition creates a level of urgency and above all a renewed spirit in the organisation.



*Spirit – Fundamentally knowing and experiencing that it makes perfect sense what the organisation is pursuing. Goosebumps because you can relate to something bigger than yourself. Experiencing the power of an organisation that is living its true potential. Contributing to something that you value a lot. Feeling the energy and pride when talking about your organisation.*

### 2. Lead from a state of positive self-awareness

Leadership occurs when a person can, and is willing to, contribute to the organisational ambition. Often people must remind themselves of what they are really good at, what gets them out of bed in the morning, and what provides them with energy. This positive self-awareness leads to self-confidence, which is the key to taking ownership. Giving people the time to gain insight in their intrinsic convictions, drive, and unique talents is crucial. It is often a prerequisite to stand up for your convictions, and take ownership in order to contribute. Furthermore, it ensures that people - and therefore the organisation - maintain a growth-mind.



*Ownership – Wanting to bring out the best in yourself and the organisation continuously. Being able to make the shift from frustration to drive, from surviving to thriving, from being pushed around to taking charge. Using your full potential and see your colleagues doing the same, standing up with shining eyes for what they believe in. From being engaged to being inspired.*

### 3. Focus on helping others succeed

Better and aligned collaboration delivers synergetic advantages which in turn lead to increased creativity and higher productivity. Trust is the key principle. Unfortunately, old habits, sometimes referred to as the undercurrent, prevent a fruitful collaboration that is necessary for the organisation to take the next step forward. People become self-sufficient and are no longer focused on reinforcing each other. By reflecting on the undercurrent, you will increase the level of trust and collaboration. The most important aspect is to ignite and use the team's diversity and its yearning to do what is necessary for others to succeed. Moreover, you can delve into team dynamics, feedback processes, energy management, effective meetings and solution driven communication.



*Synergy – Believing in something together, wanting to contribute with your unique abilities, knowing that others will go full throttle for it as well. A positive and future oriented way of collaboration that brings excitement in the team. Where positive energy and safety are the starting point to contribute to the team based on your strengths, realising true synergy.*

### 4. Activate ambition-driven discovery instead of target-focused delivery

A new ambition often also demands a new way of working. A different way of selling, the development towards self-organising teams, or the implementation of agile; all ask for a change in the way of working to increase the leverage in the organisation. Collaborating on the basis of personal strength is not enough. You also need to invest in a new way of working and in new routines. Routines that help increase leverage, creativity and results. Because doing the same over and over again and expecting different results is, to speak with the words of Einstein, insanity.



*Leverage – Knowing that the secret of sustainable results can be found in creating focus on doing the right activities by the right people in a successful way, over and over again. Knowing that only working from a shared ambition guarantees those desired results. A way of working that provides space for ambition driven discovery, stimulating doing what is necessary instead of doing what you where told to do.*

### 5. Look for a setup that works & motivates and skip what does not work and what demotivates

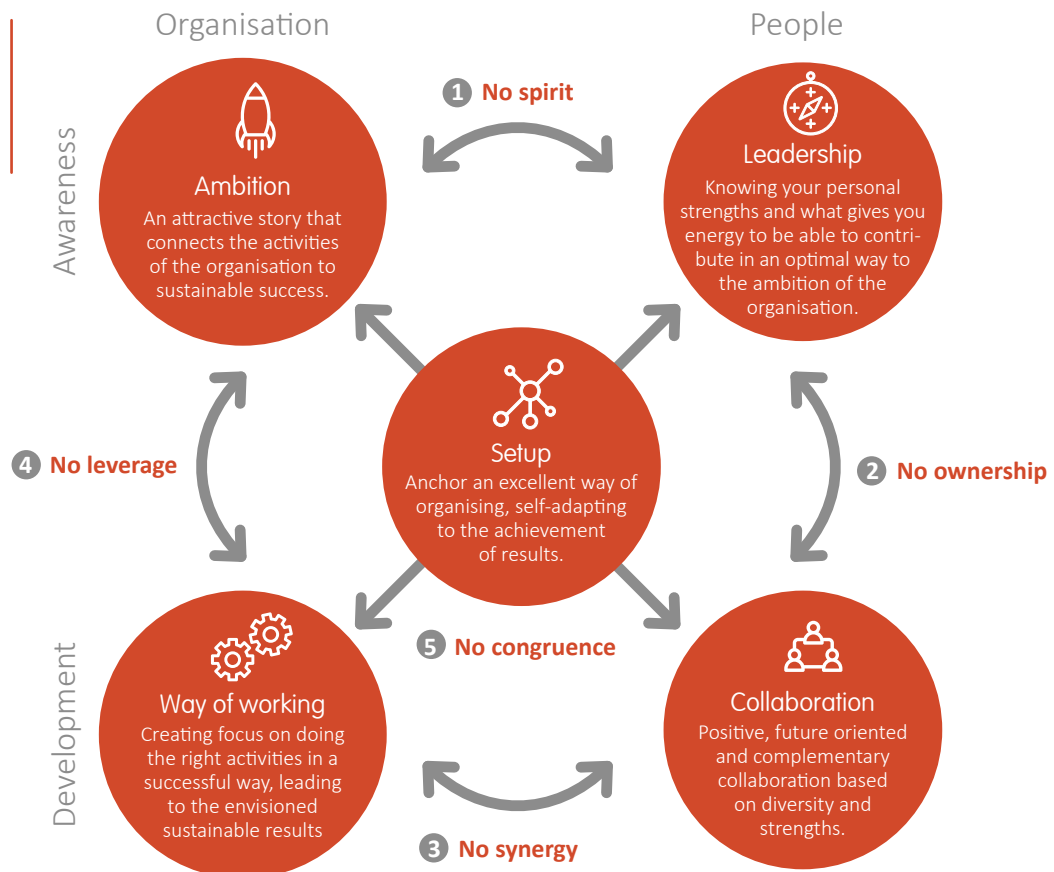
In order to successfully navigate through an ever-changing and interconnected world, a different way of organising is crucial. Would you, in all honesty, dare to reflect upon your own organisation and review whether the setup of your organisation is aligned with your ambitions and still fits the needs of your people to perform optimally? Are you able to decrease pressure due to bureaucratic processes and willing to apply new principles of organising? Also, are you capable of simultaneously embedding exploitation and exploration into your organisation? In doing so, you guarantee congruence within the organisation.





*Congruence – An organisational setup, logically following our way of working. Feeling that the organisation is fit for human beings. That the main organisational principle is trust. An adaptable setup driving coherence, client focus, dual strategy, and empowerment. Keeping it adaptable by reflecting periodically if it still fits the requirements.*

The five steps help you to solve the five most common breaks in organisational development



*The next 5 chapters dive deep into these 5 steps, and provide practical tools and guidelines to get you started.*

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results”

- Albert Einstein



When ambition  
fuels your desire  
to succeed, you're  
virtually unstoppable.



## 2.0 Make it personal, very personal

**Ambition is not something that you agree upon in the management team and put on a slide for others to read and follow. It's a collective feeling or even a belief that together you can and will make a difference in the world around you. A deep understanding of why we do what we do and how we do it makes our collaboration meaningful.**

### 2.1 Why do we need to make our ambition personal?

Connecting with each other, and to something larger than us stimulates a profound and creative sense making process. And we get a sense of fulfilment that our personal contribution matters. A sense of energy and pride that becomes tangible when we talk about our organisation. If you want to empower people, you need this to make it work. The glue and collective direction need to come from something intrinsically, a deeper choice to meaningfully relate to the organisation, contributing to its results. It needs to be profoundly personal because, as we know, all action is triggered by emotion and not by ratio. So, having an ambition that everybody understands or even likes is not enough. It needs to trigger or, even better, ignite everybody's deeper drive to get into action. When this happens, the organisation noticeably starts developing its full potential. You can feel the powerful working spirit within teams, the powerful manifestation of people who know that they contribute to something meaningful.

### 2.2 How do we allow it to emerge?

To come to a personal ambition, we need to meaningfully connect with each other and to what is emerging during this process. This is not about what once was or what still is to come. This is about what is alive in people right now. So, work with 'what is'. Whatever emotions, negativity and resistance surface, they surface because they are there, and they are real. Don't try to manage, neglect it or fix them. Just allow it to surface. And depending on what is alive in people and the duration of the silence, this can take a while.

Only when the air is cleared, and issues are expressed, collective hope for a better future can arise and ambition can grow. The only way to come to a profound ambition together is if everybody participates in the process. You need to be part of the discovery for it to be meaningful. Again, it's all about slowing down for a deeper connection in order to speed up getting to the results.

Therefore, we advocate meaningful encounters with the whole organisation on the topic of ambition to make it profound. The most important element we found is that people need to make it personal for it to become profound. They need to connect it to their own passion, values and talents before they understand or even feel the depth of the ambition that emerges during this process. The choice for people to strive for continuous development, be engaged in a transformation, or to accept a new way of working, is driven by their intentions. Intentions, personal motivating factors, are the indicators for how strongly people are committed to work on it and how much effort they are willing to make to change their behaviour and attitudes.

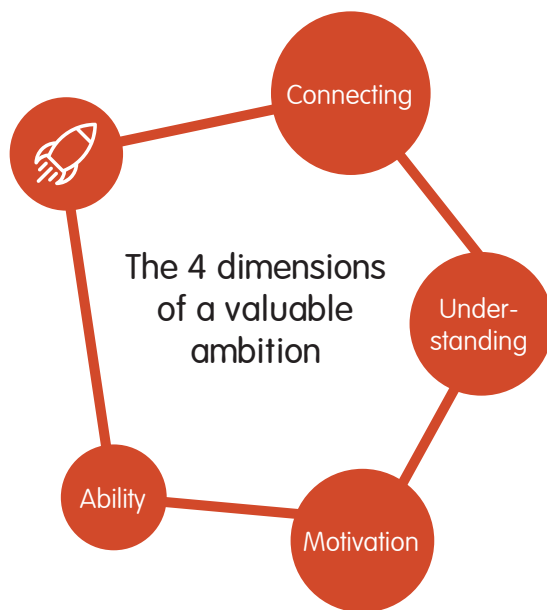
These dynamic motivating factors have 4 important dimensions:

Connecting: Deeper choice to personally connect to the purpose of the organisation

Understanding: understanding the importance of the strategy, the goals and the impact this has on your own role

Motivation: Motivation and engagement to embrace and activate the strategy in your role

Ability: (Assessed) ability and freedom to effectively contribute



Therefore, we think these four elements can be seen as building blocks to capture and communicate our ambition.

**The four central questions then are:**

- ✓ Purpose: What is the purpose of the organisation?
- ✓ Goals: What do you want to achieve together and with what impact?
- ✓ Identity: What makes you unique? What are your core strengths? How do you collaborate? What is your leadership climate?
- ✓ Roadmap: What bold steps are you going to take? Who is responsible? How feasible is it? And how do we measure progress?

## 2.3 What is the effect of a collaborative approach to discover your ambition?

Our experience is that organisations often don't take the time for this. Organisational transformation still is a top-down process based on logic, 'the wisdom of a few', and external facilitation, instead of a meaningful dialogue with the whole organisation. We've seen the power of these dialogues, connecting ambition to the change agenda, personal ambition and team development. And the beauty of it is that in doing so you're not organising your own resistance, but you actually activate your business on the spot.

And by monitoring individual, team, and organisational level on how people score on the four dimensions, you get a sense of the adoption rate of the transition. It also facilitates people in their sense-making process, in discussing with colleagues how they act, develop, and explore, realising the new ambition. We therefore promote self-monitoring in teams facilitating ongoing constructive dialogues towards the realisation of the transformation.

## 2.4 What is a practical guide to capture your ambition?

- Our purpose...
- That what gives us intrinsic direction...
- This personally engages me because...



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Become  
who you  
are.

- Friedrich Nietzsche

## 3.0 Lead from a state of positive self-awareness

**We believe that there is a strong relationship between the positive inner state of people and their sustainable performance and adaptability. People who are in a thriving state are generally more creative, productive, more involved, and more resilient. Often, they are also more energetic and healthier. They learn faster: by reflecting on what they do, how they do it and - if they allow themselves time - also why they do it. That is why positive self-awareness, also called wholeness, is so important.**

Self-confidence arises from positive consciousness. Self-confidence is the basis of trust in the other, in the team. And trust is again a fundamental condition for good cooperation.

### 3.1 The increasing importance of positive self-awareness

We see the world around us becoming increasingly complex and interdependent. Changes follow each other at a rapid pace. We see jobs disappearing around us. That requires a lot of adaptability from people and them being able to deal with uncertainty. Many experience pressure or even stress to get their lives in order. Some people ask themselves somewhat apathetically whether it is still possible to keep a grip on what they want to achieve. Or perhaps they have already given up and are in survival mode. The tendency is that organisations increasingly rely on personal leadership of employees and, to a greater or lesser extent, on self-organisation within teams. This is necessary in the VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex & Ambiguous) world to be able to respond quickly enough or anticipate out of preference. This requires people to have a clear understanding of who they are, what they want to achieve, and what their contribution is to the team. This is about personal leadership, which is to know who you are and what you have to offer, so that you can deal with all uncertainty and events.

### 3.2 Become who you are

Because of this it is important to invest in yourself, in your own positive self-awareness. More and more people are getting ahead of oneself because of the increasing pressure in life. Dealing with the many choices, experiencing higher work pressure or even stress often disrupts their peace of mind. You sometimes long for a real life instead of being lived. By planning reflection time and reconnecting with your own passion, values, and talents, you recreate direction for yourself. It helps you become who you are, instead of only meeting the expectations of others. It also helps you to pre-sort, stretch to (via job crafting) or even create the most suitable role for you in the organisation. As a result, you can ultimately accept who you are and what you have to offer. This allows you to ask for help with what you lack. And as a result, your visibility in the team will increase. By investing in the way you connect and communicate, your personal effectiveness will also increase.

### 3.3 The effect of positive self-awareness

The effect of positive self-awareness is an increase in self-confidence. And increased self-confidence leads to more development, risks-taking, and operating outside your comfort zone. In short: you continue to learn. This is necessary to increase the adaptability of the organisation.

The effects of thriving people who work based on their talents are therefore: focus, higher productivity, meaningful relationships, vitality and explorative behaviour. And you feel intuitively that this leads to better results, more agility, greater attractiveness, and a passionate staff.

### 3.4 A practical guide to capture one's essence?

Who knows his or her true unique talents? Knows what his or her deepest values are? Can express his or her inexhaustible passion and what he or she wants to be for others? Obtaining insight into this is crucial to activate personal leadership of people. One of the proven methods is to invest in a personal branding workshop, where you allow employees to reflect on their own personal brand and thereby support them in finding their personal value proposition for the organisation. With a personal branding workshop, you can focus on personal essential questions, such as:



- What is your personal passion and drive?
- What are your most important values and beliefs?
- What do you do easily with ease, are your talents?
- How do you stay true to yourself, and stay adaptable at the same time?
- How do you take personal ownership?
- What motivates you, looking at the ambition of your team?
- What are important collaborative principles for you in your team?
- What activities and projects do you prefer to engage in?
- How do you take control on your optimal contribution to the team?

A personal branding workshop is an ideal opportunity to meet meaningfully and to get to know each other better. You will validate and enrich each other with personal brands. As a result, you will learn to understand and appreciate differences better, and learn to connect with each other in a different way, deeper and faster:

- Why do others behave as they behave?
- What do we share, and where do we complement each other?
- What can I ask others to do, to compensate for what I cannot do?
- Where is the creative friction, and how are we going to use it constructively

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U•bun•tu  
*(oo-boon-too)*

~

'I am,  
because  
we are'



## 4.0 Focus on helping others succeed

**Organisations that thrive are built on teams that thrive. People in these teams understand that together, you will progress further and faster. The ability to thrive together, to engage each other on strengths, and to nurture positive behaviour, increases learning ability, agility, and performance. They break destructive patterns and continuously find new, better patterns.**

### 4.1 I am because we are

A few years ago, we came across a story about an anthropologist who proposed a game to some kids in an African tribe. He put a basket full of fruit near a tree and told them that whoever got there first would get all the fruits. After he gave the signal to run, they all took each other's hands and ran together, then sat in a circle enjoying their treats. When he asked them why they chose to run as a group, one child spoke up and said: "UBUNTU, how can one of us be happy if all the others are sad?" UBUNTU means "I am because we are" in Xhosa culture.

Organisations that want to thrive, invest in collaboration and facilitate teams in fostering a positive climate. This sometimes means breaking through years of accumulated, 'negative' patterns. People in thriving teams are so connected that they discuss the inner state-the so-called undercurrent-within the team, and then act accordingly. They incorporate what they feel and sense in their daily routines. In doing so, they increase the quality of contact, profoundly use the complementarity of the team, and have a greater capacity to assess and act upon external challenges. Instead of using verbal violence leading to debates, or silence leading to disconnection, thriving teams make use of their co-intelligence based on psychological safety.

**"It is important to break through destructive patterns, restore relationships, and strive for a deeper connection, focusing on helping others succeed."**

### 4.2 How can you create relatedness with a focus on others?

Neuroscience teaches us that our brain is a social organ. When people feel excluded from a social context, they experience pain. That's why a lot of operating processes in the back of our mind are related to thinking about people and ourselves, especially if our brain is at rest. When working together, we all experience these feelings. We get used to dealing with the negative ones and engage in all kind of attempts to get the positive feelings. If there are too many negative triggers in the social environment, people learn to rationalise and temper their reactions. As a consequence, true

engagement disappears. They become purely transactional, reluctant to give all of their potential to the team. This is why it is important to break through destructive patterns, restore relationships, and strive for a deeper connection, focusing on helping others succeed.

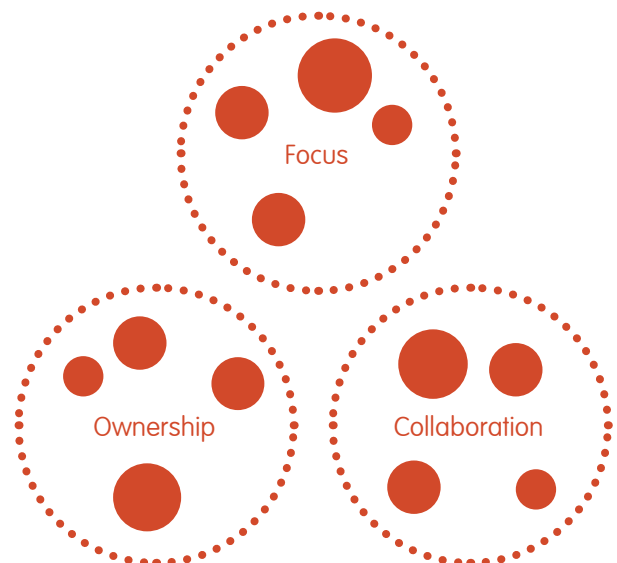
Based on writings of David Rock from the NeuroLeadership Institute, we would like to stress a few things that help teams and organisations to connect deeply and experience positive (brain) flow. Here's what you can do:

- › See your employees/colleagues for who they really are
- › Learn to deal with uncertainty in a whole new way
- › Give your employees the freedom to act autonomously
- › Take the time to develop relationships and creating relatedness
- › Stimulate fairness, in order for trust and collaboration to flourish

## 4.3 How to improve team effectiveness?

In recent years we intensively researched what teams need to perform well and, more importantly, how you can help teams to get a grip on their own performance. Regardless of the methodology or way of working. From experience we know that highly thriving teams are capable of adapting their course of action based on relevant insights, take control of progress in a positive way, and ensure that the right skills are used complementary. These teams develop a positive future-oriented way of working and install winning routines, which help in dealing effectively with their energy. They deliver meaningful results and know that healthy relationships, trust, and a psychologically safe team environment are the basis for successful collaboration.

When we coach teams on team effectiveness, we look at twelve ingredients that make the difference. We have divided these ingredients into Focus, Collaboration and Ownership.



### Focus

*Teams that focus on where they are going and why, perform better than teams that do not have that compass. Focus and flow are important conditions. We found four aspects that help teams to find a collective focus and stay on course.*

1. Curiosity: It is important to be open to important signals from outside and inside, and therefore routines are implemented to collect and weigh them;
2. Clarity: The concrete pushes the non-concrete away; that is why goals need to be concrete, tested, communicated. and organised. according to priorities;
3. Inspiration: There is a difference between involved and inspired, and that is why we are constantly working on a collective feeling, or even a shared conviction, that together the team makes the difference;
4. Persuasiveness: Together you progress further and faster, and that is why the team actively invests in the ability to coordinate each other towards the collective goals.

“You strengthen team effectiveness with focus, collaboration and ownership”

### Collaboration

*A strong team, with high trust, will get better and more collaborative over time. Trust comes from (a deeper) connection, mutual visibility, and positive solution-oriented communication. Teams that are able to monitor and act upon the inner state of the team increase the positive flow, the well-being, and thus the performance of the team. The four aspects we look at are:*

5. Self-awareness: Positive self-awareness leads to powerful individuals; that is why everyone in the team knows their own strength and regularly asks for feedback;
6. Safety: The importance of everyone being able to be themselves, and being allowed to speak freely, is embraced; that is why people listen with understanding so that everyone participates;
7. Growth mindset: Lifelong learning is what drives people; therefore you are open to new challenges, you are resilient, and solution-oriented;
8. Diversity: We recognise the importance of differences, increase them, and capitalise on them.

### Ownership

*You do not change behaviour with intentions only, but by taking ownership and doing what is necessary. You are what you do every day. A way of working that by repetition becomes a routine and makes the difference in the development and performance of your team. We distinguish four winning routines:*

9. Clear division of roles: There is agreement on a clear division of roles and responsibilities, ensuring clarity;

10. Ambition driven: The (team) result is achieved because everyone is driven to do what is necessary to achieve the collective ambition (contrary to doing what was imposed);
11. Decisive: Fast and shared decision making is crucial for adaptability, so a logical and effective way of decision making and communication has been agreed upon;
12. Alignment: Interdependence with other teams is important in achieving results, and therefore the integral alignment is well coordinated.

We see that teams using these twelve ingredients develop more positive energy, tune in more easily with others, learn faster and more effectively, and, finally, increase their drive to deliver meaningful results.

“From experience we know that high thriving teams are capable of adapting their course of action based on relevant insights, take control of progress in a positive way, and ensure that the right skills are used complementary.”

## 4.4 Practical guidelines to discuss your thriving state as a team

When a team experiences a powerful desire to act, a deep learning, and an increasing flow of energy, it will lay a solid foundation for the impact and agility needed to perform sustainably. Making the time to interact based on a few questions as a team, will increase the ability to self-regulate your agility and performance, based on the inner state of the team. It's crucial to accept any answer (no judging), reflect on it, and then co-act as a team. Here are 6 everyday questions to kick-start the calibration process in your team:

### Personal check:

Focus: Am I in flow? Do I feel energetic?

Collaboration: Am I learning? Do I make progress?

Ownership: Do I do what's necessary? Do I make the difference?

### Team check:

Focus: Is there energy in the team? And does it increase?

Collaboration: Are we learning from each other? Are we growing as a team?

Ownership: Are we doing this together? Is our drive for realisation increasing?

It's also a nice way to end meetings: Did our desire to act increase? did we learn something? And did our energy increase? I guess that an honest answer to these questions will change the way we do meetings forever.



If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood, and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.

- Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

## 5.0 Activate ambition-driven discovery instead of target-focused delivery

**The pressure on teams to perform well increases drastically, in times of rapid change. The demands placed on teams to keep a grip on outcome, to continue to function under pressure and the ability to jointly manage a virtuous circle, increases day by day. It's not enough to promote team spirit, good communication and accountability. It requires a continuous process of adapting, fine-tuning, and development. That's why you should also invest in a new way of working, with new routines. Routines that ensure the increase of decisiveness, creativity and development.**

We also see the trend towards more autonomous, independent teams, because of the promise of agility and creativity that is attributed to this way of organising. Many of the now familiar methods have fantastic tools and routines, but unfortunately, they are often used incorrectly. That is quite understandable, because managers are in a hurry to regain control. In this way they implement a new method without activating people. Teams then learn a methodology instead of working methodically and thus ignore their own drive to be successful and to discover their own unique organising principles. Simply adopting a new method is only going to scratch the surface and not going to bring you the desired results.

### 5.1 Well-performing teams realise results that matter

We define a way of working as the mindset, routines, and procedures that have a positive effect on, or help you realise, results. People act primarily from their emotions and feelings, and only partly on rational grounds. So, the question is: "What kind of emotions do we trigger in the way we organise ourselves?" We believe that a way of working works when it stimulates trust and intrinsic motivation, when people are positively self-aware and empowered to act. This is stimulated by a climate where the number of help questions increase, people can monitor their progress themselves, and where they learn from their mistakes.

To organise is a verb, it requires action, initiative, something to do. If you 'institutionalise' it into an organisation with a hierarchy and a prescribed modus operandi, don't expect it to give you the agility and exploration needed for future success. Addressing the organisation makes it impersonal and it places the responsibility for the quality and effectiveness of the collaboration outside the team. Practice shows, however, that most organisations still derive their certainty from this. You could also say that they conveniently put their own insecurity outside themselves. With this, organisations, and therefore also teams, are pinned down. This therefore requires a new way of looking and doing.

The route to the intended results during times of transition is a dynamic discovery process. Therefore, goal setting and prioritising also needs to be a dynamic part of an on-going dialogue. It is precisely this dialogue that cultivates the development and explorative behaviour of the team and the team members. The design of projects thus becomes iterative. The team then makes continuous adjustments, learning on the basis of (intermediate) results and acting on the continuous collection of relevant context- information. Realigning constantly with the ambition through permanent calibration of personal ownership. That is why we prefer ambition-driven discovery above target-focused delivery.

## 5.2 How do you stimulate ambition-driven exploration?

The focus may be more on your organisational ability instead of on complying with the blueprint or dominant logic. This is essential to increase resilience within an organisation. Do people follow a dominant model, or do they do what is necessary to optimally contribute to the results? The way of distributing work top-down is badly in need of replacement. To organise resilience, intrinsically motivated action based on external and contextual sensitivity is important.

### **From adopting tot adapting**

People are dynamic and innovative – organisations aren't. If organisations learned to adapt effectively to their environment through their employees, rather than making large investments to ensure employees follow orders and adopt procedures, a lot would change. Most traditional organisations still derive trust from manuals, job descriptions and hierarchy. In doing so, a lot of organisations are pinned down. A strong hierarchy often results in people looking upward instead of outward and inward. This asks for a new way of approaching the way you design cooperation, empowering people to self-assess their activities based on their strengths and the collective ambition, instead of looking at their job description.

### **From organisation to organising principle**

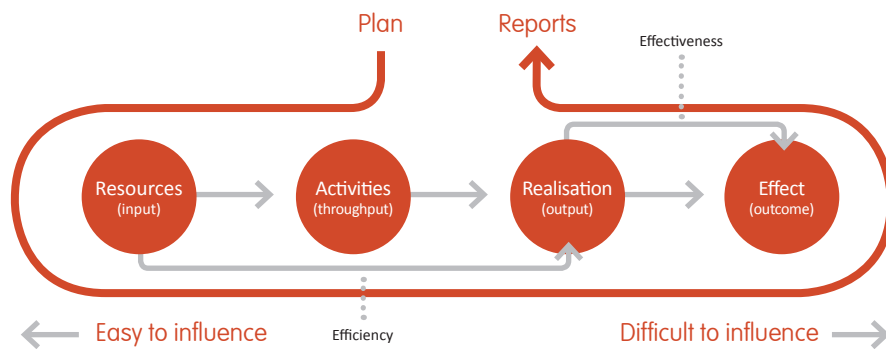
More and more we hear that organisations need to get back to the purpose of organising to regain grip on their future. It seems a nice way to put a hold on the fragmentation and speed of disruption. The question is how to together regain grip based on trust. You don't want to invent a new organisation form, but instead you should concentrate on the evolutionary organising principle. The rise of self-organising teams in organisations should therefore be treated in its purest form. So, learning people in teams to self-organise instead of adopting another dominant model. By helping teams to find their organising principle they return to their purpose, consequently organising themselves to reach their goals.

### **Always relate realisation to the effect**

In many organisations, the focus is on efficiency and less on effectiveness. People do what they have to do and realise their goals. But do those results really matter? What happens if the positive effect fails or is simply not experienced by the team? Do people then experience enough space to see what else has to be realised in order to be effective? Which activities must be set in motion, and what resources are needed for this?



The better teams understand and actively use the image below in their conversations, the more efficient and effective they become.



These are eleven proven suggestions to effectively stimulate ambition-driven discovery



#### 1. Do the wake up-check

It is often easier to follow others or simply to be involved, than to look for what we really want to contribute to the whole, what we would like to stand up for. While this is precisely where the inspiration and the ownership emerges.



#### 2. Keep focused

Together we make plans and validate and align them with other relevant teams in the organisation. Priorities are determined on the basis of our coordinated ambition. We make choices instead of stacking activities.



#### 3. Keep things simple

Collaboration is sometimes difficult because of the complexity and interdependence of many things. It helps to keep things simple and to see which steps you already can take or which sub-decisions you already can take to keep going (as small as possible).



#### 4. Explicitly agree or improve

If ideas are suggested, you agree explicitly, or you come up with an improved idea. In this way you prevent people torpedoing each others ideas and you ensure constructive concrete progress.



#### 5. Make decisions until further notice

A decision is made on the basis of the information available. If new information appears, the decision can change. This keeps us agile and prevents endless 'what-if' discussions.



#### 6. Do the right thing

If we are stuck or do not come to an agreement, we ask the question: what is the good thing to do now? With this you address a deeper wisdom. If that does not help, we use the hierarchy to protect the relationship and to keep it going.



### 7. Reflect = learn

When you explicitly address issues, you can deal with them. Take five minutes after each meeting to reflect. What went well? What can be improved? And: how will we realize that?



### 8. Organise inspiration

We often organise mainly to deliver results. But what about inspiration? Organising enthusiasm is done through delivering results that matter to customers, the organisation and to the employee themselves. Make sure people can contribute and give their best for the team. Then you create a context where people take ownership instead of showing compliant behaviour.



### 9. Making meetings fun through focus, collaboration and ownership

Many meetings are lost in re-circulating opinions without any action. By creating a collective focus (with a concrete agenda), working together on projects (using our diversity effectively) and stimulating ownership (making it explicit), you will thrive together.



### 10. Follow the energy

Situations change because people put their energy in it. If the energy is not there, nothing happens. So, look where the energy is and follow it, because that is also the fastest way to results that matter. Dare to stop what does not work.



### 11. Capture progress in a visible way

However trivial, people need to see progress. This is an important motivator to continue. So, make sure you can follow the progress visibly with your team.

And of course, you will find the best principles for your organisation together.

## 5.0 Design a set up that works & motivates people

**A lot of organisations feel like closed systems with a clear division of labour and a natural tendency towards compliance. Employee engagement is not something that we discuss with each other, but we delegate it to an annual survey. No wonder that the focus of the discussion is shifting towards the way we organise our collaboration. And we already know that the biggest disruption is not the technology, but the social innovation that is needed to be able to excel with the technology as an organisation.**

We believe in people-driven organisations. Organisations that are designed to stimulate collaboration, cultivate authentic adaptability of people and automatically adapt to changes based on external and contextual sensitivity of people.

### 5.1 Why invest to become a people-driven company?

Organisations have started leading their own lives. A life in which continuity, financial value, and growth have become the most important goals. Achieving results has in many cases become more important than meaning and value creation. People in organisations have often lost all form of shared meaning and the cooperation has become a mistrust-based way of survival. Substantial investments are being made in new technology, but the social transformation that is necessary to be successful in this respect is lagging behind. All this leads to self-absorbed organisations that have lost the connection with customers and reality. And looking at the state of some organisations, there is quite a lot to digest. Previous certainties make way for a lot of uncertainty. What made you successful yesterday is no guarantee for the future. The talent shortage is becoming a bigger problem. We are not even talking about the global problems of which the bill is being pushed forward. This reality calls for inspired organisations that act beyond their normal borders; for people who give the best of what they have to offer, who are willing to start their own transformation, and who work together based on trust and relatedness to achieve results that matter.

Reintroducing humanity is therefore crucial to reconnect with both the reality at hand and the innovation needed, collectively revitalising jammed organisations. The thriving increases exponentially when the agility increases; a platform for new ideas, experiments and discovery journeys. And especially when you manage to adjust yourself to keep creating shared value. Unfortunately, most organisations are still rigid unfriendly systems.

## 5.2 Where can you start?

### Think shared value

Thinking shared value grows with trust and believing in abundance. Game theory tells us that value is created when we do what's good for ourselves and for the system. So, what does that mean for your organisational border, getting out of the box and freeing potential? Is it possible to broaden your perspective towards your sector or your value chain and take decisions that create value for the whole system? We know that the current fragmented infrastructure is unable to solve the current social problems. The only way in which social innovation will accelerate is when we come out of our silos and operate at system level.

### Stop with positional hierarchy

The dominant model in a lot of organisations is a form of controlled commitment between a manager and an employee. We propose to change that to facilitated ownership in a team setting. Trust based freedom to act will lead to ownership and relatedness in the team, increasing agility and passion for results. Does this mean that you don't need managers anymore? I think we do, but in a different role than they have now. You still need to facilitate the leadership in the team. You still need to facilitate the team and help them find their organising principle.

Do not get us wrong; hierarchy is not unimportant. It helps to know who is accountable and who can take decisions, who should coordinate with whom to prioritise and how knowledge is shared. It is the positional hierarchy we act against, mainly because it creates an imbalance in mutual relationships and attributed responsibility, so that bureaucracy can flourish. All this argues for a non-hierarchical manager who gets things done by facilitating self-organisation, collective learning, and personal leadership in teams. The key question is of course whether you trust your teams enough to organise themselves.

### Start rewarding healthy practices

You also need to reconsider and redesign the way you define and reward success. The simplest way to do this is to put the clients in the centre of what you do, to rediscover your purpose. Also, by creating a better balance between money and health. By doing so you will discover your intrinsic motivation and the way you want to achieve it. I sometimes ask leaders: 'what is the quality of your profit?' Was it earned in a healthy way, environmentally and people-wise? Would you say that you have a healthy company? What you value most is what gets your attention, so you need to rediscover what you value to create the right setting for high thriving individuals and teams. And reward just that!

### **Throw out all the rulebooks that can be replaced by trust**

The most fundamental mechanism shift is moving from fear to trust. Some organisations are already getting rid of all the rules and procedures based on distrust throughout the hierarchical ranks. Allowing more freedom to manoeuvre, and stimulate entrepreneurship and risk-taking, instead of tiring 97% of the people with rules made up for the 3% rule breakers, who will break them anyhow. What would happen if you only had rules to stimulate collaboration? Investing in an approach or way of working allowing trust to emerge, fostering cooperation and stimulating initiative.

### **Create dedicated time and space to reflect, relate and learn**

Haste is a deep-rooted problem in organisations. It creates an adrenalin based 'can do' or 'if I don't do it, it won't happen' kind of atmosphere. Research has shown that haste due to performance pressure deteriorates judgment and sound decision making. Often, this results in a downward spiral. To break the spiral, you need to slow down once in a while. Creating space to reflect, relate, and learn, to gain a different perspective or to get to the bottom of things, instead of running around attacking the symptoms. Instead of hasty meetings that lead nowhere, let's take the time to reflect and learn to generate an upward spiral to activate the business.

### **Stimulate informal learning by allowing free flow of knowledge**

A knowledge-sharing environment is characterised by people knowing what knowledge they can contribute to the organisation and when and how they should contribute it. Moreover, they know why they have to do it, acting on their intrinsic motivation to make others successful. In this way knowledge sharing becomes organisational learning. The organisation will adapt 'naturally', because employees adapt based on free flow of information and knowledge sharing. Furthermore, in our experience, the more people are interconnected with each other, the more easily they adapt based on the information they get.

Such affiliation arises from vulnerability, social intelligence and shared passion. The more these aspects are stimulated, the higher the adaptability. You don't need to tell people how to do things anymore. They learn and adapt, based on the ownership they take and their collaboration, triggered by information- and knowledge sharing. Unfortunately, we're still confronted with organisations whose perception is that they can formalise or program this, often resulting in just the opposite behaviour.

### **Make sure that you organise both exploitation and exploration in your organisation**

Most organisations are equipped to organise the exploitation (current products and services) but less effective in organising the exploration, while this is crucial for your long-term existence. Whoever does the same as always, can also expect the same results- nothing changes.

Exploration requires a different approach, in which inspiration takes a crucial place. We have good experiences with setting up a virtual innovation accelerator in which projects are pre-approved and people from various disciplines and diverse qualities work together on innovative solutions and transitions. Teams are accompanied by a guide, supporting them in their innovation process.

“Managers somehow forgot to review the thriving state of people, helping them with their internal dialogue, contributing from within, intrinsically.

## 5.3 How to make HR instruments more human friendly

So, how can we make our HR instruments more human friendly? First, by using the most important corporate instrument, your ability to profoundly connect with other people. That is where the main ingredient to implement strategies successfully resides: in the energy and vitality of people. What gives a person energy and makes someone vital is by definition very personal. The energy results from people fully using their unique potential and constantly developing their capabilities (learning) and putting their unique capabilities into action (desire to act).

Secondly, by introducing new instruments in the field of performance management, career management and engagement. So, people are stimulated to keep a thriving state (energy and learning) and are supported to constantly work on their personal value proposition and the value they are creating.

And more concretely, what can you do?

### **From competence management to personal branding**

Managers have been trying to box people using competence management for years. The effect is meritocracy because managers tend to emphasise the incompetencies of employees. It sometimes looks as an instrument to hide the incompetence of the management to truly connect with people and their talents. We advocate returning to the uniqueness of people, helping them to create their own personal brand. And of course, this requires a different dialogue and instrument, like we discussed earlier.

### **From performance review to value dialogue (preview)**

An important shift we see is in the way you can do performance reviews. Managers have been trained for years to make performance reviews smart, result-oriented and emotion-free. Although there is the obvious upside, we also see a dangerous downside. Managers somehow forgot to review the thriving state of people, helping them with their internal dialogue, contributing from within, intrinsically.

Therefore, you need to plan time to relate, reflect and experiment to increase the self-awareness of people. Let's use the time managers now invest in measuring people's performance to create space and reflection time for their employees to take ownership of their future added value. Stimulating constant value dialogues based on their personal brand.

### **From boxing personality tools to holistic tools**

A lot of personality tools that are used box people and often have either-or grids. For example, you're either a feeling type or a thinking type. We believe that unique talent often appears in the paradoxical combinations of seemingly opposite aspects of your personality. Therefore, we prefer to use tools that have a both-and approach. Because of this we use the Lumina Spark personality tool.

### **The end of talent management**

Talents are perfectly capable of managing themselves. The only thing in their way is experience, feedback and the liberty to do what they excel at in closeness to experienced leaders. Limited free positions and the ones deciding on the positions are seen as the main bottlenecks. We often experience talent management as an uphill battle, arming fresh talent to survive the bullpen. We need to get rid of the career battle analogy where the managers are the gatekeepers of future leaders. Instead, we could go back to the master-apprentice way of organising talent development.

The changes that we propose in this white paper revolve around bringing back the uniqueness of people, instead of treating them as human resources. In a time like this it is so important that we put the human factor at the centre. That is what we stand for. People-oriented transformation. From our years of experience, we know what the impact is of vital, motivated people: agile, prosperous organisations with unbridled enthusiasm and ownership at the base. •



