

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE FOR TODAY'S LEADERS

TM

engaging the edges

Transformation Issue

Where change meets possibility.
Step into new tides of growth and leadership.

 interaworks



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transformation isn't a buzzword

Transformation isn't a buzzword — it's the essential work of leadership today.

We find ourselves in a world where complexity, uncertainty, and rapid change are the new constants. Traditional strategies rooted in stability and predictability no longer serve the evolving needs of organizations or the people within them. At InteraWorks, we believe that transformation is no longer optional — it's the path forward for leaders, teams, and organizations who want to thrive, not just survive.

That's why our Programs Team is deeply committed to creating experiences that go beyond incremental improvement. Every program we design, from EDGE for Productivity to Embracing Complexity, is crafted to support the real transformation of leaders and organizations — helping them move from managing change to fully embracing it as a catalyst for growth, innovation, and purpose.

We draw inspiration from new models of leadership and organizational design — ones that recognize organizations as living systems, and leaders as catalysts for collective resilience and adaptability. Our approach integrates the latest research on Vertical Leadership Development, conscious leadership, and complex systems thinking because we believe that the organizations capable of thriving in today's environment are the ones who prioritize inner transformation alongside external results.

In this issue, you'll find ideas, tools, and invitations to transform how you lead, connect, and create impact — including *The Case for Transformation*, our feature article. We hope it inspires reflection, conversation, and action within your own work and leadership journey.

Thank you for allowing us to be part of your transformation story. We are honored to walk this path alongside you.

Sincerely,

The InteraWorks Programs Team

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A blue-toned photograph of a rocky coastline. The foreground shows dark, jagged rocks partially submerged in the water. The middle ground features white, frothy waves crashing against the shore, creating a stark contrast with the deep blue water. The background shows the ocean extending to the horizon under a bright, overcast sky. The overall mood is serene yet powerful, capturing the raw energy of the sea.

True transformation begins when
step boldly



we let go of certainty and ...

into possibility

Navigating Change

with Intention



Michelle SantaFerraro, InteraWorks Facilitator

This year, my intention is to awaken fully! While I've always been an early riser, this mantra holds newfound significance as I navigate the shifts unfolding around us. Perhaps you've noticed these changes as our culture transforms, urging us to lean in, pivot, and sometimes undergo profound personal growth.

Nicholas Janni, author of "Leader as Healer," shares a profound insight: "The simplest, most powerful tool we have is our attention." I'm embracing this wisdom by paying close attention to my inner world. This inward focus already yields positive results, allowing me to be more present with those around me and more attuned to the subtle shifts in my environment.

So, how am I putting this into practice?

Living into Learning

I'm adopting a perpetual student mindset, especially as I immerse myself in a new European culture. Rather than jumping to conclusions based on my own cultural lens, I'm learning to stay curious. Instead of immediately crafting stories to explain what I observe, I'm embracing the question "que significa?"—What is the significance of this or that? This open-ended inquiry fosters a spirit of inquiry and receptivity, both in my personal life and our work culture.

Being Gentle

I'm learning to pursue my goals while holding them loosely. While I have aspirations for the year ahead, I'm mindful not to fixate on specific outcomes. By focusing on intentions and consistent habits within my control rather than outcomes dependent on others, I'm fostering resilience and reducing the likelihood of disappointment.

Speaking to Connect

Too often, I've held back kind words or compliments, assuming someone else would express them. Yet, a recent encounter reminded me of the power of simple human connection. Despite initial assumptions, a fellow traveler's vulnerability shattered my preconceptions, underscoring the importance of reaching out and embracing genuine connection whenever possible.

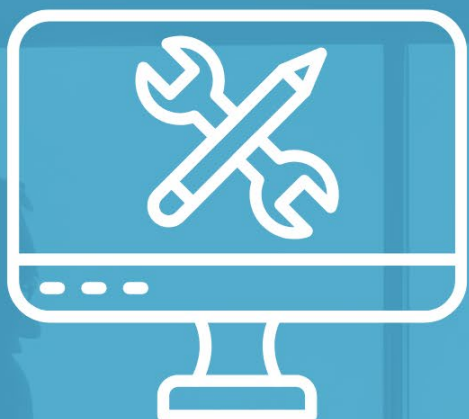
As Janni reminds us, attention is a muscle—the more we use it, the stronger it becomes. Nurturing this ability to pay attention draws us back to our deep inner selves and empowers us to navigate the complexities of our ever-changing world with grace and insight. Let's commit to cultivating this invaluable skill together.

The Return to Office Toolkit

Support your team's transition with clarity, compassion, and connection.

Returning to the office isn't just about changing locations—it's about reconnecting teams, rebuilding rhythms, and reigniting a shared sense of purpose.

Our Return to Office Toolkit provides practical, people-centered resources to help leaders and teams navigate this transition thoughtfully and successfully. Whether your team is returning fully in-person, staying hybrid, or finding a new path altogether, the toolkit is designed to create smoother, more meaningful re-entry experiences.



Guided conversations to realign expectations and rebuild trust

Practical exercises to reestablish connection and collaboration

Tools for leaders to set new norms and support diverse needs

Resources for managing change, transitions, and team dynamics

Ready to Lead the Way Forward?
CLICK HERE to access the toolkit.

Connect with InteraWorks to integrate Return to Office tools into your broader team development plan.

Fostering a Culture of Accountability



Steven Crawford, InteraWorks Director of Sales

Accountability embodies a spectrum of meanings that vary from person to person. However, at its core, accountability involves taking responsibility for one's abilities and actions. This sometimes means raising your hand and saying, "I need help," and other times telling your supervisor, "I missed the mark on this."

According to a study, 91% of participants highlighted accountability as a crucial aspect they desire in their workplace, yet 82% of those respondents believed they had no power to hold anyone else accountable. There's clearly a discrepancy surrounding accountability in the workplace, which is why leaders should be putting an even greater emphasis on it.

Like any other culture change, accountability must start with top-level employees and trickle down throughout the rest of the company. When organizational leaders emphasize and exemplify high levels of accountability, lower-level employees are inspired to do the same.

When individuals are accountable for themselves and others, it increases their sense of empowerment, making them more motivated and incentivized to offer solutions and contribute to results. Accountability and productivity go hand in hand, so to maximize your company's output and profit, you should focus on these four things to increase your workplace accountability.

Have Set Accountability Meetings

The Association for Talent Development (ATD) studied accountability and found that your chances of completing a goal increase to 65% if you tell someone about your commitment. Even more impressive, those odds raise 95% if you have a specific meeting with your accountability partner. These meetings not only give you insight into how your employees are doing in relation to their goals but also create a conversation where they can take responsibility for what is and is not working.

Make Everyone's Goals Public

This can seem daunting, but it's one of the best ways to hold people accountable for their actions. When goals are public knowledge throughout the company, no one can hide behind their numbers and there are no surprises at the end of the quarter because everyone is aware of who is and is not reaching their goals. This shouldn't be used as a tool to put people down for not reaching their goals, though, but rather a tool to celebrate those who did.

Avoid the Triangle of Blame

To avoid the Triangle of Blame, you first must educate your employees on what it is and how to recognize it. The Triangle of Blame is the common conflict arising out of a lack of accountability, including a victim, an offender, and a rescuer. In most cases, someone who perceives themselves as a victim reaches out to a rescuer and labels the other person involved as an offender. For example, Susan goes up to John and says, "Can you believe the way Pete made me look bad on the call yesterday?" This creates a triangle of blame – forcing John into the middle of the conflict.

By educating your employees on this concept, they'll be mindful of when they're placed in a Triangle of Blame and know how to diffuse the situation. Rather than feeding into Susan's negativity, John would recognize the situation and get out of it by saying, "I think you should talk to Pete directly about that." This response reduces conflict and shows that John is holding Susan accountable for her actions. When the Triangle of Blame is consciously avoided, it increases the sense of accountability throughout the organization.

Recognize and Acknowledge the Various Levels of Accountability

Accountability falls into a series of different tiers, so leaders must understand which tier their

employees are at. If your employees are at a basic level, it would be unrealistic to expect them to develop to an advanced level immediately. If you understand where your employees are currently, it'll be easier for you to help them develop their skills to reach the next level. Additionally, it will be helpful for them to recognize why you're pushing for this culture change. When you understand that everyone is at a different stage in accountability, you'll be able to give them the tools they need to advance in it successfully.

A team without accountability tends to resort to excuses, miss deadlines, and engage in blame-shifting. Conversely, accountable teams consistently achieve their goals, maintain open communication, and adapt as necessary to ensure success. Once individuals embrace ownership and responsibility for their actions, they naturally identify opportunities for growth and progression – fostering a culture of accountability and achievement.

Build a Culture of Accountability

Accountability is about ownership, trust, and growth. Our **Culture of Accountability program** delivers powerful tools and mindsets that help teams move from excuses to empowerment.

- Keynote, Lunch-n-Learn, or 1-Hour Short Program
- Practical models for shifting conversations and expectations
- Strategies to create a high-trust, high-performance environment

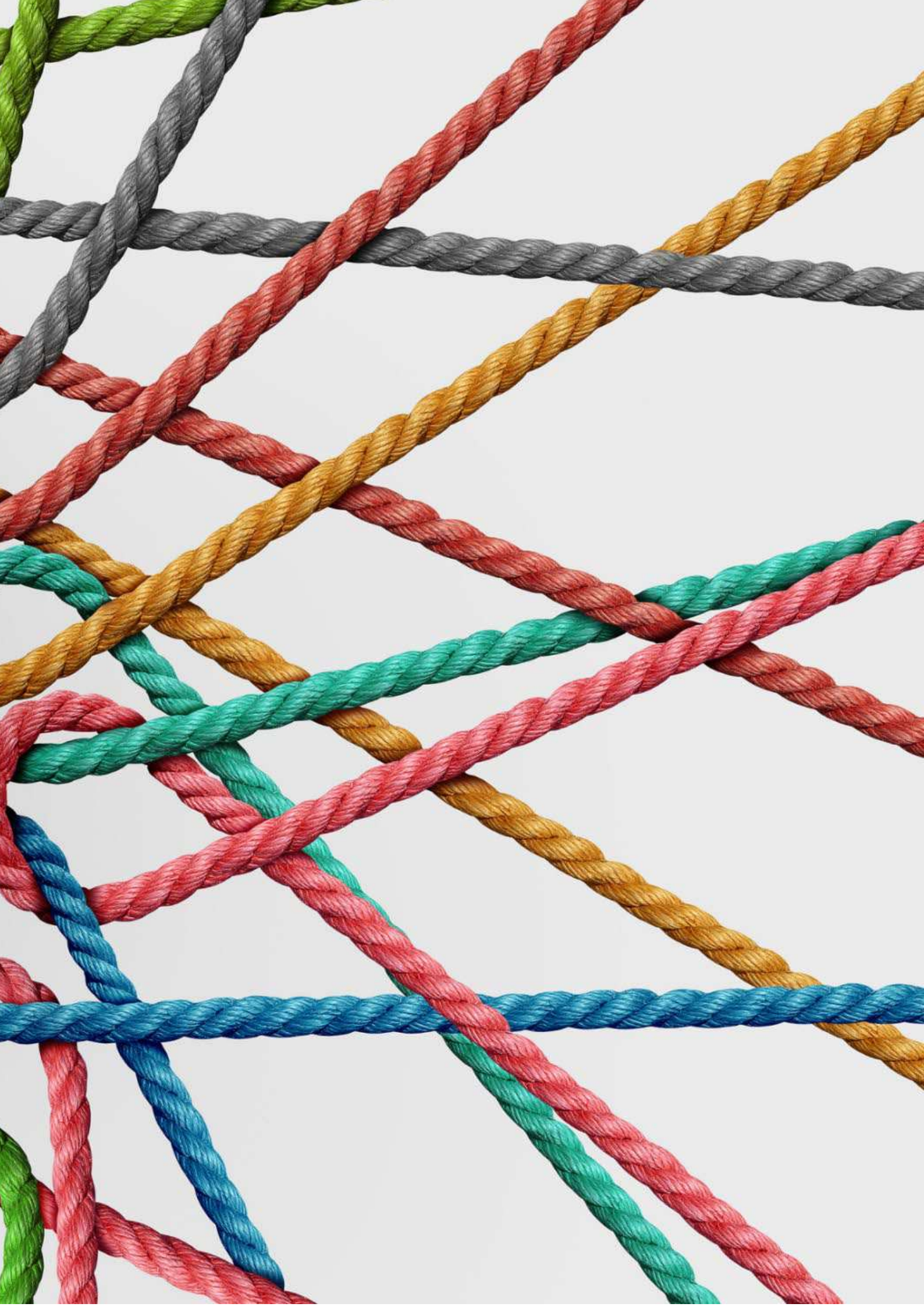
**Ready to strengthen
your team's foundation?**
Contact us to learn more!

A decorative border of colorful braided rope runs along the top and right edges of the page. The rope is twisted and looped, featuring a variety of colors including orange, blue, grey, red, green, pink, and teal.

The Case for Transformation

Building Resilient Teams
+ Adaptive Leaders

Anne McGhee-Stinson
InteraWorks Managing Partner + Director of Practice



In today's volatile and interconnected global landscape, traditional leadership and organizational structures emphasizing stability and predictability are increasingly inadequate. Our whitepaper, *The Case for Transformation*, highlights the urgent need for a shift toward more organic, human-centric approaches to leadership and organizational design, which are necessary for fostering innovation, agility, and resilience in modern organizations.

Current Challenges

Organizations are facing a multitude of crises driven by rapid technological advancements, global connectivity, and socio-political complexity. Traditional cause-and-effect thinking has proved insufficient, leading to heightened stress and disengagement within the workforce. As leaders attempt to adapt to these

challenges, they often encounter barriers rooted in outdated paradigms, which view organizations mechanistically and rely on stability-focused strategies ill-suited for today's dynamic environment.

Erosion of Leadership Confidence and Global Workforce Disengagement Recent surveys show a growing disillusionment with traditional leadership models. For instance, PwC's Global CEO Survey reveals that a majority of CEOs foresee economic decline in the near future, with concerns over the sustainability of current business models. Employee disengagement is also at record highs, with organizational culture and lack of well-being cited as primary causes. These trends underscore the limitations of traditional strategies in fostering resilient, engaged teams capable of navigating complexity.

Big Ideas for Transformation

Organizations as Vehicles for Socio-economic Transformation

Organizations need to move beyond the industrial-era focus on predictability and profit maximization to thrive. Innovative companies like Haier and Microsoft are reimagining organizational design to focus on human-centric principles, prioritizing adaptability, shared leadership, and stakeholder value.

Conscious Leadership

Effective organizational transformation requires leaders to operate from higher levels of consciousness, as described by Frederic LaLoux in *Reinventing Organizations*. Leaders with heightened self-awareness, empathy, and emotional maturity are better equipped to create cultures that foster trust, autonomy, and purpose.

Calibrating Leadership Consciousness

The development of conscious leaders is critical for organizational success. Researchers Bill Torbert and David Rooke's model of "action logics" and Richard Barrett's Values Model are examples of frameworks that support this development. These models guide leaders through stages of mindset evolution, helping them to better navigate complexities, manage polarities, and foster constructive relationships.

New Model for Leadership Development

Vertical Leadership Development goes beyond traditional skills training, emphasizing psychological growth, reflective practices, and experiential learning. It prepares leaders to think holistically, balancing analytical thinking with creativity and empathy. This approach promotes agility, innovation, and collective resilience.

Without shifting to Vertical Leadership Development, organizations face serious risks:

- Difficulty managing complexity, leading to poor decision-making.
- Reduced agility and adaptability in response to disruption.
- Increased employee disengagement, higher turnover, and rising recruitment costs.
- Declines in innovation, especially where conventional thinking persists.
- Erosion of organizational culture, affecting talent retention and alignment with core values

To navigate the complexities of today's world, leaders and organizations must embrace new paradigms, moving beyond stability-focused approaches toward adaptive, human-centric models. Building resilient, conscious teams requires courage and a commitment to continuous learning, laying the groundwork for sustainable, inclusive growth. The future belongs to those willing to evolve, innovate, and build organizations aligned with the values of all stakeholders.

CLICK HERE
to read the complete
whitepaper,
**The Case for
Transformation!**



The Art of Creating Space

Charity Wilkins, InteraWorks Director of Shared Services

As I've grown older, I've realized that many of us fall into the trap of believing that we should be able to handle everything on our own. However, in this often chaotic and stressful world, this strategy can lead to feeling stuck and uninspired, wondering if this is it or if there is more. That's where the importance of creating space becomes evident.

Again and again, I've experienced the art of creating space emerging as a beacon of hope, offering a path to self-discovery, growth, and fulfillment.

But as with many growth opportunities, this one requires courage. Courage to face the unknown.

Creating space can look, at first, like a giant void, and that can make us uncomfortable—I, and perhaps many of you, like nice boxes and filled-in shapes. Peering over a cliff into the dark abyss can be frightening. But what if it's not a dark abyss but an expanse just waiting to be filled with something wonderful?

Embracing the act of creating demands courage because it involves letting go of expectations. We hold on to the belief that we can follow the steps and reach our intended destination. Certainty is something we crave. However, it's essential to recognize that expecting certainty is unrealistic and often leads to disappointment. Rather than fearing the unknown, how can we learn to embrace it as an opportunity for growth and transformation?

Part of this transformative journey involves trusting forces greater than us. Whether it's embracing a spiritual connection, tapping into the boundless energy of the universe, or simply surrendering to the innate power of life, opening

or simply surrendering to the innate power of life, opening us up to these possibilities can pave the way us up to these possibilities can pave the way for incredible opportunities to unfold. So, how can we create space?

Shift your Mindset

Instead of relying on a step-by-step guide that seemingly guarantees our desired outcome, consider breaking free from self-imposed constraints and allowing yourself to dream beyond the boundaries we traditionally set for ourselves.

Go big!

If your goal is bite-sized, consider making it a feast. When we look at more expansive goals, our minds are often open to possibilities that we would not have considered for more tactical accomplishments. Even if the goal remains the same, how you get there may change.

Think outside yourself.

Creating space is not solely about personal gain; it also involves recognizing when to step out of the spotlight and make space for others to step in. Just because we can do something does not always mean we always should. Experimenting with silence can be an enlightening experience. If you are typically the one to fill space in the room, try waiting, listening, and creating space for others to fill it up. The act of creating space for others can lead to more collaboration and collective growth and can be incredibly rewarding.

Creating space in our lives is a courageous act that invites us to embrace the unknown, break free from limitations, and open our hearts to a power greater than ourselves. It's a journey of self-discovery, personal growth, and generous empowerment of others. So, the next time you feel stuck, uninspired, or yearning for more, consider it an invitation to create space and unlock the possibilities beyond the familiar.

Create Space for What Matters Most

In *The Art of Creating Space*, we explored how making intentional space—mentally, emotionally, and physically—unlocks new possibilities for growth, innovation, and well-being.

The **Best Year Yet® App** takes that principle even further by helping you create intentional space for your goals, values, and vision every day.



Ensure the space you create is filled with what matters most!

CLICK HERE to discover the **Best Year Yet® App**



Micro-Steps *to What You Want*

Julio Arquimbau, InteraWorks Facilitator

There is a new prefix that is appearing quite regularly now in a lot of the articles and blogs I read. It's "micro". Now that I have spotted this trend, I see it everywhere, in various contexts. I came across micro-services when reading an article on AI, micro-aggressions when working with a client on an e-learning project, micro-habits among productivity specialists, and just recently, micro-presence and micro-mindfulness.

Reflecting on this trend, it is just an updated take on a favorite quote used regularly and loved by my late colleague and dear friend Robertt Young:

"Small things done consistently in strategic places create major impact – positive or negative."

And it is so true.

Having used this quote extensively in my productivity classes, I also like to introduce the concept of "aggregation of marginal gains." The phrase was coined by Sir David Brailsford, who in 2003 became the Performance Director for British Cycling. British cyclists were not doing well on the international stage at the time. His mandate was to turn things around and the philosophy he adopted was the aggregation of marginal gains – breaking things down into smaller components and then looking at how you can improve these, no matter how small.

The thing with micro-whatever's is that by their very nature they are small, which makes them easier to perform quickly and with minimal effort. Who wouldn't like that? The trick is to do them consistently; this is where the benefits are built.

So, if we look at micro-habits, you can add them to something you already do to make them more accessible and stick. Many people in this field of research refer to this as habit stacking. For example, an article by Dr Michael Mosely several

years ago advocated standing on one leg to help improve your balance. This is very important as we grow older. He suggested doing this while brushing your teeth. My toothbrush has a 2-minute timer, so I do one minute on each leg. My balance has improved, my calves are stronger, and I can't imagine brushing my teeth if I am not on one leg!

For David Brailsford at British Cycling, it was improving things by 1% at a time. I have also seen this approach in people with knee replacements or new prosthetic limbs – they aim for 1% more movement or flex per day. However, for British Cycling, David Brailsford applied it to everything from each bike component to the products the riders wore or used to their nutrition, exercise, and sleep patterns. Each of these marginal gains may look insignificant, but the aggregation of these gains has transformed British Cycling into a force to be reckoned with. Just look at their results at the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and all previous Games since Dave Brailsford took charge.

What does this mean for you?

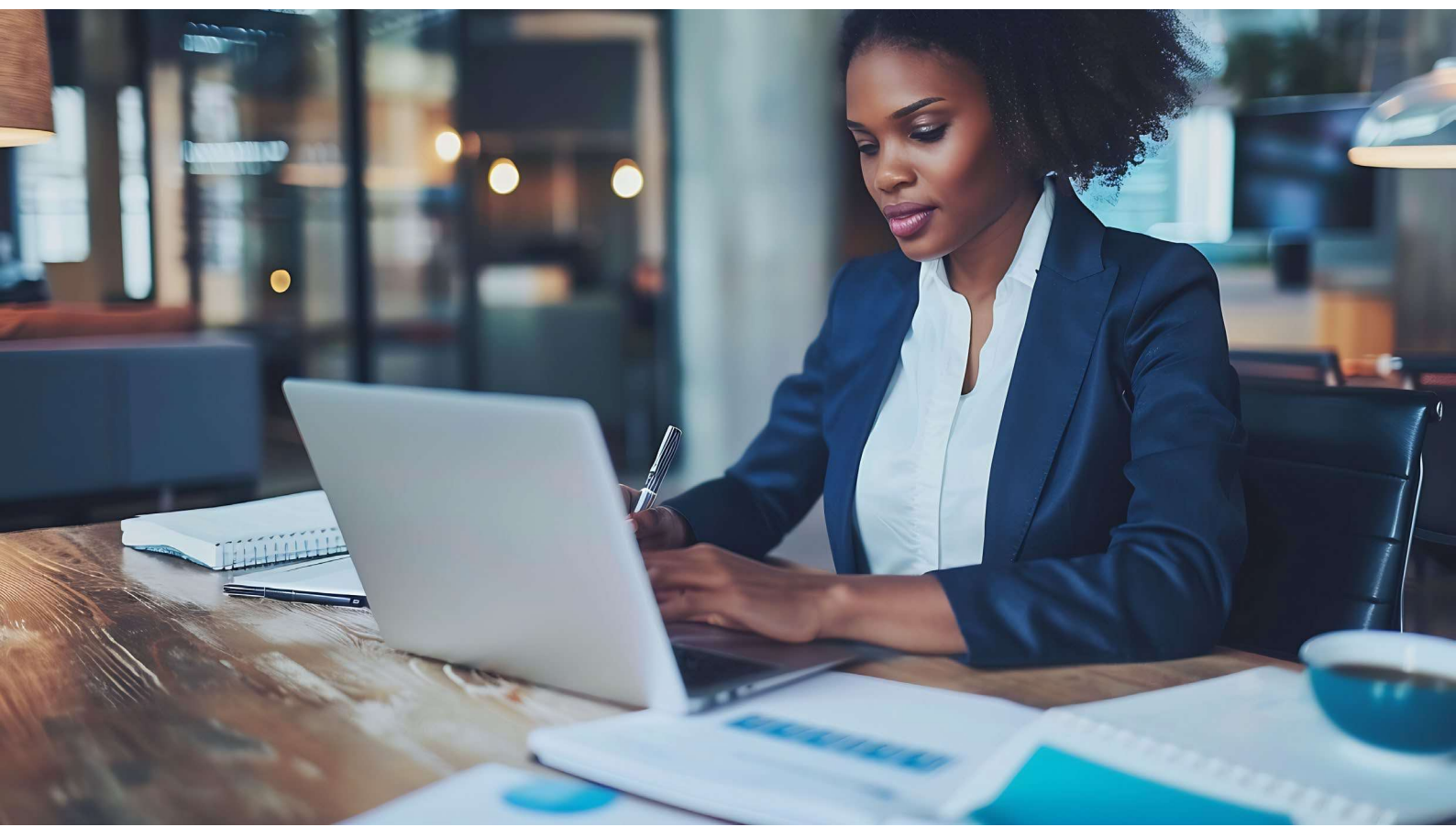
These principles can be transferred to almost anything we are involved in. Since most of us

spend most of our time at work, this is an excellent place to consider what micro-things you can do consistently that will, in turn, make a big difference.

One place to start is to think about what interruptions and distractions affect your daily workflow. Our digital notifications, pop-ups, and alerts have multiplied in recent years. Now, some of these are useful and we want to keep them, but the vast majority are interruptions to your flow. They do not serve you and are only there as your device's or software's default setting.

Research shows that every time your workflow is interrupted, it takes 2 – 4 minutes (wasted time) to get back into focus and return to the groove of what you were doing before the interruption.

Now, just for simplicity, if we could eliminate 10 of these interruptions or distractions a day (and you have far more than 10 a day, I am certain!), then let's say that each of these saves an average of 3 minutes of wasted time, that equates to 30 minutes you get back. That may not sound like



much, but 30 minutes a day is 2½ hours a week, 10 hours a month, 120 hours a year – and that is significant.

Just think what you could do with an extra 120 hours a year!

Here are a couple of examples from my routine. I have changed my LinkedIn notifications from push (delivered continuously) to pull (I get them when I want to look at them). It wastes so much less time to look at them all in one go rather than every time they arrive and distract me. Switching off email pop-ups on my laptop and mobile phone has also been a game changer. This also encourages me to work in batches (i.e., process my emails in a batch instead of as they arrive), which is far more brain-friendly and less stressful.

Most of us think that eliminating small things that do not serve us and doing small things that add value won't make much difference, but the truth is, if these are applied consistently, they can have a significant impact. If it helps, consider using a habit tracker. This simple visual tool can remind you and act as your trigger while also giving you encouragement and a sense of accomplishment as you see the frequency grow.

You can do so many small things that will have a significant impact. Drink a glass of water right when you wake up, as one of my colleagues does. Set your daily intention when you swing out of bed and stretch well. Take a 10-minute walk right after lunch. Small things that, when you add them up over a period of time, will surprise you just how much benefit they have provided.

Could you do something while waiting for the coffee to brew?

This is why reading about micro-mindfulness piqued my curiosity. Mindfulness activities can

be as big or as small as you want. I just love the idea of micro-mindful actions. To help you remember to do them, stack them with something else you already do. Then, make sure you do them consistently. Again, over a period of time, you will see they have made a significant impact.

Again, there are many things you could incorporate into your daily routines, like journaling one positive thought a day or something you are grateful for. This one action would give you 365 items in a year. What a great read that would make, and it will have taken you very little time. You may have thought about meditating, but just talk yourself out of it because it will take up too much time. Start small with a few minutes, and see where that takes you. You may find it helps reduce your stress or anxiety levels, and you can build from there.

There are even simpler things you can do. Do you have a go-to breathing exercise? There are lots to choose from. Practicing this every day and mastering the art will provide you with the additional benefit of a tool when you are anxious or uncomfortable. You can call on this breathing technique to help calm you down and re-center yourself.

- **Do you check in on yourself?**
- **How are the different parts of your body feeling today?**
- **Do you stop to appreciate what is around you, checking in with all your senses?**

This could take less than a minute. Maybe any of these could be done while you wait for your next meeting to start, the microwave to ping, or the traffic light to turn green.

Perhaps you could add a particular exercise or stretch into the start or end of a break you take. These will certainly add up, and you will notice a real difference over time.

What other transitions between tasks could act as a trigger to introduce a micro-habit?

Once you start tuning into micro-activities, you will see they can be incorporated into many areas of your life. Your finances could benefit. The first thing I do when I sit at my desk or look at

my mobile phone is to go through my banking apps to ensure everything is as it should be. Balances and transactions all in order, and I am calmer. It also lets me respond quickly if anything is not as expected. It is easy, takes little time, and gives me peace of mind.

These micro-opportunities are everywhere. Watch for them. Stack them with another habit or trigger. Keep them simple and easy. They will look insignificant on their own, but if done consistently, these micro-activities will become micro-habits, and the aggregation of benefits will pay you back handsomely.

What micro-habits could you incorporate into your routines?

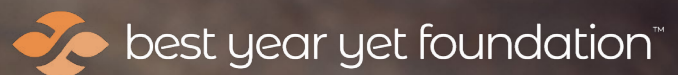
Small Steps. Big Impact.

Support transformation—one micro-step at a time.

In *Micro-Steps to What You Want*, we explored how lasting change begins with small, intentional actions. The **Best Year Yet Foundation** brings this same principle to life—empowering nonprofits and service organizations with tools that help them focus, grow, and thrive.

By rounding up your invoice, you're taking one small step that creates a ripple of transformation.

- Support nonprofits tackling the world's most pressing challenges
- Reduce burnout and amplify impact in service organizations
- Fuel year-after-year transformation for youth and adults across the globe



Ask your InteraWorks Relationship Lead how you can round up your next invoice to support the Best Year Yet Foundation.



The Conversation Compass

Anne McGhee-Stinson, InteraWorks Director of Practice
Stacy Cross, InteraWorks Programs + Branding Lead

How to Stay Grounded, Connect with Others, and Focus on What Really Matters

Conversations are getting harder.

Whether the topic is political, social, technological, economic, or environmental, it's easy to feel like you're one comment away from conflict. People are tired, emotionally charged, and often unsure how to engage without feeling reactive—or retreating altogether.

We're living in a world shaped by rapid change and high-stakes issues. From climate policy to artificial intelligence, economic justice to social equity, political polarization to global uncertainty, many of today's conversations aren't just

complicated—they're emotionally loaded.

And yet, this is precisely the moment when clear, grounded, human-centered dialogue is most needed.

At InteraWorks, we believe that authentic leadership begins with how we show up—in conversations, in community, and in the heat of disagreement. That's why we created this Conversation Compass—a field guide for navigating complex, emotionally charged conversations in any area of life or work.

Whether you're leading a team, engaging with clients, or just trying to connect with loved ones who see the world differently, these five tools will help you move from reaction to reflection, from division to shared humanity.



Shift the Frame:
Move from Reactivity
to Wisdom

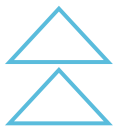
Before you respond, zoom out. Ask yourself: What’s really going on here? Is this about the issue – or something deeper?

Try asking:

- “What do you think is underneath all this tension?”
- “It feels like we’re in a bigger cycle of change—have you noticed patterns like this before?”
- “What would leadership (or action) look like if it came from wisdom instead of fear?”

Why it works:

These questions invite people to shift from their emotional brain to their thinking brain. They open up space for reflection, pattern recognition, and deeper understanding.



**Lift Others Out of Fear
& Frustration:**
Acknowledge Emotion,
Then Redirect

People don’t just want to be heard—they want to feel understood. Validating their emotion can lower the temperature and create space for more constructive thinking.

Try saying:

- “I can tell this really matters to you. What part of this feels most concerning?”
- “It sounds like you’re carrying a lot of frustration. What would you like to see change?”
- “These are intense times, for sure. How can we move forward from a place of clarity or personal power?”

Why it works:

When people feel emotionally seen, they become more open to dialogue. This technique also helps you avoid the debate trap and move toward deeper engagement.



**Prevent Yourself from Being
Pulled Down:**
Observe, Don’t Absorb

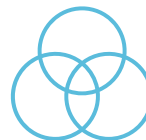
You don’t have to mirror someone’s intensity to stay in the conversation. You can be present, compassionate, and grounded—all at once.

Try asking:

- “That’s an interesting perspective. I’ve been exploring a different angle—want to hear it?”
- “No doubt it’s a complicated issue. But I keep wondering—what’s the real opportunity in all of this?”
- “I hear you, and I respect your passion. I’ve been focusing more on how we move forward than staying stuck in cycles of outrage.”

Why it works:

This keeps your nervous system calm while still being engaged. When you model neutrality with empathy, others may follow your lead.



Find Common Ground:
Focus on Shared Values, Not
Divided Positions

Despite differing views, most people want the same core things: safety, fairness, meaning, connection, and a better future. Tap into that.

Try saying:

- “At the core, I think most of us want to feel safe and heard. What do you think would really help create that?”
- “It seems like both sides are afraid of losing something important. What do you think the deeper fear is?”
- “No matter the issue, I think we all want leadership that listens. What do you wish decision-makers would do differently?”

Why it works:

This creates emotional resonance. It shifts the conversation from “us vs. them” to “we’re in this together.”



Future-Focused Thinking: Redirect from Problems to Possibilities

Fear focuses on what could go wrong. Leadership asks: What might go right—if we get this right?

Try asking:

- “What do you think leadership could look like in 10 years if we made the right changes now?”
- “What systems or solutions might emerge from this moment of transformation?”
- “Who do you see as a person or organization offering a fresh and wise path forward?”

Why it works:

Forward-looking conversations activate hope, creativity, and collective intelligence. They help shift energy from blame to possibility.

The Most Powerful Thing You Can Do? Hold the Field.

You don’t need to persuade everyone. You don’t need to “win” the discussion.

You just need to hold the field—a grounded, compassionate space that invites others into thoughtful engagement. In a world overwhelmed by division and outrage, your calm presence is a form of quiet leadership.

Whether you’re navigating conversations about politics, climate, economics, technology, social change—or all of the above—remember this: you have more influence than you think.

You can turn even the most difficult conversations into opportunities for connection and transformation by showing up grounded, curious, and aligned with your values.

**Take a breath. Speak with purpose.
And let your presence change the conversation.**





Behind the Badge

Jennifer Wilmoth, InteraWorks Relationship Lead + Facilitator

What a Police Ride-Along, with Nashville's Finest, Taught Me About Leadership

Recently, I was in a police car. So that you aren't concerned about criminal activity, let me back up and explain what led up to this encounter.

InteraWorks has teamed up with the Nashville Police and Public Safety Alliance (The Alliance) and Nashville Metro Police Department (MNPD) to design the first ASPIRE Leadership Institute. Recognizing I was interested in learning more about the business of policing, one of the Deputy Chiefs we are collaborating with suggested a ride-along with a patrol officer, which is why I was in the police car with Officer "C."

I realize that not every citizen may have the opportunity to ride alongside an officer, so I'll share what I experienced, heard, and observed while on patrol in South Nashville.

- Meeting people where they are goes a long, long way.
- The more context one provides, the more people understand. This is especially important if we must explain that we are not the right person to help them solve the issue at hand.
- Good advice from Officer "C": practice your skills when you don't need them so you can fall back on your training when you do need them.
- Being in a car together allows for many stories which reveal values and character. It was evident that his decision-making is driven by respect, teamwork, and being of service.
- He recognizes that neither he nor others listen or perform well under duress, so his

responsibility is to be calm and compassionate, ensuring a positive and safe encounter.

- Many factors (besides the obvious) make being a patrol officer very difficult. Yet, the intrinsic desire to be of service drives officers to run into any situation, risking their own lives out of dedication and commitment to our safety and wellbeing.

“When I put this uniform on, I am saying that everyone else in the city of Nashville’s life is more important than mine.”

– Acts of Heroism video at www.thenashvillealliance.org

Witnessing the kindness, honor, and caring Officer “C” demonstrated to the citizens he chooses to serve, day after day, painted a refreshing image of the men and women who make up the business of policing. They are parents, neighbors, and friends, but they are also Leaders who demonstrate how to do so with humility and heart.

Level up your EDGE. Unlock your potential.



Coming Soon!

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