

PEOPLE MAKE IT HAPPEN

LIVING OUR CULTURE
AT T-SYSTEMS



CHANGE STORY

How we're making change happen – and why. PLUS how to combat change fatigue

T-MINDSET

9 real stories about mindset change, 11 agility myths busted, and 5 tips to become self-aware

DIGITAL PACEMAKERS

You are one of our next generation of leaders! Find out why – and what really makes an effective leader

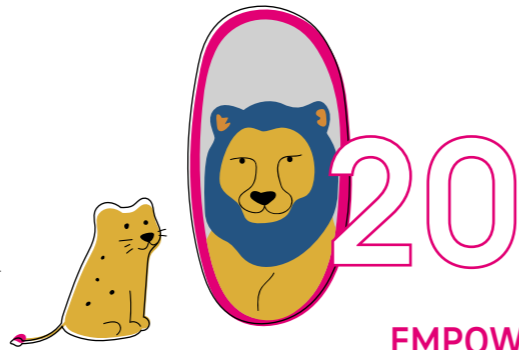
T Systems

Let's power
higher performance

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HOW WE LIVE OUR CULTURE



Dear reader,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the first issue of People Make It Happen and offer you an insight into how we live our culture at T-Systems.

To me, culture is a hugely critical element of how we think, act and work. It is the unwritten description of what a company is all about. Regardless of what is written down about company strategy and direction, culture is how we live every day in reality. It is the personality of our company.

Over the course of my career, I have learned that culture is never finished.

Our people are our most valued asset. They make things happen – and trusting our people is critical.

Even if you are in a company that has a strong culture, you can still keep working on it.

I spent my early years in a huge company with a 100-year history and a well-established culture. In the initial stages of your career, you don't necessarily understand aspects of a culture as being 'good' or 'bad' – you just accept it. But after ten years, I began to realize that there were some strong cultural dynamics at play. In some cases, these dynamics were beneficial, but in others, they impeded our progress.

Eventually, I was assigned to work with a struggling business unit. I quickly learned that I could no longer just accept the existing culture – I would need to change it to get everybody aligned with our goals. It was at this point that I read the Arbinger Institute book, Leadership and Self-Deception. It had an incredible impact on me as a professional. I used the Arbinger concepts and methodologies to drive change successfully in that unit, and I have continued to use and refer to them ever since.

Coming to T-Systems enabled my understanding of culture to deepen further. Now, it's very clear to me that the way we think about working together, and the way we collaborate, are fundamental enablers (or impediments) for us. Our culture describes the future we will have. I was determined to work on our culture in addition to the transformation T-Systems was undergoing.

The T-Mindset equips us with the tools we need to embrace change.

We began a culture transformation journey centered on our T-Mindset four years ago. The T-Mindset equips us with the tools we need to embrace change and guides us in how we work and collaborate. It supports us in fostering self-awareness, confirms that change starts with oneself, and reminds us always to see people as people.

Our people are our most valued asset. They make things happen – and trusting our people is critical. I want everyone to feel trusted, be empowered to make decisions, and respond quickly to customer needs.

Our agile structures and methodologies support us in quickly adapting to and thriving amid change. They are vital for any organization in these times, when markets and environments change faster than ever.

All this was, of course, accelerated by the events of the last two years. While we are beginning to emerge

INTRO

from the pandemic, the way we work and collaborate has changed forever. We are designing solutions for how – and where – we will work tomorrow through our award-winning We.Work. New initiative, which merges the best of the old and new working worlds, shaping the way we work in line with what every team member needs.

Amid all this, I want to acknowledge that our cultural journey is not finished. The world continues to change, and our culture continues to evolve. We must always keep improving, and doing so with our people in mind, co-creating a culture that works for and empowers everyone.

After reading this publication, I hope that you will see that culture isn't just a 'nice to have' for us. It is a fundamental part of future-proofing our organization, and ultimately, it is what will make T-Systems the best place to work.

ADEL AL-SALEH
CEO, T-Systems

Not yet on Percipio? [Click here to get started](#).

Read the whole Leadership and Self-Deception book on [Percipio for T-Systems](#).

Prefer to listen? [Tune into the audiobook](#) * (12 h 14 min).

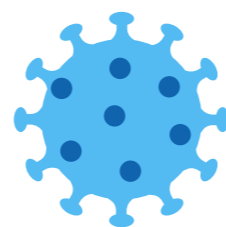
No time to read but want to know more? [Read the book summary](#) * (5 min).

* Please note: internal link only

CHANGE

WE STARTED EARLY...

and laid the foundations for our cultural transformation



2014

Piloting agile Working
First projects started in T-Systems.

2017

Start small, but start!
Our agile journey begins.

2019

Corona
Focus switched to support colleagues in adapting to changes in the working world. Begin embracing new ways of working and collaborating. An additional boost for transforming our culture & collaboration!

Facts & Figures*

The #peoplemakeithappen initiatives expressed in facts and figures.

Culture Transformation

- 26.000 colleagues attended culture related workshops
- 274 managers and early adopters engaged in the Change & Transformation team
- 260 culture change ambassadors active in the Magenta Change Champions community
- 30 multipliers act as "extended" change team
- 1.400 leaders approached via the joint #peoplemakeithappen "People Leader Program"

Agile

- 82 % agile skilled in Germany and 68 % globally
- More than 4000 certifications in agile methods
- 176 agile guides (in Germany)

We.Work.New.

- Activity-based working as hybrid working model introduced to ~28.000 colleagues in 15 countries incl. 11 T-Systems subsidiaries
- ~200 We.Work.New. Ambassadors in site teams, core teams & international community
- 10 Meet & Connect Hubs in Germany & 25 internationally
- 12.789 colleagues directly engaged in trainings & workshops in 2021 40 companies attended the New Normal Roundtable in 2021

Digitize!

- Aim: 10.000 future skillings by 2024
- 12 Digitize! Skilling programs developed & introduced in 2021 and 2022
- Almost 450 participants and ca. 3.100 certificates handed out

* as of March 2022

2020

Boost the agile transformation

Anchoring agile working for sustainability. First pilots of Objectives and Key Results (OKRs).

Embracing Change

Culture change focuses on supporting colleagues through times of crisis and transformation.



2022+

Establish Enterprise agility

Connect the agile islands and become a truly agile company.

Our journey continues!

Enabling sustainable culture change. Continued focus on mindset and behavior. Establishing enterprise agility. Anchoring We.Work.New globally. Promotion of future skills development.

#peoplemakeithappen

We are shaping our transformation end-to-end. Our T-Mindset is the basis of our evolution.

LIVING THE T-MINDSET

2015

Future Work

Exploring alternative ways of working and office space design.



2018

Initiating our agile Transformation

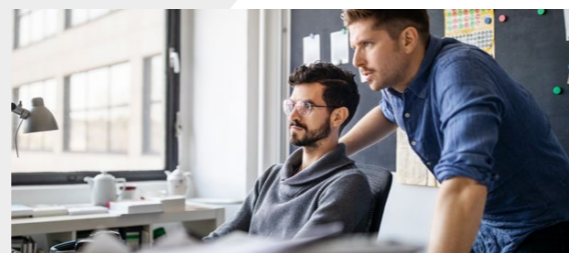
Implementing agile ways of working on individual and team levels.

Leadership as the Starting Point for Cultural Change

250 managers and change drivers form the Change & Transformation Team to role model the new mindset.

Mindset shift initiated

Outward mindset and self-awareness workshops offered to all colleagues.



2019

T-Mindset launched

Agile and growth mindset principles make the new mindset complete.

Scaling the agile Transformation

Company-wide agile transformation initiated: Flexible organization established. Agile guides accompany the change.

Magenta Change Champions created

Colleagues engaged in the change community to support mindset and behavior transformation.

Bigger steps

Implementing a flexible organization. Agile Power teams installed.

2021

We.Work.New.

Using the lessons learned and emerging trends from the crisis to shape our new way of working.

Digitize!

Launch of the company-wide re- and upskilling program to equip colleagues with the tech skills of the future.

The new #peoplemakeithappen

Consolidation of our culture change, agile, We.Work.New. and Digitize! Initiatives under one umbrella.

Start scaling Agile

New expert formats, conception, and piloting of Enterprise Agility. Further establishment of OKRs.

NEW

HOW TO BE RESILIENT WHEN EVERYTHING IS CHANGING

Over the last few years, we have all faced challenges in our professional and personal lives and have been forced to adapt to rapid changes in our environment. Constant change has become a natural part of our lives. As we move forward, change will continue to happen within and beyond the working world – and it's our ability to bounce back from challenging situations that will determine how we experience the change.

“T-Systems operates in a fast-moving, constantly changing environment. Our ability to adapt quickly and efficiently to change both as an organization and as individuals is what drives our competitive advantage.”

ADEL AL-SALEH
CEO, T-Systems



Why are we changing?

The rapidly evolving digital era, coupled with the new pandemic-shaped world we all find ourselves in, has dramatically changed the playing field. New skills; new ways of working; environmental and strategic challenges; new outcomes: it's an entirely new landscape out there.

We've been on a steep transformation trajectory for the past few years and are focusing on keeping that momentum going. We aim to build upon the changes already implemented and help all colleagues adapt to, and embrace, the changes yet to come. That's what the T-Mindset is designed to achieve.

Are you resistant to change?

Before we go further, think about any recent changes that have taken place in your role, projects, or teams. Now imagine how you would react if a significant change were announced tomorrow. How many of the following behaviors would you engage in?

- Silently disagreeing with the proposed change, but not voicing your concerns
- Spending time thinking up all the reasons the change is a bad idea
- Questioning the rationale behind the change, even after it has been explained
- Openly expressing concerns and dislike of the change
- Being less productive in the immediate aftermath of the change
- Procrastinating, and not adopting the change until someone follows up
- Sharing information you think discredits the change
- Continuing in the 'old way' – ignoring change
- Trying to get the decision reversed after it has been made
- Encouraging others to ignore the change directives

If you identify with many of these behaviors (even if only in some circumstances), you are proactively resisting change, even if you don't consciously realize it. But the point of this exercise isn't to shame you. In fact, let's acknowledge it's easy to find change overwhelming, especially if it feels like it's constantly happening in all parts of your life.

But, contrary to popular belief, you don't just have to grin and bear it. You can reframe your approach to change.

Ask yourself why you resist change. Perhaps you immediately associate it with upheaval, stress, and uncertainty. How about a new association: change as the catalyst for progress? Without change, it's impossible to take positive steps forward that open up new opportunities or better ways of working. "Easier said than done," is what you might think now. Here are some more tips for you.



How to become resilient, instead of resistant, to change

We recognize that our transformation journey can be difficult, even in 'good times'. We also know that living the T-Mindset can be challenging when we are under pressure. The Change Core Team's commitment is to support you through all forms of change. They will help you understand and adapt to specific changes and give you the skills that empower you to succeed in a new working environment.

Those skills will be discussed in-depth in this magazine, but here, we would like to introduce you to a specific skill that supports us in adapting to change: resilience.

Resilience is the ability to withstand, deal with and recover from difficult circumstances. It includes our capacity to make the best of things, enter unknown or challenging situations courageously, and rise to the occasion.

Being resilient enables us to adapt when faced with adversity, threats, or other stressful situations, such as family problems, serious health, or workplace issues.

It's true that you can't simply become resilient overnight. But you can work on resilience in a structured manner, using the '7 Cs' framework that we teach in resilience workshops:

7 POINTS FOR YOUR RESILIENCE JOURNEY

Each of these attributes is a cornerstone of resilience. So, to build resilience, focus on each of these seven points, one at a time, working out how you can embody it – or, if you can't, what is holding you back.

Check out the list on this page to give you some more detailed starter questions for each cornerstone and kick-start your resilience journey.

1 COMPETENCE
your ability and skills to adapt and learn to recover

2 CONFIDENCE
how you think of yourself and recover from challenges

3 CHARACTER
being true to your own values

4 CONTRIBUTION
seeing the bigger picture for the greater good

5 CONTROL
taking responsibility for your thoughts and emotions

6 CONNECTION
to your purpose and others around you

7 COPING
having strategies and your plan

TEST YOUR PERSONAL RESILIENCE



To quickly gauge how resilient you are, just ask yourself whether the following statements are generally true when it comes to you. Please mark your answers using the scale 1–5 below, with 1 if the statement is entirely false and 5 if it is entirely true.

When you have finished, add together the answers you picked to get your total score.

I can quickly adapt when changes occur

1 2 3 4 5

I can deal with whatever comes my way

1 2 3 4 5

I try to see the lighter side of things when I am faced with challenges

1 2 3 4 5

Having to deal with stress makes me stronger

1 2 3 4 5

I tend to bounce back quickly after illness or other hardship

1 2 3 4 5

I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles

1 2 3 4 5

Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly

1 2 3 4 5

I am not easily discouraged by failure

1 2 3 4 5

I consider myself a strong person when dealing with life's challenges

1 2 3 4 5

I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings such as sadness, fear and anger

1 2 3 4 5



GET HELP WITH BOOSTING YOUR RESILIENCE

Visit the [HR Development Center](#) * to view a range of materials to support you in building your resilience.

The Change Core Team has developed a Resilience workshop to support leaders and teams. Contact the [Change Core Team](#) * for more information.

* Please note: internal link only

RESULTS

If you scored 10–23

Oh dear, your resilience needs some work but don't worry, we are all on a learning journey. Firstly, it is important to relax and practice thought awareness. Try and change your outlook and perspective and surround yourself with more resilient people. Remember, you are stronger than you probably realize.

If you scored 24–36


Well done, you are getting there – but your resilience is something that you can always increase. It's great to see that you are bouncing back from challenging times. Try and focus on these achievements; reflect on your experiences of resilience and take these positive thoughts and momentum forward on your journey.

If you scored 37–50

Congratulations – you are already very resilient – but nobody will ever reach their full potential when it comes to resilience; there are always things to learn. Join one of our resilience workshops and embrace some of our new techniques. After all, continually improving resilience can only be a positive thing.

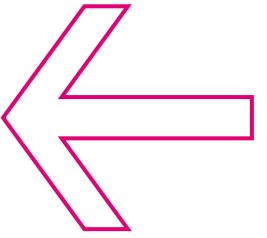

LIVING THE T-MINDSET

MOVING US TOWARD OUR DESIRED CULTURE



[Learn more about the T-Mindset here](#)

(Please note: internal link only)

COURAGE

Accepting failure and learning from it is part of our development.

FEAR



COLLABORATION

Working collaboratively in agile and flexible ways and focusing on the collective results.

SILOS



SELF-AWARENESS

Accepting that change starts with me.

SELF-CENTEREDNESS



ACCOUNTABILITY

Taking responsibility for our actions and the impact they have.



BLAME



CLIENT-FOCUSED

Putting the customer and their needs at the center of our thoughts and actions.

INTERNAL FOCUS



EMPOWERMENT

Seeing people as people and considering their needs, challenges, and objectives.

CONTROL LEADERSHIP



DECENTRALIZATION

Valuing transparency and trusting individuals to take autonomous, self-directed decisions about their work.

HIERARCHICAL



GROWTH

Embracing change and continuous improvement.

STAGNATION



WHAT DOES THE T-MINDSET MEAN TO YOU?

Every employee, team, and project is different – so how can the T-Mindset apply to them all? Here, we speak to six team members from across the organization to find out what the T-Mindset means to them, how following the T-Mindset helps them with their day-to-day work, and why they think mindset and culture are important.

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

It is a bundle of many attributes – integrity, teamwork, delighting customers, growth – all of which are essential ingredients in the making of a 'great company'.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

Because it is a form of guidance – the T-Mindset can help every employee follow the right actions. The best part is it can be applied to your personal life as well.

3 Why do you view it as important?

It motivates me to work, to contribute, and feels like I am part of a bigger family.



ASHISH SHARMA
Lead strategy and BO office, India

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

For me, T-Mindset is a true harmony between a passionate heart and a cool head.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

Such a mindset helps keep me motivated and enthusiastic, even in times of crisis. It's exactly the passion that drives us forward and that constitutes the basement of our inner motivation.

3 Why do you view it as important?

It is important to become stronger, be ready for any changes, but still have the motivation to move on, drive our business, and collaborate with each other.



EKATERINA KLOSS
Personal Assistant, Russia

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

It combines everything we need to be successful together in the future: embracing change, seeing people as people, and trusting our ability to grow.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

Living the T-Mindset is valuable, because mindset is the basis for all our actions and therefore for great teamwork.

3 Why do you view it as important?

Because the work in which you invest so much of your life can never be just about completing tasks.



ANDREA BRINCKER
Change Facilitator &
IT Consultant, Germany

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

The T-Mindset is an enabler for us to change how we work – to be more agile and adapt, change the way we think about ourselves, and think about each other in new and more holistic ways.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

Living the T-Mindset has brought teams, and indeed the whole company, together across different countries, PUs, and customers. That's especially true in these times of working virtually and not meeting physically. Adapting and improvising help us work together as a team and perform better.

3 Why do you view it as important?

I see it as an invisible binding force that enables us to work together, grow individually and as a company, and have fun doing it all.



SABEEKA LAMBE
Associate Manager, Quality &
Process Management, India

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

It's all about culture, change, motivation, and collaboration.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

It gives a human face to corporate activities and projects, giving you the opportunity to develop better relationships and to grow as a result. Getting to know other like-minded people in the Group enables us to get even more motivated and involved.

3 Why do you view it as important?

A strong culture is proof of engagement and can inspire our customers and colleagues.



CLAUDIA LUNGU
DPO & Quality Manager, France

1 What does T-Mindset mean to you?

At its core, it means that everything starts within you.

2 How is the T-Mindset helpful?

It enables better communication and relationships with others, and leads to more happiness, fulfilment and meaning in everybody's lives.

3 Why do you view it as important?

Because it allows open and transparent communication that helps employees and units work together better, accelerating us towards the achievement of company targets.



RÜDIGER AMSLER
Senior Project Manager,
Germany

THE T-MINDSET IN ACTION

Three stories from around the T-Systems' organization showing us how the T-Mindset was put into practice in real-life situations.

Changing your personal outlook

Part of my job includes moderating and recording Webex sessions. One of the sessions I recorded was 'Living with a T-Mindset in times of crisis' with Maxine Blumfield. When I'm recording a session, I'm focused on making sure there aren't any technical issues. Generally, I don't pay a lot of attention to the content and usually only half-listen to it. And that's how it started out in this session. But then there was a moment – like when you're in a crowded room, someone says your name, and you can pick it out from all the noise. What Maxine said spoke to me, and from that moment on, I paid attention.

When Maxine explained the T-Mindset, I thought, "Hey, that's me!" It was mostly a confirmation that the way I had, subconsciously, seen and done my own work over the last 20 years was the way to go.

I realized that, even if I live the T-Mindset in general, I sometimes stray from the path and behave in ways that leave space for improvement. In 2020 I was asked to participate in a new project, which was quite similar to an idea I'd had a couple of years before. I was kind of sitting on a high horse, and I may have tried to take over the project. It led to a few heated discussions.

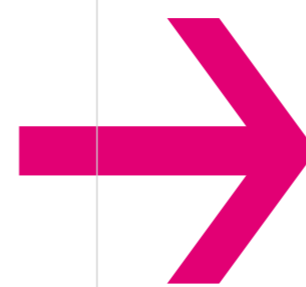
Afterward, I tried to analyze what was wrong with my colleagues – and then, thanks to the T-Mindset workshops, I realized that maybe it wasn't just them that were wrong, but also me.

So I went back, apologized, and we started anew. And the result was a very successful project.

CARSTEN SCHILLER
Global Quality Manager, Germany



Check out the 'Living with a T-Mindset in times of crisis' workshop [here](#).
(Please note: internal link only)



SELF-AWARENESS



Addressing the issue when things go wrong

During the summer of 2020, we caused service outages to a client due to avoidable errors. Every colleague involved wanted to do the right thing and had the best of intentions, but we lacked collaboration and alignment. Among other things, we did not fully understand the impact a supposedly minor change would have on the customer.

I called on the T-Mindset to help. Firstly, we had the customer share stories with us on the real-life impact the incidents had. This was a healthcare client, and I wanted our teams to hear directly from the customer how important our service is to them. Naturally, we did our quality and process deep dives and looked for mitigation for the future. But I wanted to do more and better.

We wanted to offer comprehensive support to our teams around mindset and behaviors, not just processes and systems. Furthermore, we wanted to motivate them – to show them what they could control, and how living the T-Mindset could help our business and our customers.

We organized a refresh on what T-Mindset is and introduced tools to show how to bring the T-Mindset to life in a business setting. The mindset tools are really helpful, particularly in showing us how to build relationships and actively listen. This is something we can really apply to help us work through or even prevent incidents.

ANDREAS TRULS

Managing Director, Deutsche Telekom IT Solutions, Slovakia

Identifying priorities

I attended some T-Mindset workshops run by the Change Core Team. The one that inspired me most was called Clarify Roles – a tool that enables individuals to identify where they are spending the majority of their time, discuss the importance of their various roles with their manager, and re-prioritize if needed. I immediately wanted to share it with my colleagues. Now, we use it in our team to reflect, discuss, and work together to improve our collaboration and behavior.

For the team, it gave us a different way of talking to each other, a common framework to understand what was happening, and a different way of approaching our challenges and building relationships with our customers. I challenge you to try it!

VINCENT WESTBROCK

Client Consulting Team, Germany



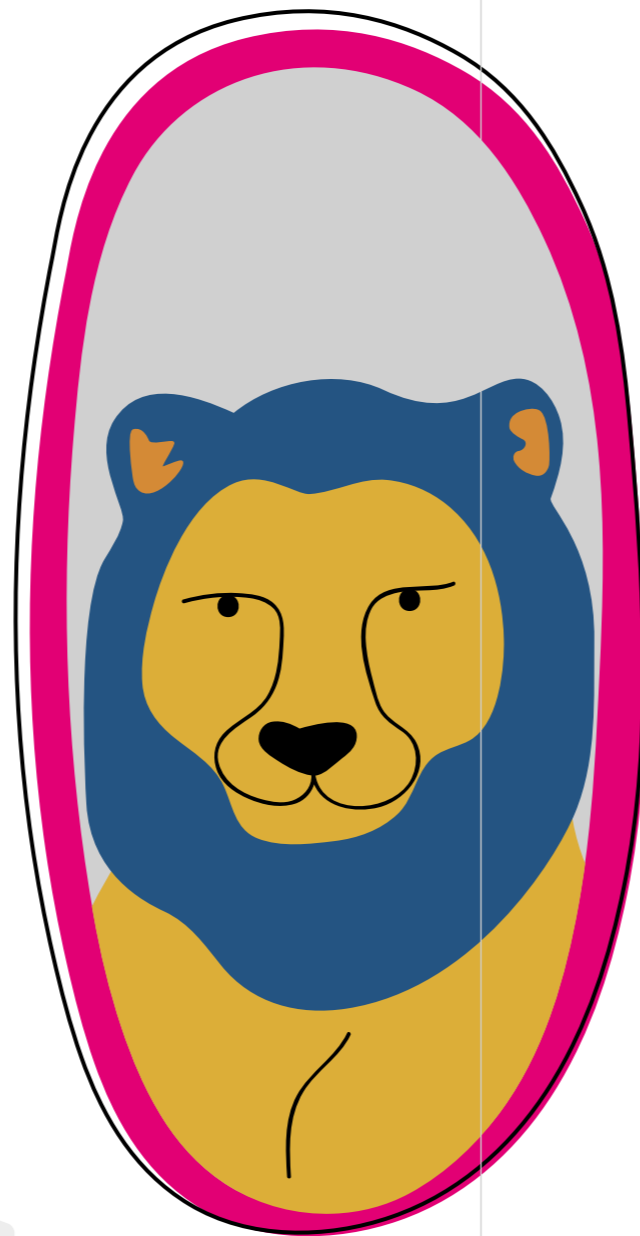
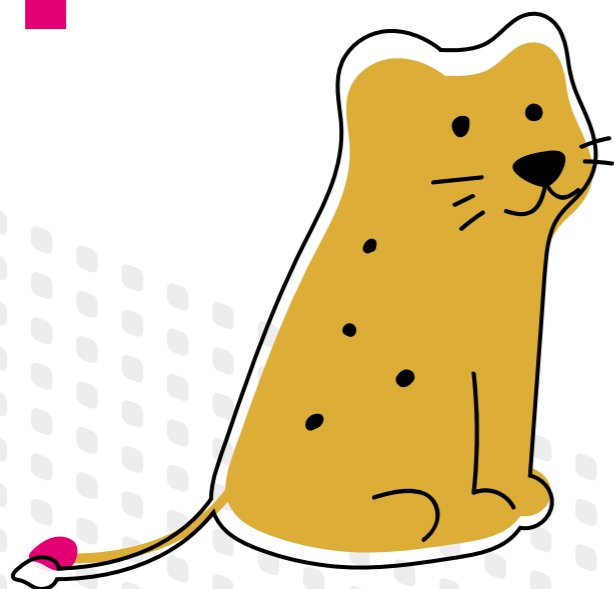
Clarify Roles: Try it for yourself

Follow these steps with your manager to clarify your mutual understanding of which roles deserve the most time and effort.

Leaders: Use this tool with your direct reports to help them plan their allocation of time.

- 1 List your primary roles (up to four).
- 2 Rank your roles in terms of importance to the organization. Ask:
 - How much time are you currently allocating to each role?
 - Does that match its importance?
- 3 Discuss and revise your roles with your manager as needed.
- 4 Reach an agreement on the relative importance of each role relative and where you should be allocating your time. Ask:
 - Am I spending the 'right' amount of time on each role?
 - Do I notice anything that suggests changes I need to make, either in my own roles or for my reports?
 - Am I using my time where it is most needed? Are my reports using their time where it is most needed?

ARE YOU AS SELF-AWARE AS YOU THINK?



'Change starts with me' – it's a core part of the T-Mindset. To embody it, you need to understand yourself: how you currently work, respond to different situations, and how others perceive you. This might be more complex than you think. It's estimated that only 10–15 % of people are actually self-aware. Are you? Read on to find out what self-awareness really is and how you can cultivate it.

Let's start with a quick exercise. Try to name five essential leadership skills as quickly as you can. Right now. Go!

Perhaps your list looks a bit like this: communication, decision-making, people management, time management, problem-solving... And you're certainly not wrong. But very few people would say 'self-awareness' – and yet, it may be one of the most powerful skills of all.

Experts now suggest that strong self-awareness is associated with most of the other qualities we just mentioned: better communication, stronger relationships, more satisfied team members, sounder decision-making. What's more, although most of us aren't particularly self-aware, it's a skill we can all attain.

That's why self-awareness is becoming viewed as one of the most important skills we can add to our personal toolbox.

This may raise a lot of questions. Primarily: What is self-awareness, really? How can I get it? And are you sure I don't have it already?

'The meta-skill for the 21st century'
Self-awareness stands apart from other skills in that it is a 'meta-skill': a fundamental skill that allows you to accrue and master other skills. Think of it this way: if you can speak Spanish, that's a skill. But your ability to learn languages is a meta-skill. Once you have developed a meta-skill, it gives you a permanent boost in a range of skill-building activities.

In a world where change comes faster than ever, meta-skills – such as adaptability and resilience – have come to the fore. We may not know what the next challenge will be, but we can give ourselves the tools to adapt to it when it comes.

When we move our focus from external challenges to personal development, self-awareness becomes the key meta-skill. Tasha Eurich, the leading self-awareness expert, calls it the "secret weapon of the 21st century". If we raise our self-awareness, we raise the upper limit of a host of other skills and increase our power for creativity and change.

But what is self-awareness?

Self-awareness is the ability to see ourselves clearly: to understand objectively who we are, what we want, and how we are perceived. Self-aware people can assess their abilities and examine their thoughts, motives, and actions clearly and without judgment.

Crucially, self-awareness can be split into two types: internal and external. Internal self-awareness is how well we can look at ourselves. External self-awareness is how well we can understand how others view us based on our internal characteristics and reactions.

It's possible to have one type of self-awareness without the other. You can be clear on who you are and how you react to different situations, but you don't realize how others see those reactions or ask for feedback to gain that understanding. Or you can be completely focused on making sure others see you in a certain way but never stop to think why you're doing this or why it matters so much to you.

But I'm self-aware, aren't I?

According to the statistics, you probably are not. As many as 95% of people think they are self-aware – but only 10–15% of people truly are. The rest thinks we are analyzing our actions effectively, but we are getting something wrong. Our analysis of our own analysis is faulty!

One thing to realize is that introspection isn't the same as self-awareness. Thinking about ourselves isn't related to knowing ourselves. Many of us have analyzed our behavior or replayed situations in our heads – especially situations that went wrong. But our introspection is focused on what we got right or, more likely, wrong: 'I should have dealt with that better,' 'Why did I say that?', 'Why was I in such a bad mood that day?'

Self-awareness isn't about judging or questioning ourselves. This can lead to stress, or it can lead to a defensive reaction that overlooks what's really going on – 'of course I reacted that way, it's just how I am!' Or, even, we can come up with an answer to those 'why' questions that is simply wrong. In jumping to conclusions, we reinforce our own pre-held beliefs and move further away from self-awareness.

What can you do about it? You can make a simple change to how you analyze yourself and your performance. Ask 'what' instead of 'why': instead of 'why did that go wrong,' ask 'what would have made it better?' Or, instead of, 'why am I frustrated in my job,' ask, 'what situations frustrate me and what do they have in common?'

By rephrasing our questions, we stop endlessly replaying the past and start thinking about the future – what we can change, build or do better. We gain a better understanding of ourselves, how we fit into different situations, and practical tools we can take into our future exchanges. That's self-awareness!

Bridging the self-awareness gap

It can be hard to take the first step to self-awareness. Historically, we have learned not to bring emotions into the professional world – so talking, or even thinking, openly about situations where we were angry, resentful, or unproductive can feel uncomfortable.

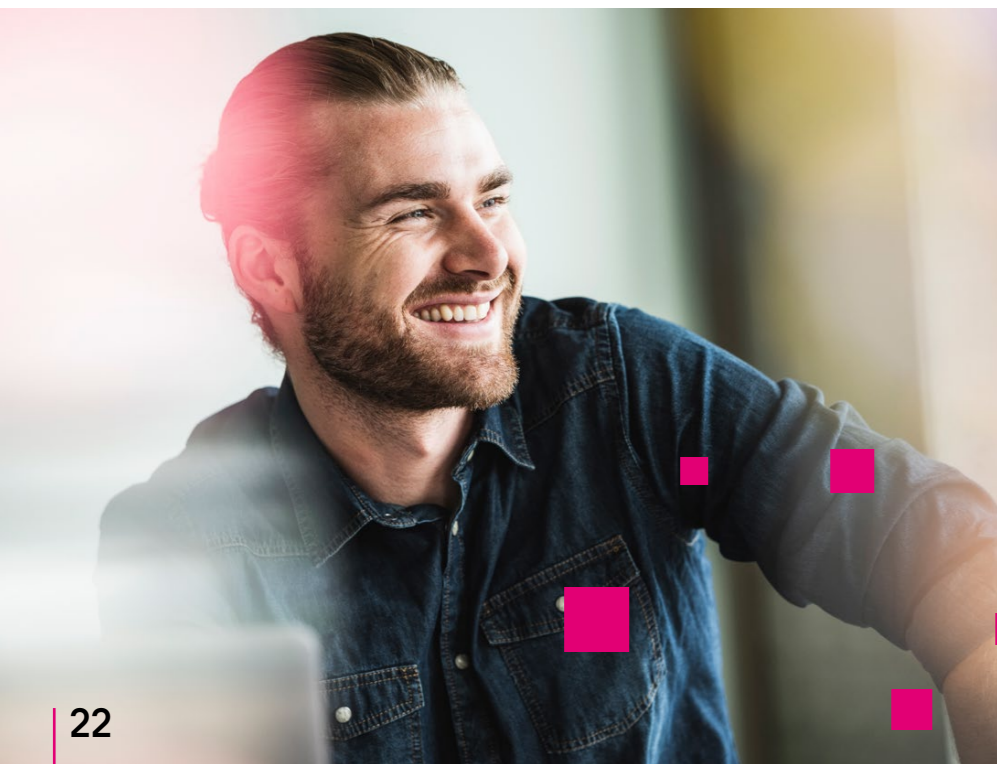
Although self-awareness is a skill, it's not always gained with experience. Conversely, experience or seniority can give you a sense of confidence that hinders self-awareness. If your career has been going well, you might never stop to think about your own qualities or the possibility that you might get things wrong.

But, as with any skill, you have to take that first step to build it. And there are plenty of steps you can take to foster self-awareness. Ask the right questions of yourself; examine old behavior patterns; and talk to others, asking for honest feedback that helps you see yourself more clearly.

The journey towards self-awareness isn't over. It isn't a single truth; there is no one-word definition of who any of us are. But that means there is always more to learn and new benefits to reap. By focusing on internal and external self-awareness, you can begin that journey now.

5 TIPS ON BECOMING MORE SELF-AWARE

- 1 Practice daily self-reflection:**
Take 5 minutes each day to reflect on your behavior and the impact it has on others. How do you perceive yourself and other people? How does your behavior affect others? Was there a situation where you could have acted differently?
- 2 Recognize your strengths and weaknesses:**
Write down your perceptions of yourself. What are you good at? What do you need to improve? Which specific events trigger an emotional reaction in you? How can you control this?
- 3 Ask colleagues to help you identify blind spots:**
Encourage colleagues to be honest with you and ask for informal feedback. Use it as a basis for your development.
- 4 Get feedback from trusted friends:**
Ask a couple of close friends to describe you, your strengths and weaknesses, and what you stand for. Tell them you are looking for honest, critical, and objective feedback.
- 5 Create clarity around your goals:**
What are your goals? What are you doing that is working? What are you doing that is hindering you? How can you change your process to improve it?



Turn the page

We've put together a short assessment to help you understand of how self-aware you are now and what you can do to build true self-awareness. You can find it overleaf.

Take a personality test

There are online tests dedicated specifically to self-awareness – you can find one at <https://inlpcenter.org/self-awareness-test>. But even a generic personality test, such as the one at www.16personalities.com, can give you some basic insight that helps you get started.

Read the book

Tasha Eurich is an authority on self-awareness, and her book, *Insight*, is considered the bible on the subject. She's got a self-awareness quiz you can take, too. Read more at www.insight-book.com or check out the available content on Percipio for T-Systems:

Keynote by Tasha Eurich (43 min) "[The Power of Insight: How Self-Awareness Helps Us Succeed at Work and in Life](#)" *

Book summary (8 min read): "[Insight: The Surprising Truth About How Others See Us, How We See Ourselves, and Why the Answers Matter More Than We Think](#)" *

Audio summary (16 min): "[Insight: The Surprising Truth About How Others See Us, How We See Ourselves, and Why the Answers Matter More Than We Think](#)" *

* Please note: internal link only

THE SELF-AWARENESS QUIZ



Are you as self-aware as you like to think? Or want to identify the areas where you haven't built self-awareness? Take the quiz and find out. It will give you a basic assessment of your internal and external self-awareness and some questions you can ask to become more self-aware.

Have you ever taken a personality test?

- A** No – what a ridiculous idea. I know they are all meaningless. How can a simple test ever give you any real insight?
- B** I take them on occasion as a chance to stop and think about myself. I know that what you put in is what you get out, but it's sometimes useful to see my responses summarized and stated objectively.
- C** I take them all the time. You could say I'm somewhat addicted. If I ever get a result I don't like, I immediately try to change my behavior, so I'll get a different result.
- D** I take them regularly but be sure to think critically about the results – whether they confirm or contradict my perceptions of myself. The unexpected results are of most interest to me – when I get one, I always ask a friend or colleague whether they agree with the analysis.

- A** No – what a ridiculous idea. I know they are all meaningless. How can a simple test ever give you any real insight?
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You haven't had an appraisal with your manager for a while. What are you thinking?

- A** I'm worried about what this means. Perhaps my manager does not care about or value me. But I won't do anything about this worry.
- B** No news is good news. The thought of being told about areas where I need to improve makes me anxious. Better to avoid it if possible.
- C** I'll proactively put one in my manager's diary because I need that feedback to know what I should do next.
- D** It's OK because I make feedback a regular part of my role rather than waiting for a periodical review. We should have an appraisal, but in the meantime, I'll be messaging my manager and some other colleagues asking for feedback on my current projects.

Can you name the three most important things to you in life?

- A** Day-to-day life is so busy that I don't have time to think about what's important.

- B** I know my values and could make a prioritized list of the top three. Of course, this is mostly something I keep to myself. I'm not sure what place it has in the wider world.
- C** I could name them right now, but my priorities and values are constantly changing based on my situation and what others require of me. So they could have changed by tomorrow!
- D** Yes, I am very clear on what is important to me and why. I make important choices based on these values and, although nobody is perfect, I could tell you how well I have been living by them recently.



Do you know where you want to be in five years?

- A** That's straight out of the job interview handbook, right? No, it's a meaningless question with no real-life application.
- B** It helps me define my goals and be clear about what I need or want. But I couldn't tell you how that turns into a real-life vision in five years or what I am doing to pursue it.
- C** I don't explicitly set goals or plans, but I regularly ask my peers and managers how I could improve and what I could do to advance.
- D** Goal-setting is an important task for me. I regularly write down my goals and timelines and key steps for achieving them.

What are you most likely to think afterward if you have an argument with a friend, partner, or colleague?

- A** I can't believe the other person was so unreasonable. Why did they react that way? I just don't understand.
- B** I feel so strongly about this issue – but perhaps I am wrong? Should I have said or done something differently? Could I have achieved a better outcome there?
- C** I feel bad about this – I don't want the other person to dislike me or for our professional relationship to be harmed. I'll apologize shortly and listen to their perspective again.
- D** I got sucked into negative behavior there. But I can address it with some processing time and feedback. I just need to explore how I felt, what caused it, and understand how I came across from the other person's perspective.

Do you have limitations in your abilities?

- A** I don't think about limitations. There is no time for that. I just do what I have to and see what happens.
- B** I'm better at some things than others, and I could name my limitations if I had to. But, to be honest, it makes me feel awkward to admit that I can't do some things. What if others judge me for it?
- C** As a result of feedback from others, I could list several things I can and can't do well. But I don't think too deeply about it since I don't want to be defined by negative traits such as limitations. If someone asks me to do something, I always try.
- D** Everyone has limitations, and being aware of mine saves me a huge amount of time and stress. If I come up against a limit, I'm happy to ask someone else to help or advise. It's not a negative thing – simply a case of using the right people for the right tasks.

Would others say you are in touch with your feelings?

- A** People would likely say I am a mystery, or I live in my head.
- B** Personally, I know I am very aware of my feelings and can describe and control them, including negative ones. But I don't know what others would say.
- C** I think others might say I am an emotional person. I know when I am emotional but can't control it very much.
- D** People comment on my ability to talk about my emotions calmly and analytically. Like everyone else, I do show emotions, but I don't let that become a negative aspect – after all, I know how to handle them.

At work, do you have a tendency to micromanage?

- A** I know it's undesirable, but I'm a perfectionist and like to push people to achieve more. What else am I meant to do?
- B** I prefer to concentrate on my own workload and performance – so I leave others to do things their own way.
- C** No – I've read so much about the demoralizing effects of micromanagement, so I take care to avoid it.
- D** The workplace I want to be in has a culture of trust, transparency, and accountability. In this workplace, there is naturally no micromanaging, since managers are confident in their employees, and the employees are confident to voice their opinions, take initiative, constantly try to improve, and flag up when difficulties occur.

Finally, do you think you are self-aware?

- A** I spend a lot of time in my head. That means I'm self-aware, right?
- B** I am constantly assessing and re-evaluating my worldview, attitudes, and goals. But these change regularly, so I suspect I'm not fully self-aware.
- C** I'm very aware of the effects my actions and feelings have on others. As for the cause of those feelings, I am not sure there is any way to know.
- D** I can identify and work with my feelings and actions, both internally and externally. But I recognize that my self-awareness journey is not complete and I have much yet to learn.

RESULTS

All you have to do is check what your most common answer was: A, B, C or D.

Mostly A: Starting the Journey
It's likely that you haven't developed internal or external self-awareness yet. But that's OK – most people are in your position. Realizing you aren't self-aware is an important first step to building awareness. Try to move from introversion to objective reflection. The next time you find yourself asking 'why' you acted in a certain way, try asking 'what' questions instead.

Mostly B: Shining a Light Inside
You've most likely established some internal self-awareness, but you haven't managed to 'join the dots' and connect your internal feelings and processes to what's going on in the outside world. Be fearless and ask for honest feedback from colleagues and peers.

Mostly C: You're Looking Out
If you answered with a lot of Cs, you have a level of external self-awareness, but still lack internal

self-awareness. You are seeking and valuing others' opinions – which is great – but be careful not to overlook what matters to you. Next time you have an important decision to make, first consider what would give you the most success and fulfillment.

Mostly D: The Big Picture
Congratulations – you may have a developed sense of self-awareness, both internal and external. But self-awareness is never 'finished' and you can

always build this important meta-skill further. Keep reflecting, asking questions and seeking more feedback.



Want more? Take the self-awareness quiz at

www.insight-book.com

EMPOWERMENT



LEADERSHIP ENTERS A NEW ERA

In a world where everything is changing, leaders have to change too. In the world of work, many of us have firm preconceived notions about 'the boss': a high-flying executive issuing directives and commands. But this preconception is changing fast. Statistics and personal experiences confirm that leaders are being developed at all levels and that they are taking on a new role based on supporting and empowering people rather than directing or controlling them. What's more, you might be one of the next generations of leaders.

What does a 'new leader' look like? Just ask Elena Kochler, Global Sales & G2M for Google Cloud. Through coaching sessions and community involvement, she's spreading the word within T-Systems about authentic leadership – a subject close to her heart. With Elena, we discussed five long-standing assumptions about leaders – and what the reality is really like in today's working environment.

'The oldest, most experienced people get to be leaders'

How are people selected to lead their teams and business units? It's easy to assume it is simply the person who has been there the longest or has the most knowledge. In fact, Elena says, leadership is nothing to do with age or experience. Instead, the best leaders are the ones with the highest emotional intelligence.

"What changed during the pandemic, as authentic leadership became more prominent, is that we saw more of the human side of leaders," she says. "Previously, if someone was leading in an old-fashioned way – through control and fear – it may have gone unnoticed since the environment was not so challenging. But today, the need to be agile and adapt to new ways of working means we need something else. We need leaders to be self-reflective, resilient, and to communicate with people at eye level."

"It's not about a lot of experience: it's about emotional intelligence, awareness of yourself, and awareness of others in the team. If you have these skills, you can become a leader even at a young age."

'A leader's job is to tell the rest of us what to do'

In the past, leaders were sometimes characterized as the people with the biggest egos on the team. But today, the reality is almost the opposite. Being a leader isn't about you or your own achievements; it is about bringing other people together and empowering them to do their best work.

To do that, you need to start with yourself. "When I first went on a leadership course, we were told, 'Leadership starts with yourself,' and some people in the room started laughing," says Elena. "But it is really true. It starts with you developing the soft skills that are needed. You don't learn how to tell others what to do or how to measure performance – it's a finer, more human skillset."

"A good leader is very authentic, and you achieve that authenticity when you know who you are and what your values are. To become a role model, you combine that with competence in your field and your character. And I think that's how we need to picture leaders from now on. We have this old image of a high-flying executive making a lot of money. It's not that any more – it's about empowering other people. You become less, rather than more."

'Some people are innate leaders, others are innate followers'

"Everyone can become a leader who wants to be," says Elena. "It's easy to think of a 'successful' career path: starting with a junior role, then a senior one, then maybe becoming a team lead... But instead of following this standard definition of success, we need to define for ourselves what it means to us. If it means being a leader – which comes with a lot of responsibility for others and for yourself – then you can do it."

In a future-proof organization, everyone is empowered to decide what is important and what they should work on next. It means that everyone takes on leadership roles to a greater degree than before. "The success of any organization depends on its people – all its people," says Elena. "Our whole society is built on competition – for grades at school, or for places in talent pools at work – but we are now embracing the fact that everyone can be valuable by being themselves. Any project team will have different people, with different characters and approaches. That's a good thing, since a more diverse set of perspectives and human social skills will be involved."

'Leaders are always working long hours and encouraging others to do the same'

Especially with remote working so common, it is easy to feel like work is ever-present – it is never further than the laptop in the next room or a glance at your smartphone. In addition, most of us can think of a leader who shows 'drive' and 'commitment' by working 15-hour days.

Elena is fighting back against this preconception. "To create a long-lasting and sustainable organization, you need to create a healthy system. You might feel like a hero for working long hours and getting work done, but you can only do it for a short time before you burn out and end up doing less work overall."

In addition, how much more are you really getting done by working late? "The way I think about it is, if you are late to a meeting with a friend, you might drive really fast to get there.

And you might arrive 1–2 minutes earlier than if you drove at a safe speed. Working long hours is the same: yes, you might increase your productivity by a couple of percent, but you increase the risk to yourself by 50 %."

"We protect so much in our lives – we lock our doors, install house alarms, and protect our smartphones with tough cases. Why don't we protect our time in the same way? Work is important to our lives, but so is family and taking time for hobbies and sports. Leaders understand that people who take time out for these things aren't letting down their manager, colleagues or organization: they are looking after themselves, gaining health and energy, so they can continue to be unique."

'Technology will replace all these roles anyway'

As work becomes more digital and technology-dominated, it's no secret that the nature of jobs is changing. But, says Elena, this is why embracing authentic leadership and a more human approach is essential. "Technology was developed by us, and it reflects us. Now, we need to learn to use it for our own benefit – to control it rather than be defined by it."

"Two decades ago, people thought computers would put all their jobs at risk, and it didn't happen. Instead, they are taking care of repetitive tasks that we don't want to do. That's what we need to do with digital technologies: use them to make us smarter and give

us back more time for relationships, for activities, for taking care of ourselves, and for working on creative concepts at work."

"There is no need to fear it. We will always need human skills: the ability to have courageous conversations, to explore new topics and ideas. This is something that can't be taken away, and it's what we need to foster in our jobs and our leaders."



“Being a leader isn't about you or your own achievements; it is about bringing other people together and empowering them.”

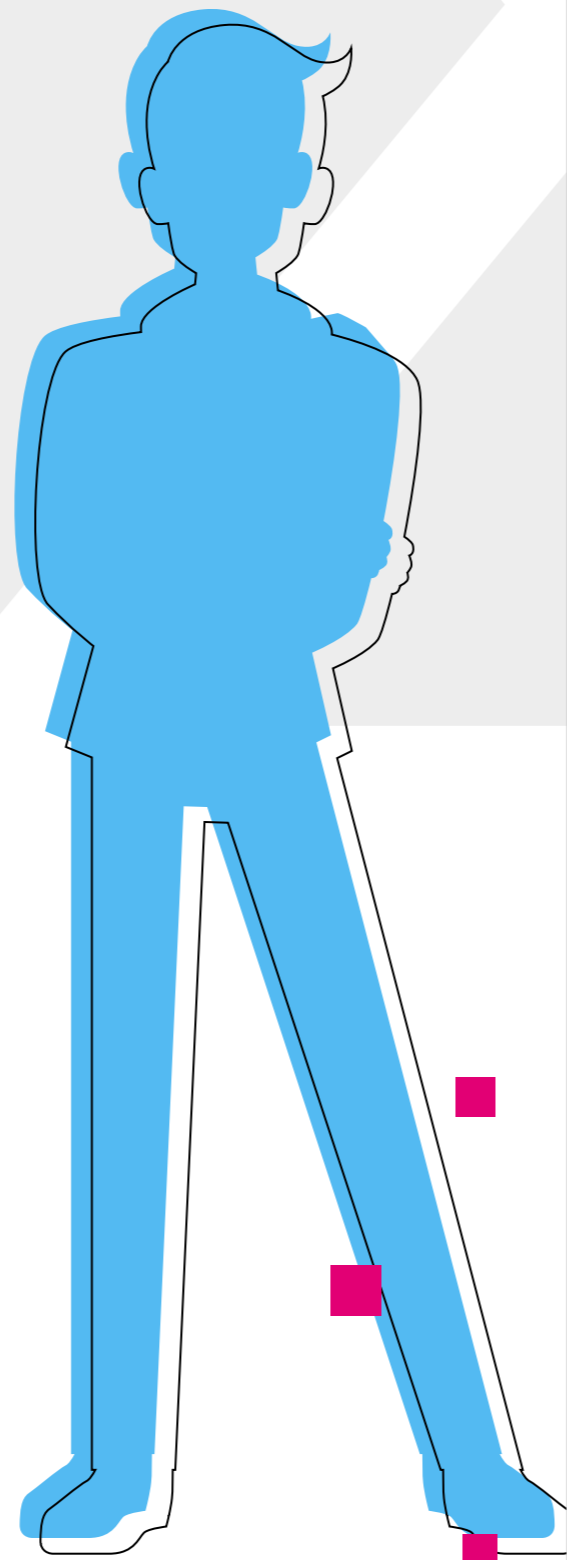
ELENA KOCHLER
Global Sales & G2M for Google Cloud, Germany

55% of CEOs

say their biggest challenge is developing the next generation of leaders [DDI, 2021]

INITIATING ACTION
FORMULATING CONCEPTS
ORGANIZING
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
ACHIEVING PERSONAL GOALS

Five areas where members of Generation Z (the youngest generation entering the workforce, typically defined as people born from 1997–2012) show greater strength than established business leaders [Adecco, 2020]



COMMUNICATION
PROBLEM SOLVING
TEAMWORK

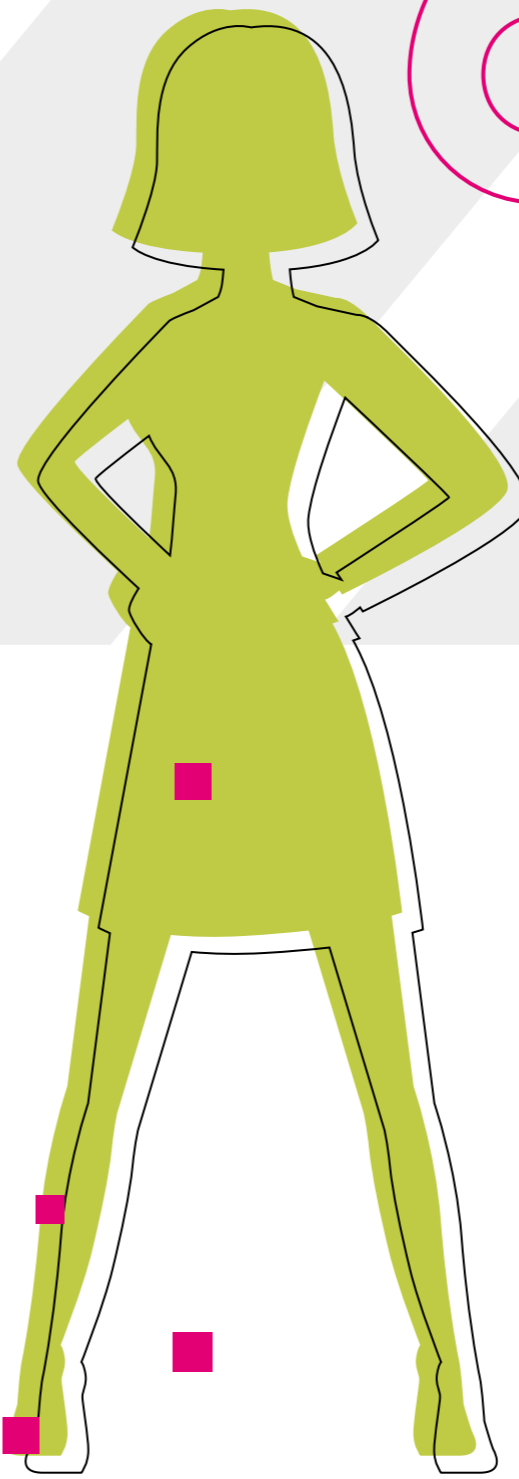
were described as the most important soft skills today [Monster, 2022]

63%

of employers are willing to hire someone with transferable 'soft' skills, even if they aren't trained for the job [Monster, 2022]

JUST 28%

of business leaders globally are currently being developed with critical skills for the future [DDI, 2021]



59%
↓
78%

Before the pandemic, 59% of leaders believed that growing capabilities long-term was important. Now, that figure stands at 78% [McKinsey, 2021]



HOW TO MAKE CHANGE HAPPEN

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.” That’s the principle that the T-Systems cultural transformation community, the Magenta Change Champions, was founded on – that real change happens with how people think and act, not with high-level decisions. And it’s giving more and more people the tools to achieve real change in their part of the organization.

Jane Relph, a member of T-Systems’ Culture Change Team and one of the community’s founders, gives us an insight into how Magenta Change Champions works and how – and why – you can get involved.

First of all, what’s your attitude to change in a big company like T-Systems?

I truly believe that change happens on the ground. It’s something I’m passionate about. Decisions about a company’s overall direction of change might be made at the top, but it’s the people living that change who really make it happen. In my view, if you want to achieve real change across an organization, you have to engage colleagues in that change and create a community of active role models and change agents.

There is a place in the Magenta Change Champions for anyone who wants to join.

Is that how Magenta Change Champions works?

The approach has evolved since we launched the community in 2019. Initially, we had a group of Change Champions in each country and unit, who were tasked with spreading change initiatives organically. But when the Coronavirus hit, we needed to rethink. The community program we’d designed originally relied on people being in the office, meeting face-to-face. That wasn’t going to work anymore.

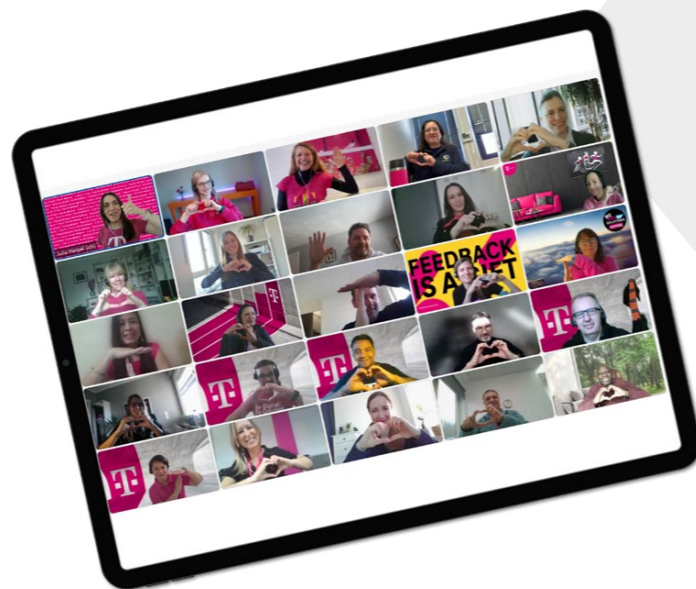
So, we rethought and came back with a slightly different model: a global community of people who have volunteered to take part (that’s important – no one is strong-armed into joining!) They are all passionate about supporting cultural transformation, and we have a monthly video call with them to catch up and coordinate our activities.

When we created this version of the Champions, we were careful not to set the agenda. We didn’t want to tell people how to change – instead, we wanted to understand what they needed and co-create a community that worked for everyone. Whether you want to proactively drive change initiatives or support others through change, there is a place in the Magenta Change Champions for anyone who wants to join.

“Decisions about a company’s overall direction of change might be made at the top, but it’s the people living that change who really make it happen.”

JANE RELPH
Community Leader, UK

MAGENTA CHANGE CHAMPIONS MEET MONTHLY



That's how it works – but what do you actually do?

We are focused on driving behavioral change by living the T-Mindset. We work things back, starting with the results people want to see: we show how these results are driven by behavior, and behavior is driven by what you think.

We are focused on driving behavioral change by living the T-Mindset.

In line with that, we run exercises to encourage people to see situations in different ways: consider a new angle or another person's perspective. Often, that's all it takes to make them enthusiastic about change.

Here's a simple example. Say you run a meeting, and someone turns up late. What would you think? Perhaps your response would be, "They clearly don't value me." But is that necessarily true? Do you know it for a fact? There are a number of reasons why they could be late. They could have had an accident, another meeting could have overrun, something could have happened at home... If you reframe the situation, you can see it in a less negative way.

That applies to all sorts of things you might perceive as negative – you can look at it from a new angle, and suddenly, it's not so negative any more. That's what we try to do with the Magenta Change Champions: help people to look at things differently.

How does that apply to change?

Change is often viewed as something risky or difficult. But it doesn't have to be. Think back to how we all changed our behavior almost overnight when the pandemic started. In response to a clear need, we changed quickly, and we made the change work.

Think back to how we all changed our behavior almost overnight when the pandemic started.

We aim to do this in Magenta Change Champions: to help people see change in a new way. To overcome those negative associations. With every person we work with, and everyone they in turn work with, we make a difference – because change happens person by person.

What has the reaction been from Magenta Change Champions participants?

Generally, we get very positive feedback. The program is valued as much for its atmosphere as its results. We try to make the workshops fun, even when

we discuss serious topics. We give everyone as much information as we can and have open discussions about a variety of culture topics. Sometimes colleagues stay on the call when it's finished because they want to talk to us personally about matters they think we can help with. We listen to people, figure out what we can and can't do to support them, then communicate this openly.

Community members appreciate the chance to meet like-minded colleagues, to see that they have the same challenges, and brainstorm how these can be addressed. They also want to learn about cultural transformation, so we try to share our experience and give participants a practical benefit.

This community aspect is so important to me because – as I said at the start – it is people and communities who really drive change. In this way, we take a ground-up approach to change, giving as many people as possible the self-awareness and confidence to become change agents and advocate for the working environment they want to see. We know that a collaborative, empowered environment is hugely preferable to command-and-control or micromanagement. So let's all contribute to making it happen.

HOW WE ARE CHANGING: 5 AREAS THE MAGENTA CHANGE CHAMPIONS FOCUS ON

- 1 Actively Driving Change**
Many colleagues join the Magenta Change Champions (MCC) as they want to “do something” and have an impact on the culture transformation. MCCs can get involved in culture change projects – big and small. At the same time, colleagues can develop their culture change knowledge and skills through coaching workshops. It's a win-win!
- 2 Collaborating & Networking**
Community members appreciate the chance to meet like-minded colleagues, to see that they have the same challenges. The Change Core Team regularly hosts break-out groups for colleagues to brainstorm challenges, share their feedback, and identify ways to address these challenges. Learning from and connecting with one another is a cornerstone of this community.
- 3 Information sharing**
All possible information from management gets shared with the Champions, including upcoming key events and a preview of the contents. MCC are trusted partners on our culture transformation journey.
- 4 Exchanging ideas**
Colleagues regularly share ideas and initiatives they are working on within their local units. We also align with other communities, and ideas are discussed and spread through the Deutsche Telekom Group via regular catchups with the Telekom Ambassadors. Colleagues also want to learn about culture transformation, so the Change Core Team tries to share our experience and give participants a practical benefit.
- 5 Being role models**
The Magenta Change Champions is a community of role models and change agents who can help to spread the T-Mindset into their local communities. The Change Core Team equips community members with the skills they need to help their colleagues see change in a new way. With every person the Change Core Team works with, and everyone they in turn work with, we make a difference – because change happens person by person. Please join us and be one of those people.

BE THE ONE WHO MAKES THE DIFFERENCE! A MAGENTA CHANGE CHAMPION

Do you want to become a Magenta Change Champion? We are always ready to welcome new members to the community. The community's mission is to reach as many people as possible – so if you want to start

driving change, benefiting from its people-first approach, or just to learn what it's all about, please get in touch.

Contact Jane at:
T-Mindset@T-Systems.com

[Get involved here](#)
(Please note: internal link only)

INTRODUCING YOUR NEXT LEADER:

YOU

In a future-proof company, every team member is empowered to be a leader in their own area. But how do you get there – how do you break down old ways of thinking and give employees (or colleagues) the confidence to take the lead?

Thorsten Bolz, Vice President Cloud Services International, has been doing just that within his area of the business. Here, he shares how he did it and what he learned.

We all know how companies have traditionally worked when it comes to leadership and responsibility. Decision-making is done in a strictly hierarchical manner: whoever is in a higher position on the company organization chart gets the final say. Everything ultimately needs to be approved by one leader, and everyone else must constantly repeat the mantra, “I’ll reach out to the boss, I’ll reach out to the boss.” Even if it’s a technical issue that the boss knows nothing about!

At T-Systems, this is totally changing. Adel himself is leading this change, implementing programs from the Change and Transformation Leadership initiative with 250 leaders, to the agile transformation initiative that empowers everyone in the organization: allowing people freedom, getting them to use that freedom, and doing things autonomously based on what you need to do, not on what the org chart tells you.

This got me thinking about my personal desire to drive change within my own job. Adel has been very clear that driving change and pushing forward into the unfamiliar are key parts of his role. And, to my mind, if that applies to Adel, then it applies to the people who report to Adel and the people who report to those people... It applies to everyone in the organization.

This is what led me to design and run leadership programs with management and technical employees (or colleagues) within my PU. Leadership development isn’t strictly the job I was hired for, but over time, I have realized that to achieve our best work and fulfill our customers’ needs – whether in cloud services or a totally different area – we need to empower every team member to work creatively and confidently, to take brave steps and design new solutions. I view enabling this as one of the most important parts of my role.



Everyday empowerment works wonders

The content of these programs was inspired by workshops run by the Transformation team – but I adapted it to take place on a more ongoing basis, as part of the fabric of everyday work and manager one-to-ones. We start with calibration sessions, where I gauge people’s expectations of their way of work. The next step will depend on the individual’s starting point: I might organize specific sessions to help them ‘unlearn’ aspects of traditional working culture, or I might simply start asking them different questions during our daily conversations. Such as: What options do you have here? What would you do?

Many people aren’t used to being asked this when they consult their manager. But, in my experience, they already have an idea of their answer. After some thinking, they can tell me how they would act if they had to take the decision. At this point, I affirm their decision. I say to them: If that is the decision you would make, if you have carefully considered all the options and alternatives you have, and if you would be happy being accountable for the outcome of this decision, then go for it. You are doing the right thing.

This is how I try to activate the courage within people: to make them confident that they should be doing what they believe is the best thing to do, rather than expecting to be told what to do. The process might be unfamiliar, but it is ultimately rewarding. It is about helping them to manage themselves. Looking back, people can see: “Now, I’m not just doing my job, but I’m also permitted and encouraged to decide about how that job is done.”



Does it really work for everyone?

Many people embrace this new way of working very quickly – but this isn't universal. In fact, many people keep trying to continue with the 'old ways', reaching out and asking for approval for everything. This isn't something I ever criticize or shame them for. After all, it is only natural when your years of career experience reinforce that you should work in a hierarchical way. My job here is to engage with you personally and help you see change not as a risk but as something that can make your job better.

I started this program with my direct reports in cloud services. Then we enrolled skilled technical employees. Now, we are looking to expand even further. Because I learned that you need to work with everyone on these change programs – you can't just handpick those who are immediately enthusiastic. My goal is to achieve change in the entire organization. That means engaging and working for as long as it takes. For some people, that might be weeks. For others (and this is far from a rare case), it means six or nine months. It might seem time-consuming – but it doesn't feel that way when you see how it is really helping people grow.

During this time, I will engage directly and continually, confronting them with a new reality in their daily work. One where I don't give commands; instead, I set goals, tell them to work in the best way (according to them) to achieve those goals, and to come back to me if they need support.

Why is all this a good idea?

Because I'm not an expert in every subject that I'm a manager for. In fact, I might be the most clueless person in my team about certain technical details and tools. If I take unilateral decisions, not being the expert, there's a high probability I will make the wrong decision. The expert should make the decision, not me!

That's the kind of thinking we need to embed across the organization – not just for day-to-day tasks but also for critical decisions that would normally get escalated. Think about it this way: Across the whole company, we have one overarching goal, which is client-centricity. If we can all make our own decisions, and if we all have an inherent understanding of our personal purpose and goals, it helps us focus on the customer rather than focusing inward.

At the same time, we can get a lot more done. In a conventionally organized company, you can get a lot of people working in silos, even if they are serving the same customers. They end up repeating each other's work. One person works on a certain service; another comes along and works on the exact same service. But if we can get people working together on a closer, more even footing – not looking at their job titles, but looking from a client or product perspective, and then joining forces to focus on a common goal – we can eliminate that duplication and free up our time.

This matters even more in today's remote, digital workplace. We all know that this way of working requires us

to be more flexible. In former times, people would become involved in projects simply because they were part of a certain team. Now, as we work more autonomously, we have the opportunity to build flexible project teams where everyone is working on something that fits their skills and that they really believe in. If we have a clear idea of our purpose and what we are responsible for, we can get the right people involved to deliver it successfully.

How can we build these agile teams? How can we support people to find their place in the organization? We start by coaching people to move beyond the old assumption that your job is defined by what the organization chart says and that your role is to do whatever your manager tells you. And we redefine leadership so that being a successful leader isn't defined by how many people are 'under' you but by how well you empower those around you.

I know we still have work to do here, but I'm optimistic that we will manage it. In my last three years in cloud services, I have seen positive results – in terms of our customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and financial results. That shows that our change is working. But we don't stop. I've been managing for 20 years, but that doesn't mean I have learned everything there is to learn. I, and we, must keep constantly improving further and advancing along our positive path.

[Download the Purpose Journey PDF here](#)

(Please note: internal link only)

DO THE TEST! CAN YOU BE TRUSTED?

According to Stephen M R Covey, a global authority on trust, leadership, and culture, and New York Times best-selling author of Speed of Trust, most of the dysfunction and unhappiness we experience at work is to do with low trust. We invited Stephen to share his valuable insight on trust with our Change & Transformation Leadership team. In this article, we would like to share some of the main findings from the session, which are guaranteed to make you look at and embrace trust in a whole new light.

Have you ever worked with somebody you didn't trust?

Perhaps you didn't trust them to carry out a task properly or complete a project on time. Or maybe you felt you couldn't share your true thoughts with them or that they might take all the credit for your work.

How did it make you feel? How did it impact the way you worked with them?

For Stephen, being trusted and being able to build trust in a team are critical to successful leadership – but what is trust? Trust is about giving and receiving. We give trust by choosing the right words and sharing information or even personal insights. When others share things with us, we receive trust. Trusting someone means believing that this person is honest, reliable, and has the best intentions for you. But to truly be able to trust, you need to start with yourself.

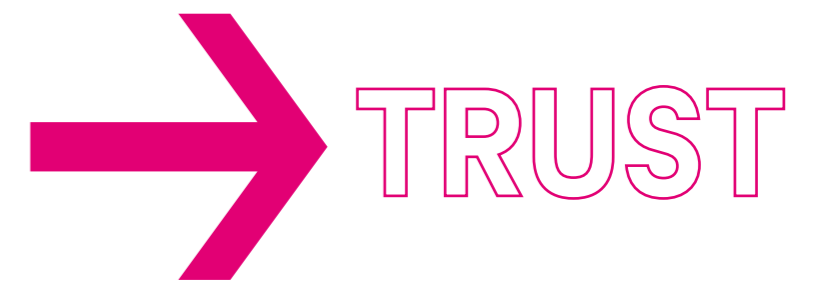
Do you trust yourself? Can others trust you?

It gets you thinking, doesn't it? Now say the following five statements out loud and give yourself a mark from 1 to 5. Try not to spend too long deliberating over the answers. The faster you score yourself, the more genuine your responses are likely to be:

How did you find that exercise?

It's really useful for getting your mind thinking about trust and how much of an integral part it plays in who we are and the decisions and actions we take every day. The good news is that we can improve trust. That includes the trust we have in ourselves as well as how trustworthy others consider us to be.

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| STATEMENT 1 | I justify telling small lies or "spinning" the truth to get the results | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am thoroughly honest in all my interactions with others |
| STATEMENT 2 | At times, there is a mismatch between what I say or between my actions and my values | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | What I say and do is what I really think and feel: I consistently walk my talk |
| STATEMENT 3 | I am not fully clear on my values. I find it difficult to stand up for something when others disagree | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am clear on my values and courageous in standing up for them |
| STATEMENT 4 | I find it hard to acknowledge that someone else may be right, or that there is additional information out there | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am genuinely open to the possibility of learning new ideas that may cause me to rethink issues or even redefine values |
| STATEMENT 5 | I have a difficult time setting and achieving personal goals or commitments | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | I am able to consistently make and keep to commitments |



THE BUILDING BLOCKS TO ESTABLISHING CREDIBILITY AND TRUST

According to Stephen, 'Most of the major violations of trust are violations of integrity', which is one of **The Four Elements of Trust**.

1 INTEGRITY

Are you honest, and do you stand by your principles and deliver on your promises?

Integrity is about more than just telling the truth; it's about making the right impression. It's made up of three qualities: congruence, humility, and courage.

CONGRUENCE is when there's no gap between intent and behavior. Or, in other words, it's walking the talk.

HUMILITY involves putting what's right ahead of being right. It means standing up for what you believe, even when it's difficult to do so.

COURAGE is closely linked to integrity, which requires having the courage to do the right thing, even if it's not easy.

3 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR INTEGRITY

- 1 Make and keep commitments to yourself (be honest with yourself first!)** – treat commitments like you would a promise. Don't be impulsive with your promises over commit.
- 2 Stand for something** – do what's right. You'll never have to wrestle with your conscience if you do.
- 3 Be open** – humility involves always seeking to learn and grow. Close-mindedness is a sign of arrogance. Do you honestly believe you have the world figured out? Or is there more you can learn?

2 INTENT

What's your agenda?

Intent is part of our value system and is defined as our 'plan' or 'purpose.' It can be broken down into the following three areas:

MOTIVE – the greatest motive in building trust is genuinely caring. If you don't care, that's ok, but be prepared to deal with the repercussions. If you want to care, start doing caring things.

AGENDA stems from our motive. The best agenda is honestly seeking mutual benefit (e.g. using your T-Mindset to achieve win-win outcomes for both parties). The key here is to be open and upfront and avoid hidden agendas.

BEHAVIOUR is what people see and judge. It's the difference between telling someone you love them and showing them.

3 WAYS TO IMPROVE INTENT

- 1 Examine and refine your motives.
- 2 Declare your intent.
- 3 Choose abundance.



“ You can behave yourself out of a problem you've behaved yourself into... and often faster than you think! ”

STEPHEN M R COVEY
New York Times best-selling author
of Speed of Trust

3 CAPABILITIES

Do you know what you're talking about?

Having high integrity and the right intent is irrelevant if you don't have the technical abilities for the task at hand. To help think about the various dimensions of capabilities, Stephen uses the acronym TASKS: Talents, Attitude, Skills, Knowledge, and Style.

TALENTS are the things you naturally do well and love to do. They're your natural strengths.

ATTITUDE is how you see things. How do you choose to look at a situation?

SKILLS are what you have learned to do well. Continuous improvement is needed to improve these skills.

KNOWLEDGE is what you know and continue to learn. Can your knowledge on the matter be trusted?

STYLE is your personality. Are you loud, brash, quiet, reserved, a good dresser, articulate, etc? How do you go about things?

3 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR CAPABILITIES

- 1 Follow your strengths and passions.
- 2 Remain relevant by continually increasing your knowledge and improving your skills.
- 3 Know where you are going.

4 RESULTS

What's your track record?

Results matter! People don't trust people who don't deliver results. Both **what** you accomplish and **how** you accomplish it matters.

“ If the results aren't there, neither is the credibility. Neither is the trust. It's just that simple; it's just that harsh. ”

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR RESULTS

- 1 Use a balanced scorecard approach.
- 2 Remember that:
 - Development and readiness for the future matter as much as bottom-line results today.
 - People will judge your credibility on your past results (what you have proven you can do), your current results (what you are contributing right now), and your potential results (what people anticipate you will accomplish in the future).

6 TRUST-BUILDING ACTIVITIES YOU CAN DO REMOTELY

We know how important building trust is – but all too often we think of it as something that can only happen through close, in-person collaboration. What happens when we all work remotely or in a hybrid manner? Trust becomes even more integral – and waiting isn't an option. Thankfully, there are some actions you can take and resources you can access to build trust effectively. We've listed six of them here ...

1 MAKE TIME FOR TRUST

Many studies have shown that we believe what we see – and conversely, if we haven't seen something with our own eyes, we are far less likely to believe it. If you and your colleagues are working from different locations, you can go days or weeks without seeing them – or perhaps you've had new team members join you who have never met face-to-face. In this situation, it's easy to stop viewing someone as a whole person – with their own workloads, priorities, emotions, and personal life – and see them as just a name on a screen.

To overcome this, there's no substitute for making time. Whenever you have a scheduled virtual meeting or call, deliberately put the first five minutes aside for team-building. Nothing special is needed here – just ask people to turn on their cameras, un-blur their backgrounds (this should be a judgment-free zone with regard to any pets or kids hanging around), and ask people to share something simple about their lives like what they are looking forward to doing at the weekend.

You aren't doing anything revolutionary, but you are giving everyone regular reminders that there is a real person behind every name on the screen. And seeing people as people is a foundation for trust.



2 LISTEN – REALLY LISTEN

If you're used to having one-to-one catch-ups with team members, it will be no surprise to hear that they have changed immeasurably since moving to a remote setting. Many people would say they've become more challenging, since it's harder to pick up on cues – body language and so on – that will tell you how people are really feeling.

It's time to claim back the one-to-one and implement a new style that makes them more, not less, effective at building trust. Use it as a space for honesty and listening.

Show your colleague that you are actively listening: your webcam is on, you have turned off emails and other distractions, and perhaps even moved away from your desk to a more comfortable place. Start by sharing something honestly – either something from your life, or a company update if your team is waiting for a certain piece of news.

The idea is to make them confident enough to share what's really on their mind, rather than thinking these one-to-ones are a formality or just for project updates. Within this culture of honesty, ask open questions that you can turn into actions afterward, such as:

- How could your day-to-day work become easier?
- How can I better support you?
- What's on your mind that might be difficult to bring up with the wider team?
- Is there anything I need to know that I might not know at the moment?

3 RUN HYBRID MEETINGS THE RIGHT WAY

In many cases, 'remote teams' is something of a misnomer: teams are actually hybrid, with people split between working on-site and remotely. For these teams, it's important to ensure that culture and inclusion are universal. It might be easier to pass information to – or have open conversations with – people who are actually in the office with you. But you need to resist falling into that trap and include remote workers equally in every exchange, taking deliberate steps to make sure they aren't left out.

That's never more important than when arranging team meetings. Here are several tips on how to get hybrid meetings right:

- Distribute all required documents digitally before the meeting. Better, use a single shared resource platform like OneNote or Miro.
- Try to keep in-person participation to a maximum of 6 people in the room. Ask everyone to make sure they are on-screen and facing the camera, or turning on their camera, so they are clearly visible.
- Encourage virtual participants to use the Layout button in Webex top right to display only the 'tiles' of those participants who are dialed in with video. That way, they get a better view of everyone.
- If regular meetings have different presenters, ensure that these alternate between on-site and virtual team members.
- From the in-person attendees, nominate a 'remote buddy' whose role is to advocate for virtual team members and make sure they are included in conversations.
- Make sure there is a standard way to request to speak in the meeting (should they use their voice, the 'raise hand' feature, or something else?) If it's a software feature like 'raise hand', this should apply to everyone, regardless of whether they are physically present or not.
- Ask for the opinion of virtual participants directly and regularly.
- Watch out for the 'meeting after the meeting': informal conversations that occur after the call ends and cameras are turned off. Remote participants will miss this discussion and any new insights that arise as part of it. To avoid this, encourage feedback in another way, such as by asking everyone to send you a paragraph of thoughts after the meeting.





4 EMBED A 'SPEAK-UP CULTURE'

A speak-up culture is one where every employee feels confident that their ideas and concerns will be listened to, as opposed to one where only leaders make decisions and feedback isn't welcomed by anyone else.

Despite how clearly preferable a speak-up culture is, it can't be achieved overnight. It takes dedicated efforts and resources to make it work. To embed a lasting speak-up culture in your team, consider these five points:

Start with yourself – be transparent. Speaking up and honestly sharing thoughts takes confidence. To embed this, start by sending information the other way: sharing everything you know about upcoming news and changes or admitting when you don't know things. People need to feel like you trust and support them, not withholding your information and opinions.

- **Encourage speaking up, don't just reward it.** It's not enough to wait until someone volunteers an opinion, then reinforce it. You need to actively encourage speaking up, even when no one is doing so at present. Take time to specifically ask people for their opinions or schedule short one-to-ones so people can air their thoughts without fear of what others will think.
- **Thank people.** It's a small but simple thing: when someone has been brave enough to speak up, make sure to thank them for it. Your aim is to make them feel like their opinion is being valued, not swept under the rug.
- **Pay attention to the small things.** 'Speak-up culture' is often used to describe major issues – a toxic workplace culture or unacceptable behavior from an employee. And although it can apply to these, don't forget that it also applies to everyday issues: an idea someone has had about a new product or business model, for example. Treat these occurrences with just as much importance.
- **Respond fully and timely.** When someone has aired a concern, silence is the worst thing they can hear in response. Getting no response will discourage them from ever speaking up again. Be sure to respond quickly and comprehensively, explaining your rationale, even if it's not the outcome that the person was hoping for.


Speak-up culture is at the core of T-Systems' cultural transformation – and it's the goal of Let's Talk, a series of open discussion sessions on eye-level with board members, which anyone can join. We've had as many as 3,000 colleagues in these sessions before!



5 SET AND SHARE COMMON GOALS

Goals are important for building trust because they're a common destination for everybody to work towards.

Establishing a shared T-Systems goal is even more critical in a virtual setting. It defines a common destination for team members, who may feel disconnected while working from home. It also helps prevent us from getting distracted by our own personal goals and objectives.



6 DELIVER ON YOUR COMMITMENTS

In any setting, being transparent means saying what you mean, meaning what you say, and doing what you promise. Share information openly. Work schedules, project progress, and task statuses should be available to all team members at all times.

If you can't deliver something on time or need help, let your team know as soon as possible so they can help you.



[Watch recordings of the Let's Talk sessions](#)

(Please note: internal link only)

WHAT HAS AGILE GOT TO DO WITH ME?

Agile – that’s just for software developers, right? In fact, this notion has been disproved for a while – and agile is rapidly evolving and expanding to transform the entire world of work. Let’s dive into how that’s happening and where the agile journey has taken us so far...

Of all the buzzwords that crop up in the tech world, few are as often spoken about as agile. It feels like the number one, cutting-edge concept of today in many areas of business. And while you may not be surprised to hear that, you may be more surprised to learn that agile is over 20 years old – dating back to the spring of 2000, when a group of software developers met to discuss how they could speed up development times and bring new software to market faster.

Since then, agile has proved its worth many times over and in many more areas than software development. Its meteoric rise seems inevitable. After all, who wouldn’t want to align themselves with a term that suggests speed, flexibility, adaptability, and intelligence? A word packed with the promise of innovative solutions and speedy conclusions?

But this is where many of us come unstuck. The word is often used, and businesses appear in such a rush to go agile that it can easily lose meaning. It’s entirely understandable to ask: “What does agile actually mean? What significance does it have for me?” That’s what we will explore here – highlighting what agility looks like in general, what it doesn’t look like, and how T-Systems is adopting agile principles for everyone’s benefit.

AGILITY

Why is T-Systems going agile?
T-Systems projects were run in the conventional ‘waterfall’ style for many years. For example, everything was planned for the long run: contracts were agreed with 10-year terms.

This provided a sense of security – but it meant we couldn’t handle immediate changes or challenges that required a quick response. In reality, unexpected hurdles or opportunities crop up all the time – and if you’re fixated on a 10-year time frame or a rigid set of requirements, you might miss them.

That’s what agility is designed to achieve: enabling us to keep pace with rapid developments, both in technology and in what our customers need from us. It brings our horizons closer: when we work agile, we are always aiming to deliver value in the short term, to master the challenges immediately in front of us. And, ultimately, it changes our customer relationships. When we’re constantly (and instantly) meeting customers’ needs and solving their issues, we’re no longer just providing a single product or service. Our customers will value us in a complete way as an overall partner.

What does the agile organization actually look like?

Our overall organizational model is based on the well-known ‘Spotify model’. This structure – developed by Spotify to coordinate 30 teams in three cities – is characterized by flexible teams operating in a dynamic environment with ever shorter cycles of adaptations. An ideal fit for T-Systems – just think about the increasing pace of change when it comes to our technologies, markets, and customer expectations. So, for us, agile means:

- Flexible deployment of team members
- Flat organizational hierarchies
- The use of new working methods.

Note that it doesn’t just mean ‘using scrum’ or ‘using Kanban’. Agility is what you make of it. It’s not just about certain tools or processes: it’s about embracing the agile principle at many levels.

“ Agile in our context means the ability to react flexibly and adaptively to changes or even shape or anticipate them. Agility has the goal of fulfilling complex requirements in close coordination with the customer in a fast, market-ready implementation, flexibly and with high quality at the same time. Agility is often equated with chaotic or spontaneous. However, the opposite is true. Agility follows a clear structure while respecting the above advantages. ”

RAIHAN KLEINMANN
Tribe Lead agile Hub & New Work, Germany



THE MANY LAYERS OF AGILITY

We strive for stronger focus and priorities, faster time to market and response to change, and constant improvements to transparency and quality.

That's why we do it agile!

We see great advantages for us and our customers in collaborating based on agile principles...

CUSTOMER

Our customers benefit from a closer collaboration at every stage. Outcomes and solutions are of higher quality and delivered faster, with the most impact and benefit for their business.

COLLEAGUES

Motivated, involved people who work responsibly and in a self-organized manner with autonomy and trust. Acting at eye level creates trust, sustainability and higher value contributions.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership benefits from higher commitment by sharing responsibility. This leads to better and faster results and decision making. Thus, the Leadership role is practiced in a more focused and effective way.

... continuous improvement is key!

Ensured by these pillars

We question our actions regularly, use retrospectives for our collaborative work, observe, adapt and learn from failure – quickly!

TRANSPARENCY

“ We know what we need to know! ”

INSPECTION

“ Are we doing the right things? ”

ADAPTATION

“ Are we better than yesterday? ”

ITERATION

“ We are improving continuously, step by step. ”

AGILE

But I've been working the old way for so long...

Daunted by the prospect of breaking out of the old, familiar way of working? That's only natural. "If you have worked in a classical waterfall approach for 30 years, it's not easy to unlearn what you know. It's not easy to learn to be agile; to define user stories; spread tasks within teams; and learn new approaches," says Raihan Kleinmann, Tribe Lead agile & New Work. "Our brains are wired to establish and keep routines – and we are more likely to dismiss new information if it contradicts our current understanding. In many ways, unlearning an old process is harder than learning a new one."

But it is not impossible. We can recognize and tackle behaviors and routines. Within your own mindset and behaviors, the FEED protocol is recognized as a useful way to go about it: Focus, Efforts, Effortlessness, Determination. Firstly, you Focus on a new way of thinking or acting, observing the example of others (such as agile coaches or scrum masters) and deliberately trying to follow it.

Implementing this for yourself requires Effort – consciously working on and practicing the new behavior. In time, if you keep up the effort, you reach a point where it is Effortless – the process occurs naturally.

But the transformation isn't finished yet: you need to fully learn the new process and rewire your brain with Determination. What also helps here is the environment you work in: if it is supportive, with proper coaching and acceptance of failure, you stand a better chance of succeeding.

"When we try something for the first time, there is often a feeling of awkwardness," says Raihan. "Here, it is easy to get discouraged and fall back into old routines. Overcoming this – and turning the new concept into a practiced skill and ultimately a habit – requires consistent effort, along with support and encouragement from those around you."

Where is T-Systems in its agile transformation?

For T-Systems, the agile transformation is a journey. The start of the journey isn't the outcomes we wish to achieve: it is the mindset and philosophy that will ultimately make those outcomes possible.

"We already have several agile islands within the business," says Raihan. "Now, our leadership team is looking to connect these islands and bring our agility to the next level. This means

SPRINT

looking at our central processes, investigating how we do lean portfolio management, looking at our Scaled agile Framework (SAFe) and using the elements relevant to our business."

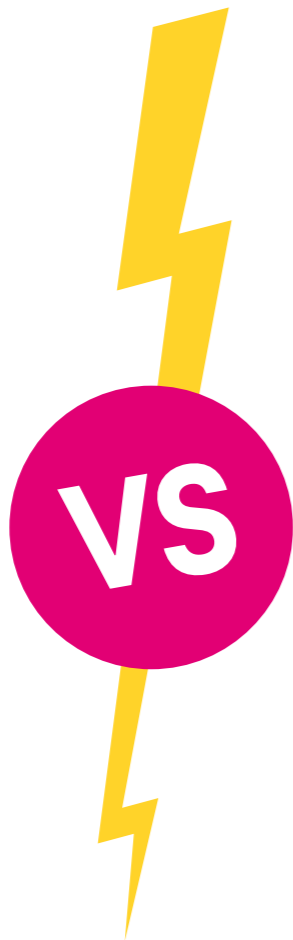
"At the same time, T-Systems CEO, Adel Al-Saleh, is investing in culture transition, to ensure we can all understand and adopt the T-Mindset – enabling us to learn new agile methodologies and approaches, and drive meaningful change. A business might be driven by financial results, but a transformation is driven by other elements. It's driven by colleague empowerment, by respect and by freedom. Get these right, and financial success inevitably follows."

AGILITY MYTHS – AND THE TRUTH



MYTH

- no documentation
- no reporting
- undisciplined and chaotic
- no architecture
- no analysis
- no plan
- not predictable
- not scalable
- just a passing fashion
- it's a silver bullet
- fixed price not possible



TRUTH

- appropriate documentation
- appropriate reporting
- structured and disciplined
- emergent architecture
- “just in time” analysis
- long and short term planning
- transparency
- size is not a measure
- already firmly established
- there is NO silver bullet
- under clear conditions

6 TOP TIPS: HOW TO MAKE AGILITY WORK

- 1 Be brave and experiment. Small changes can make a huge difference, e. g. by using retrospectives or certain elements of Agility that fit your context.
- 2 Don't think of agile as a single tool: think of it as a toolbox, from which you can pick elements depending on your current needs.
- 3 To change something, you have to change yourself first. You will not be able to change others but rather act as a role model, exemplifying agile leadership and mindset.
- 4 Want to transform quickly? Reflect on your own mindset, but also on the way things are done. Don't be afraid to try new things.
- 5 Be a role model. Act authentically in all that you are doing, provide trust, and you will receive trust.
- 6 Show commitment towards changing things personally. Act in an entrepreneurial manner.

BIG BANG OR BABY STEPS: HOW DO YOU GO AGILE?

To become agile, an organization could transform gradually, in steps, as T-Systems has been doing, or do what Heineken did, and follow a ‘big bang’ approach, transforming everything in one go. Since Heineken is a T-Systems client, that raises the question: how can two organizations following such different paths work together? And how do we adapt to ensure we are fulfilling Heineken’s needs?

T-Systems has a long-standing relationship with Heineken, as an IT supplier and a partner in a wide range of projects. But when it came to Heineken’s agile transformation, it wasn’t a single project or deliverable – more like a journey that the two companies went through together.

In 2018, Heineken took the decision to completely transform its IT operation into an agile organization. Everything it did was assessed and adjusted. It was a big leap, with job titles and even whole departments changing as the company migrated into a product team set-up.

What was particularly impressive is that Heineken followed the ‘big bang’ approach: taking everyone from old to new working practices in one go. Within two months of the decision, everyone had a new function, and was working in an agile manner as part of a product team.

Change cascades through the market

But it wasn’t just Heineken that was changing. Now that its systems had transformed, Heineken asked its IT suppliers to transform too.

“Heineken said to us, ‘Look, our core business is making beer,’” says Rik Bulterman, head of the Heineken customer unit at T-Systems. “We are not an IT company. Yes, we have people that know about IT, but the real end-to-end expertise lies with our partners.”

That meant T-Systems, as a trusted IT partner, had to get a lot closer to Heineken, essentially working as one team. A job that is easier said than done. Heineken is a distributed

organization with around 80 operating companies – each of which has its own IT specialists – along with a central IT team. On top of that, T-Systems’ teams were undertaking their own agile transformation – but with a very different ‘step by step’ model. Now, they faced the challenge of accelerating that transformation to meet their customer on their own terms.

“A lot of companies are transforming, so we have to transform ourselves too – or we will lose our connection to our customers. The question isn’t whether agile will become an industry standard, but how fast. And I think it’s speeding up. Maybe only 25–30 % of businesses have transformed to date, but soon it will be 50 %,” says Rik.

When your customer moves at light speed, how do you catch up?

As agile transformations go, this one was extremely daunting. The T-Systems team needed to keep the pace with Heineken’s transformation – which meant it would have to disrupt its own model. How could they go from baby steps to a big bang?

“We still proceeded in steps, actually,” says Rik, “but those steps got massively sped up. We had to commit to fast and robust action. For a long time, some of us had been saying things like, ‘We’re working out how to go agile,’ or ‘We’ll give it a go but we’re not sure it will be successful.’ There was no time for that anymore. We recognized that we needed to do it, and it was here to stay.”

“Our first challenge was navigating the new landscape at Heineken. They had completely reorganized themselves, with new teams and roles. Previously, we only ever talked to one or two service-level contacts. Now, for a given project or query, we might talk to any of three portfolio managers or 16 product owners. Clearly, we needed to get far more embedded in their organization.”

“That led us into the next challenge: Aligning our own teams to their needs. Asking ourselves basic questions like: What product teams do we have? What expertise do we need in those teams? Then looking more specifically at their resource needs and working out who to assign to fulfill those.”

“There was no quick solution for this. I started by assigning existing roles to their key services, but before long, I was creating new roles that would align much better. In the end, we had to break open our old shared-services model to assign dedicated resources. It made sense – after all, the needs of every client are specific and different (and even different teams within Heineken require different levels of service).”

RIK BULTERMAN
Head of Heineken
customer unit, Netherlands



“ If you work in an agile way, everyone’s work is transparent. But if you use that as an opportunity to ‘check up’ on people, you will destroy trust. Use information to support people, not control them. ”

“Finally, we implemented training internally to make sure our teams could talk the same language as Heineken: that they know how scrum works, and so on. Before we knew it, we were transformed.”

But there was one final challenge to overcome: “It’s not just about doing what they need. You also need to stop doing what they don’t need! Heineken doesn’t want a monthly service-level report any more. They want alignment to be fast, regular and responsive, not confined to formal scheduled reviews. Whatever collaboration is needed, that’s what you need to provide. If it’s management support, if it’s a technical expert... they ask, you deliver.”

Trust is the key to transformation

Rik was one of the people tasked with overseeing this high-speed transformation – but, he says, he had to start by transforming himself. “I had to look inward, and let go of all the old management thinking. Step one was to recognize the power of the team and to give them trust. In the new way of working, teams that worked ‘in the background’ are now very much in the foreground. Technical teams, for example, are now engaging directly with the customer.

“And you know what? It works great. They speak the same language as the customer’s IT team. They have the same interests. But at the start of the agile journey, I was a bit reluctant to let it happen. I kept wondering if they really knew how to talk to customers. Ultimately, I needed to realize that a customer who demands transparency will want to hear directly from our experts, and that they will understand

and value their feedback. Realizing that was the key to creating a healthy environment where people feel free to talk about what they are proud of, what isn’t working, and what else we could try.”

“As a manager, you have a responsibility to give everybody the trust to enable this. If you work in an agile way, everyone’s work is transparent. You can see what every individual is working on. But if you use that as an opportunity to ‘check up’ on people or make judgements about how they work, you will destroy trust. Use information to support people, not control them. Be specific about what you need, but don’t tell them how everything needs to be done on the way, because they already know. And don’t ask typical management questions like ‘When will it be ready?’ In an agile way of working, the team takes care of scheduling. If you are clear on the priorities and needs, they will deliver.”

Agility without limits

What the teams ultimately discovered is that being agile doesn’t just mean organizing scrums or setting up Kanban boards. It governs your fundamental approach to business, productivity and customer relationships.

“To make it work, we had to unlearn some things we thought were basic and unquestionable – like paying attention to the contract,” says Rik. “In the commercial team, we were so used to discussing what was in the contract and what wasn’t. But this would clearly hold up the transformation. If we kept stopping to say, ‘This isn’t in our agreement,’ neither of us would get anywhere.”

“Similarly, we had to give the client more visibility than we had been comfortable giving before. They wanted a better understanding of what capacity they had available – so we created a dashboard that allowed them to look it up instantly. They loved it. Their central IT organization told us, ‘This is what we want you to do more for us: show a proactive understanding of our needs, and make things transparent.’”

“Another thing Heineken asks of us is to work in one ecosystem with other suppliers – and show the same level of transparency here too. For example, we might be designing the infrastructure of an application, while another company handles the development. In an agile environment, the client shouldn’t have to coordinate us all individually – they will expect us to coordinate ourselves to deliver what Heineken needs. Essentially, we ended up working as one with different suppliers: not withholding information, but trusting each other and delivering on common goals.”

“All these are ways of working that were unfamiliar to us – but we understood that we needed to embrace them enthusiastically. As a result, our relationship with Heineken has evolved into one based on overall business success, not a contract. They trust us more, and discuss things with us as equals. They recognize that there’s much more value to working this way.”

3 STEPS TO SUPPORTING A CLIENT’S AGILE TRANSFORMATION

1 EVALUATE EXPERTISE

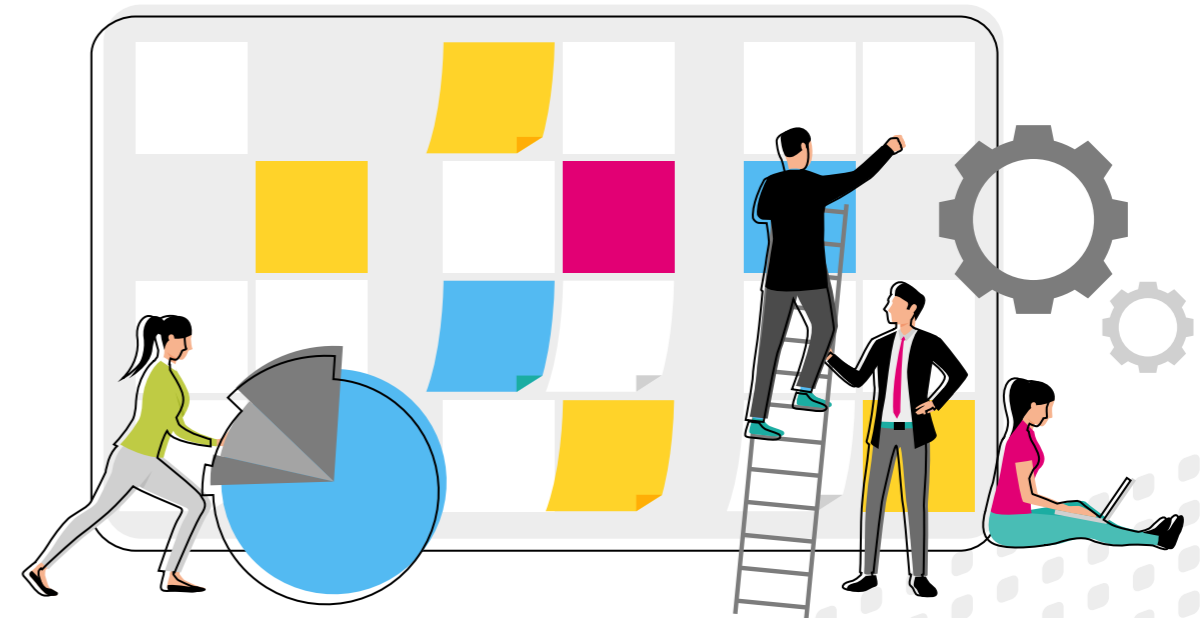
What product teams does the client have? What experts do we need? Get people close to their teams, starting with their priority areas.

2 RESPOND QUICKLY

What specific resources has the client asked for? What kind of experts and services do you need to provide here?

3 GET ORGANIZED

How is your client transforming? Who do you need to talk to in their transformed organization? Do you need to transform yourself to match?



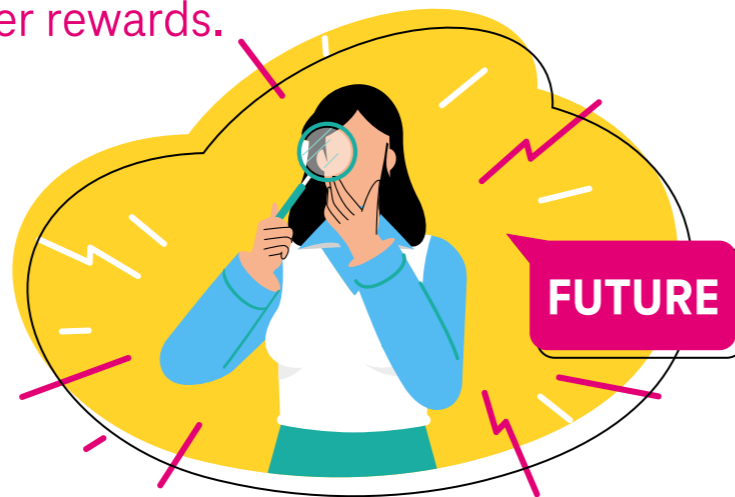
SKILLS OF THE FUTURE: THE STATISTICS

As technology evolves more rapidly than ever, so does the workforce. More than ever, we look to our jobs to provide far more than just a salary. Flexible working, job benefits, and the chance to learn skills on the job are three of the biggest things companies need to implement to stay competitive, according to Monster's 2022 Future Of Work Survey.

At the same time, talented workers are looking for an employer (or organization) that keeps its promises and has a sense of purpose. Most agree that it's more important than ever for their companies to be sustainable, and for the economy to have a positive impact on society and the planet. Our socially conscious priorities are underpinned by a desire to engage with tasks that are more meaningful, that are close to our passions. Our willingness to act on this desire is changing the jobs landscape.

At the same time, in-demand skills are changing. The impact of digitalization and automation on the working world is seismic, with the World Economic Forum anticipating that automation alone will lead to more than half of all employees requiring significant reskilling and upskilling.¹ Meanwhile, others see the upside to this change: it ushers in the age of New Work, where workers will no longer be defined by job titles and departments, but by their skills and personality. In the world of New Work, soft skills and flexibly organized teams replace rigid structures.

There is no doubt that we are in a period of extensive change, as well as a valuable opportunity to gain new skills, futureproof our careers and enjoy greater rewards.



The New Work transformation is here, and the opportunities being presented by the new skills economy are there to be seized and savored.

¹ www.weforum.org/projects/future-of-work

SKILLS

55%

BY 2030, demand for technological skills (digital, programming and IT skills) will climb by 55%.¹ (Source: McKinsey)

69%

OF ROUTINE WORK currently done by managers will be fully automated by 2024.² (Source: Gartner)

87%

OF HR MANAGERS have started looking into the impact of technology advances on job fields and skills.³ (Source: Cegos)

#1 & #2

IN A GLOBAL LINKEDIN SURVEY of L&D leaders, resilience and digital fluency were cited as the #1 or #2 most important skills in every participating country.⁴ (Source: LinkedIn)

70%

EMPLOYERS expect to offer reskilling and upskilling to just over 70% of their employees by 2025.⁵ (Source: World Economic Forum)

3/4

NEARLY THREE QUARTERS of heads of recruiting reported that talent shortages will have a major effect on their organizations.⁹ (Source: Gartner)

4x
5x
9x

THERE HAS BEEN A FOUR-FOLD INCREASE in the number of individuals seeking opportunities for learning online through their own initiative, a five-fold increase in employer (or organization) provision of online learning opportunities to colleagues, and a nine-fold enrolment increase in people accessing online learning through government programs.⁸ (Source: World Economic Forum)

/ HEALTHCARE
/ SCIENCE
/ TECHNOLOGY
/ ENGINEERING

THESE HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED as professions that could grow more than before the pandemic, reflecting increased attention to health as populations age and incomes rise, as well as a growing need for people who can create, deploy and maintain new technologies.⁶ (Source: McKinsey)

/ AGILITY
/ ADAPTABILITY
/ LEARNING SKILLS
/ EFFICIENT WORK ORGANIZATION

FOUR SKILLS European HR directors see as the key skills for the future.⁷ (Source: Cegos)

30x

LEARNING TOGETHER increases engagement. Learners who use social features – Q&As, learning groups, or simply sharing course content using deep links or social posts – watch 30 times as many hours of learning content as those who don't.¹⁰ (Source: LinkedIn)



Source links:

^{1,3,7} <https://static.cegos.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/26144947/The-Future-of-Soft-Skills.pdf>

^{2,9} <https://www.gartner.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/2020-01-23-gartner-predicts-69--of-routine-work-currently-done-b>

^{4,10} https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/business/en-us/amp/learning-solutions/images/wlr21/pdf/LinkedIn-Learning_Workplace-Learning-Report-2021-EN-1.pdf

^{5,8} https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf

⁶ <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/future-of-work/the-future-of-work-after-covid-19>

THE AUTHENTIC REVOLUTION

Leaders in 2022 are defined more than anything else by their 'soft skills': creativity, collaboration, communication. Combine that with the disruption of a pandemic situation, and we get a new level of demand for authentic, personal leaders, who are transparent and bring their whole selves to work. Let's explore what that means for the way leaders and team members talk to each other, and why storytelling might be the one skill every leader needs to be trained in.

Business communication has got a lot more personal in recent years. That's an obvious thing to say during a pandemic, when video calls have become the norm and we have got used to seeing each other's home backgrounds, kids and pets in so-called 'serious' business calls. But it's a trend that was already underway. In an age where technology enables constant communication, and social media profiles declare so much about us both personally and professionally, the walls between our personal and business communication expectations have been blurred. We expect to have a real person, with a proper identity, attached to all the communication we receive.

Think about how even when you do something as simple as request support on a website, you are

redirected to a live chat with a named person. Think about how the smart speakers in our homes have been given personalities and trained to respond intelligently to our queries. Think about how the advertising you see online or on television has changed since the pandemic began: brands are more focused on communicating earnestly and making personal appeals along the lines of 'We are here to support you'.

They no longer want to simply shout about a new product – they want to build a personal relationship with their customers.

So, what does this have to do with leaders in business? There are several traditional norms about how leaders communicate: they are 'business-like' and impersonal, they give high-level orders and expect others to work out the rest, they avoid showing weakness in any circumstance, they consolidate their power by carefully controlling who they give information to. To unlock the potential of our teams within a new way of working, we need to address those preconceptions and normalize a new, authentic, engaging mode of communication. We need to turn leaders into storytellers!



Storytelling in business culture

Our own surveys indicate that, when there is big news about to break, team members prefer to be informed by their managers, either face-to-face or in some form of one-to-one digital communication. By communicating openly, those managers can fulfil their employees' needs and retain their trust.

But there's the opportunity to go further. By sharing information in a new way – a creative, inspiring or even surprising way – you can give team members a sense of belonging and empowerment. You can give them the confidence to try new approaches, and to influence other people. That's the essence of the T-Mindset: breaking out of old ways of thinking and trusting and empowering everyone to do their best work. Storytelling can help enable that – and that's why it's a part of our culture transformation.

What, when and how to communicate

The first step to being a storyteller? Just get started. Don't wait for a 'big' piece of news to come along so you can spin a story around it. Just start with how you talk about everyday issues and challenges with team members: do you give them the overall context? Do you highlight why the subject you're talking about is important for them? Do you talk to people on their level? If you had to explain what you were talking about in 15 seconds, could you do it?

This applies to how much you communicate as well as what you communicate. Team members deserve transparency, but leaders often make the mistake of waiting until they have 'complete' knowledge of a new subject before communicating anything about it. But with so many communication channels available these days, news can come from anywhere. It's better to stay in control of the message with a clear summary of what you know, what you don't, and even what your personal response is at this stage.

As for how you talk: you don't need to be a published novelist to be good at storytelling. You can make huge progress by focusing on keeping it concise.

Here's an exercise to try. Get people to describe their favorite movie (without saying its name or the names of the lead actors) in no more than three sentences, and get a group of other people to guess it. Easy, right? Now do it with a different movie, but you only get one sentence. Then do it with a limit of three words.

It sounds impossible at first, but you'll soon find that you get the hang of it and can use those three words to be surprisingly specific and evocative. (Bench, chocolates, running. Got it? Another one: Bowling, carpet, nihilism).

Now transfer that to your everyday business communication. Talk openly, personally, and succinctly – and have one consistent message in everything you say, rather than mixing messages.



CHECK OUT THE BOX HERE FOR MORE TIPS AND DOWNLOAD THE “STORYTELLING IN TRANSFORMATION” FOR MORE INSIGHT

5 TIPS TO TALK LIKE A STORYTELLER

- 1 KEEP IT SIMPLE.**
 Don't say: "Delivering targeted assistance on financials."
 Say: "Helping you cut costs."
- 2 BE POSITIVE AND EMPOWERING.**
 Don't say: "We need to overcome a number of issues before we go any further."
 Say: "We're coming together and making this work."
- 3 FOCUS ON PEOPLE AND BENEFITS.**
 Don't say: "Our new technology platform achieves 5% greater processing efficiency."
 Say: "This is going to save people time."
- 4 VARY THE FORMAT.**
 Never stop finding new formats, new channels, new topics and even new people to talk with. In the habit of sending a weekly team update? Try recording a video instead. And use formats (especially social media) to listen as well as speak.
- 5 BE CREATIVE.**
 The thing about personal communication is that there are no rules! Communicate in a way that's natural for you, and find fun ways to rephrase old sayings.



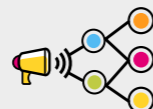
SIMPLE



EMPOWER



FOCUS



SHARE



CREATIVE

Check out [more about storytelling](#) (Please note: internal link only)

SOCIAL MEDIA: WHERE STORYTELLING IS A SUPERPOWER

BJÖRN RADDE, and his team, have worked with over 800 Deutsche Telekom employees to get them actively telling their story and building their profile on social media.

It's referred to as 'social selling', but it's not just for sales: everyone, from consultants to board members to HR teams, can use social media to represent themselves and their company. "Business has changed, and the time when customers are happy talking to a 'faceless company' is over. People want to talk to people," says Björn. "So it makes sense to empower people to talk on social media, about themselves, their subject of expertise, and their employer."

"That's what we train people in: how to be present on social platforms and build up their profile. We cover how to grow their networks, how to reach out to others, and what's

important when posting." Again, an authentic and personal approach is key: writing genuine stories, experiences and insights that people want to read. "This isn't just about social media algorithms. It's about how to write something authentic that builds trust. So if someone sees your content regularly and takes an interest in it, then all of a sudden you're in their mind the next time they have a need for a service in your industry."

It's about building practical skills, but it's also about demystifying social media. "A lot of people might say, 'But I'm not a social media person. I didn't grow up with it.' Of course you didn't – but you also didn't grow up with smartphones, but now you use one every day. You didn't grow up knowing how to drive, but you figured out how to do it."

Björn's basic tip to get started? "I always make sure to post from a first-person outlook: for example, 'I attended this event and really found it valuable,' rather than, 'This event was successful.' The more you show up as a real person, the more people will recognize you."

"And you can just get started right away. You don't need to go through a rigorous subject analysis or focus group process first – just get posting. Talk about your personal stories, struggles, what you learned, on just about any subject. As long as it's not something your CEO or your mom wouldn't want you to write about, it is on the table."



“Business has changed, and the time when customers are happy talking to a ‘faceless company’ is over. People want to talk to people.”

BJÖRN RADDE
Vice President Digital Experience, Germany

HOW TO FUTURE-PROOF YOUR SKILLSET

Lifelong learning is an essential challenge for shaping the future of our societies. We are always learning throughout our lives and careers – it is what helps us meet today’s fast-changing demands, and what opens the door to new and unexpected opportunities. But learning can be seen as risky or optional, rather than empowering and essential. Let’s take a look at the facts behind learning, challenge old stereotypes, and explore techniques that will help us learn effectively in the modern world.



“ Learning isn’t a sidetrack to work: learning is work, and keeping your skills as current as possible helps you do your best work. ”

KLAUS NEWEN
VP Learning & Development,
Germany

“Our ultimate vision is for T-Systems to be a self-learning organization, where learning is an expected, encouraged and rewarding part of everyday work.”

That’s the view of Klaus Newen, who is responsible for running **Digitize!** – an upskilling program to give people across T-Systems new digital skills. It was specifically designed to cover the skills and roles that are growing in demand – such as software engineering, hyperautomation, and architecture.

The program has also partnered with RWTH Aachen University to add business qualifications relevant for certain roles: Digital Engineer, Data Scientist, Digital Consultant and Digital Expert of Tomorrow.

“The ethos behind Digitize! is ‘future tech needs today’s experts!’” says Klaus. “We want to invest in T-Systems employees’ skills for cloud-based working, which they can combine with their existing knowledge to form a more complete skillset that sets them in good stead for the future.”

We have ambitious goals. Our aim is to upskill 10,000 colleagues by 2024



“That’s why we don’t just run discrete modules, but complete learning journeys in key areas that are relevant to team members’ careers. There is even one called Career Shifter! These journeys are designed to develop participants into thought leaders, whereupon they can organize their own learning initiatives within their teams.”

In the first year of Digitize!, colleagues gained a total of 2,900 certifications. “We have ambitious goals,” adds Klaus. “Our aim is to upskill 10,000 colleagues by 2024.”

“And we want to achieve an impact beyond the courses themselves. We want to encourage a brand of learning that is not restricted to classrooms, but is an accepted, regular part of your work. New technologies and new skills are evolving quickly today, and we want to invest time into our colleagues to give them tools to fill those gaps.”

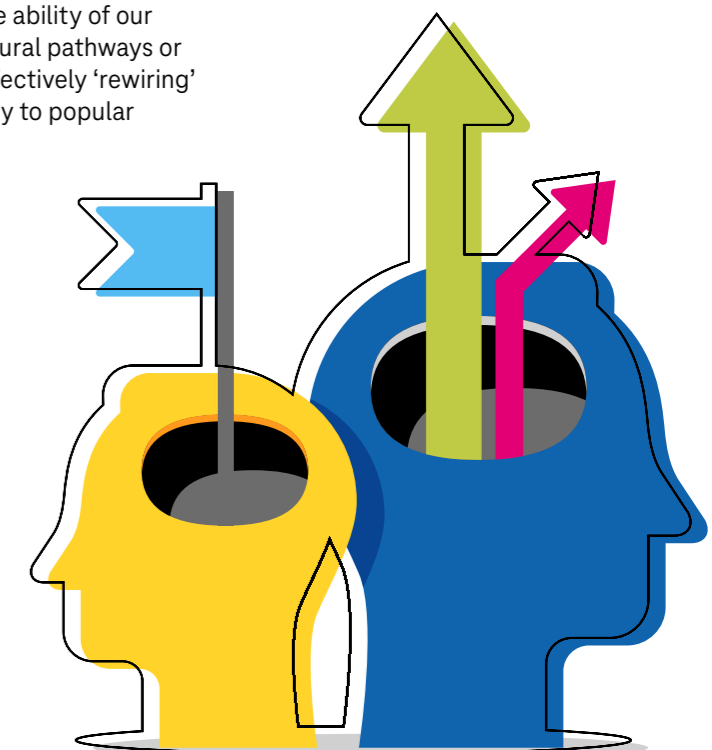
FIVE THINGS PEOPLE SAY ABOUT LEARNING (AND THE TRUTH)

Klaus isn’t just passionate about the Digitize! program content – he is passionate about the concept of lifelong learning, and the opportunities it can unlock in T-Systems.

“When I mention learning, many people admit they think of a classroom with a blackboard at the front,” he says. “Of course, the reality has moved on today. But we need to address and change those old ideas – because they can hold us back from learning, by creating fear about what it means for us.”

I’m just not a fast learner – my brain isn’t wired that way. Our brains aren’t as static as we think. More and more research is being done into neuroplasticity – the ability of our brains to redirect neural pathways or create new ones, effectively ‘rewiring’ themselves. Contrary to popular opinion, this isn’t something exclusive to children – it can happen throughout our entire adult lives. With the right approach and experiences, we can all become strong learners.

Being encouraged to learn must mean I’m not very skilled or effective at present. It’s common to worry about exposing ‘gaps’ in your existing competence. The truth is: we all have gaps, and those gaps grow as new technologies or social trends emerge. Having the self-awareness and initiative to constantly work on closing those gaps is a hugely important characteristic, not a weakness. (Read more about self-awareness starting on page 14).



I'M JUST NOT A FAST LEARNER – MY BRAIN ISN'T WIRED THAT WAY.

I'll need to take a lot of time out for learning, potentially at inconvenient times. Especially since COVID lockdowns began, learning courses have gone online. There are more free and self-timed courses than ever, meaning you can juggle them around work and family commitments. Besides, there's an overall trend away from huge blocks of learning content towards micro-learning: a series of short-term, bite-sized activities that boost our efficiency and knowledge retention. According to RPS research¹, Micro-learning improves focus and supports long-term retention by up to 80%. This means we should use Micro-learning not as a stand-alone learning vehicle, but rather as a supplemental strategy to support the main training event.

Learning is something 'extra' to juggle alongside my existing work. "You do need to block some dedicated time for learning activities, but learning isn't a sidetrack to work: learning is work, and keeping your skills as current as possible helps you do your best work. Forward-thinking managers will see that," says Klaus.

All this re-skilling means my job is becoming obsolete. Yes, jobs are changing – the World Economic Forum estimates that 40% of all core skills in the labor market will change by 2025.² But this shift inherently means that that learning is taking on increased importance.

Nowhere is that truer than within T-Systems. According to Bitkom³, while the 'half-life' of most academic and professional knowledge (the time by which half of it needs to be refreshed) is 10–15 years, in IT this is around two years. This can be even quicker in specialist areas such as security – just think about the fast-growing threats from new attack scenarios, and the advent of new regulations to keep compliant with, such as BSI Standard 200-4 or data sovereignty.

ALL THIS RE-SKILLING MEANS MY JOB IS BECOMING OBSOLETE.

That's why we are launching initiatives such as Digitize!, in the context of our culture transformation. "Our preference is to invest in the people we have, from the start," says Klaus. And T-Systems isn't alone in this regard: a CIPD report in 2021 found that 64% of organizations are actively assessing how roles are changing and how to re-skill to meet those needs⁴.

Lifelong learning is helping determine the direction of organizations, industries and societies. All by transforming people and their skills.

LEARNING IS SOMETHING 'EXTRA' TO JUGGLE ALONGSIDE MY EXISTING WORK.

BEING ENCOURAGED TO LEARN MUST MEAN I'M NOT VERY SKILLED OR EFFECTIVE AT PRESENT.

I'LL NEED TO TAKE A LOT OF TIME OUT FOR LEARNING, POTENTIALLY AT INCONVENIENT TIMES.

5 HACKS TO MAKE MAKE LEARNING WORK FOR YOU



- 1 PLAN YOUR LEARNING AND BLOCK TIME.**
You stand a better chance of success if you schedule time in for learning – even if it's only a short block. That way, you stick to your plans and don't find that other deadlines, unexpected tasks or interruptions get in the way. Simply writing down your learning plan can also help you retain the information better.
- 2 KEEP IT SMALL AND MANAGEABLE.**
Breaking training or informal learning into small blocks can make it feel more manageable. Gaining a whole new skill may seem like a huge undertaking; while studying for 45 minutes is doable. And with enough small blocks, you'll become the expert you want to be.
- 3 SILENCE THE DISTRACTIONS.**
Literally! Turn phone notifications off, use noise-cancelling headphones, and find a peaceful environment to learn in.
- 4 FOCUS ON QUALITY OVER QUANTITY.**
A short time in the 'flow' of learning is better than a long period where you constantly are interrupted or struggle to focus. Set goals, commit to getting them done, then take a break. And reward yourself when you complete a significant learning task!
- 5 ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT.**
Learning doesn't start and end with formal courses. Peer-to-peer learning is growing in popularity and importance. Recruiting someone else as a tutor or 'study buddy' can give you the motivation and encouragement to see learning through, as well as the benefit of someone else's knowledge and perspective.

Interested in Digitize?

Check out the [YAM page](#) * to find out how you can get involved

Community Learning: Learn better together

Sick and tired of learning alone? Want to meet and exchange with like-minded colleagues across the group? Or maybe you are an expert for a specific topic willing to share your experience, OR you simply want to discuss latest trends with other experts? Then join one of the interest-based ["Community-Learning from Experts" groups on WebEx Teams](#) *

* Please note: internal link only

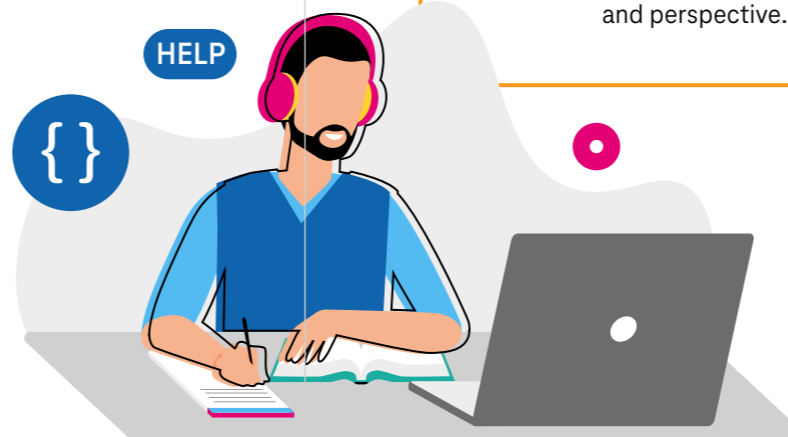
Sources:

- <https://www.raytheon.com/rps/industries/government-military>
- https://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs_2020.pdf
- <https://www.bitkom-akademie.de/news/von-der-halbwertszeit-des-wissens>
- https://www.cipd.co.uk/Images/learning-skills-work-report-2021-1_tcm18-95433.pdf

PLANNING



HELP



Curious about getting insights into executive's or colleague's daily work and gain first-hand experience on roles and functions at T-Systems? Then apply for the [job shadowing program](#) *
(Please note: internal link only)

WHY YOU SHOULD PRIORITIZE RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

What do TV quiz shows and complex business projects have in common? Collaboration, that's what – in just about any setting, your results are better when you collaborate. And in an era when we are more physically separated than ever, finding ways to work closely together isn't just beneficial – it's essential.

Doing business isn't how it always was. In a society with greater access to technology – and a higher degree of social conscience – than ever before, commercial relationships aren't determined by basic factors such as product and price. Instead, customers want end-to-end relationships, fulfilled by suppliers who take good care of them, consider all their needs, and have a real sense of purpose.

"Customers are sick of being sold to with unsolicited sales pitches," Forbes wrote last year. "Businesses that prioritize relationship-building and conversations will thrive. Customers want to be seen, heard and understood." The facts bear it out. One survey revealed that twice as many leaders (45.9%) view customer experience as their highest priority, compared to pricing (20.5%). And, according to PwC, 86% of buyers are prepared to pay more for a great customer experience.



COLLABORATION

How can you deliver that experience? It's unlikely that you can do it on your own. You need to collaborate with the right suppliers and partners to make sure all the 'gaps' are filled in your service. Not offering something a customer needs? You can't be content with that – you need to work out who can provide it, and start to work with them. And let's not forget that you need to collaborate with your customers too – regularly consulting them to capture their feelings and ensure you're delivering the right things.

But that's not all. A decent collaboration will keep your customers satisfied. An amazing one will show you new perspectives, and give you answers to questions you didn't realize you had. Co-creation is what leads to disruptive innovations. When Apple and Mastercard collaborated to make the latter's payment products securely available on the former's app, Apple Pay was born, and quickly went on to change how we pay for goods every day. Elsewhere, by co-creating with customers through dedicated Innovation Centers, DHL is able to explore new frontiers in delivery technology – such as 'parcelcopter' drones.

How can you do this for yourself – create your own creative, disruptive partnership? This is where the T-Mindset comes in. Because the mindset applies to your own thought processes and behaviors – but it can also be used to enhance our experience of collaboration.

Start with a self-assessment to identify a need. This is where self-awareness (see pages 14 – 15 for more on that) comes into play: you need to perform an honest appraisal of where 'gaps' in your (or your team's) current offering and capabilities lie.

Who could help fill these gaps? The answer could be anyone – another colleague, a business partner, even an erstwhile competitor! No one is off limits – the more ambitious you are when thinking of partners, the more you stand to achieve. Just think of T-Systems' collaborations with hyperscalers such as Microsoft, AWS and Google, or our establishment of an open-source collaboration platform with Nextcloud, effectively opening up collaboration possibilities with countless more customers.

Got a prospective partner identified or approached? Here are our T-Mindset driven tips on getting that collaboration going – and making it stick:

- **Value your partner:** Remember to see the people in your partner organization as people, not just providers of a service. Take time to understand their needs, challenges and passions. Staying curious, asking questions, and invite and recognize their input, even if they aren't agreeing with you. Diversity in opinion and thought will help you get to the best solution.
- **Focus on our results, not just yours:** Collaborations are about "we", not "me". Set and stick to collective goals with the agreement of both sides. This way, the results you deliver will be optimal for all members of the project, and ultimately for the customer.
- **Embrace change and continuous improvement:** Once your collaboration is established, it isn't set in stone forever. Regularly stop, reassess, and improve. A willingness to learn from past relevant experiences and test new approaches will pay huge dividends.

“ It can be hard to approach people you haven't worked with (or even met) before. But the number one way to get started is to be brave, turn on your camera and go for it. ”

CIARA MULLAN
VP Complex Project Management, UK



5 STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL COLLABORATION

We asked **CIARA MULLAN**, VP Complex Project Management, for her insights into what makes collaboration work. Read her tips below.

1 BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP

I remember years ago, when I was working for an American company, one of my collaborations got started out of the blue. I picked up the phone and the voice at the other end confidently said, "Hello – my name is X and we're going to work together." I went, "That'd be great – no one's told me that yet, but I'm sure it'll be fine!" I haven't experienced such a forthright approach to partnership-building since – but it turned out to be a successful working relationship.

That has always stuck in my mind as a particularly direct example of open, positive collaboration. To get going, you have to step away from your normal activities and bring yourself closer to other people. Get to know them on a personal level, trust them, and be open enough for them to trust you. Getting out of your comfort zone is crucial. It can be hard to approach people you haven't worked with (or even met) before. But the number one way to get started is to be brave, turn on your camera if you are meeting over technology, and go for it. We are more physically distanced than ever today. Let's find ways to overcome that – to recognize that we are all in the same position, and to put a human face on ourselves, share more of ourselves.

Nervous about approaching new partners or beginning complex collaborative projects? Our T-Mindset tool, 'Start in the right way', is specifically designed to help you tackle these daunting situations. It gives you three simple exercises to undertake, that make potentially difficult interactions easier.



Check out the tool now:

[YAM download page for 'Start in the right way' tool](#) (Please note: internal link only)

2 APPROACH YOUR PARTNERSHIP (AND YOUR PARTNER) THE RIGHT WAY

Meeting a new partner or existing colleagues, and getting to know their needs and challenges, can be an in-depth and complex task. But there's a T-Mindset tool, 'Meet to learn', that can help you stay on the right track. 'Meet to learn' emphasizes the value of curiosity when meeting people or groups you don't know very well – here's how to implement it:

- **Get really curious** and try to learn as much about the others as you can – their key objectives, challenges, needs, headaches.
- To structure this further, **give each person a turn to be "interviewed."** It will be the job of the others to learn as much as they can about the person being interviewed. Remember – the goal is to learn as much as you can about each other – there is no other objective.
- **After interviewing**, consider if there is any way you can help with the challenges or initiatives you've uncovered.

3 START SMALL

The agile principle of 'fail fast' really applies to collaboration. Be courageous enough to get started. **Start small – it'll enable you to get going faster.**

Then, check and learn. Just because you start a collaboration in a certain way, it doesn't have to continue in that way forever. Work in small cycles: check what you're doing after a week or two, then check and check again.

4 DON'T WAIT TO MAKE ADJUSTMENT

One of my colleagues recently told me about how their marketing team works. Each of their team members gets 10 calls to make; after five calls, they stop, reevaluate their offer and techniques, adjust them as necessary, then go on.

I was surprised at first – I would have thought 10 was a small enough number that you'd just complete the whole lot before trying to learn from them. But they were breaking it down into the smallest meaningful increment, and trying new things as soon as they could. That's something I think we can integrate into our collaborations. Once you have got started, it is never too soon to say, "Let's take a minute, step back, and look at what we are meant to be doing and how far we have come."

Taking that moment to 'check in' can be hugely valuable. If you've ended up getting diverted from your original goals, that can get you back on track. Again, this requires being brave enough to do it. Having the courage to go, "I'm not going to be content with basic status reports. Let's think about this collaboration more holistically. Is it really doing what we need it to do?"

5 ENJOY THE JOURNEY AS WELL AS THE DESTINATION

Any academic study of performance against objectives highlights why you need collaboration. Why do they give contestants on Who Wants to Be A Millionaire the option to ask a friend? It's because research shows that when you collaborate with people, you get a better outcome.

But it's not just about the results. It's about the journey. When you work in a high-performing team that collaborates really well, everything feels better. The job feels challenging and interesting. You feel like you are doing the best work you could possibly do. And even if you are asked to tackle incredibly complex and high-level challenges, it doesn't feel difficult. It can even feel quite simple! When you're working collaboratively, you can take on the world.



COLLABORATING IN A CRISIS

Imagine this scenario: You have been assigned to work on the most complex project of your career. Not only that, but you need to do it in partnership with people from a totally different company, without meeting them. And you have to complete it in 50 days. That was the task facing the teams behind the Corona-Warn-App in Germany. How did they manage it?

“Everybody felt like it was an honor to get involved and to play a part in making this app happen.”



We can all remember the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak – when everything seemed to change on a daily basis. Whether the number of cases, the regulations on how we needed to stay safe, or our level of confidence – everything was unknown.

One of the key tools for restoring knowledge and certainty in Germany was the Corona-Warn-App, a digital tool for contact tracing and submitting Coronavirus test results. Its purpose was to quickly give a data-led understanding of where (and how much) Coronavirus was prevalent, and to give people instant notifications if they had contact with an infected person.

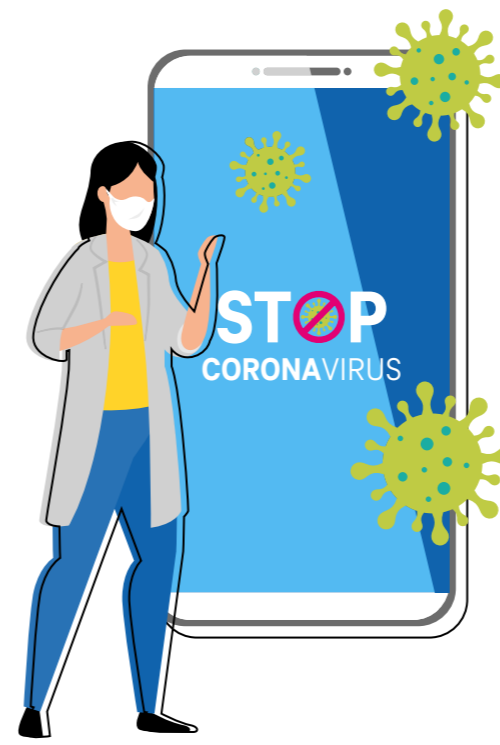
Released in June 2020, by March 2022 the app had been downloaded over 43 million times and processed over 164 million test results. It has also expanded beyond Germany, where it was originally released: it can now exchange data with contact tracing programs from 18 countries across Europe.

WILFRIED BAUER
Project Lead Corona-Warn-App,
Germany

Clearly, Corona-Warn-App is having a continued impact in the fight against the spread of Coronavirus. But how did it even come into existence? After all, many products can have a development cycle lasting years. In this case, we didn't even know we needed the app until early 2021 – and just a few months later, it was on the market.

“It was around end of April when we were officially asked by the German government to take over part of the development work for the app,” says Wilfried Bauer, project lead at T-Systems. “We would be one of the key organizations responsible for the development and for organizing the roll-out – but it was clear from the beginning that we wouldn't be taking on the responsibility on our own. We were looking for a partner.”

The ideal partner? SAP, whose software development expertise would combine with Telekom's footprint in telecommunications to form a collaboration that could ramp up app development quickly.



People make it happen

The brief and the budget were in place – but how would the development partners turn it into a finished product? With people's health at stake, every day mattered. They would need to work on the fly – managing concepts, development and implementation all at once. And they would need to do it entirely while working from home.

The first job was getting the project teams together. “We needed to ramp up the project organization first, and to do that, we needed to define central workstreams so we would have a clear perspective on what, and who, we needed,” says Wilfried.

“We needed people who could handle the architecture. We needed expertise in data privacy and security. We had to organize the core development for iOS and Android. We had to set up a workstream for all the back-end systems. All you see is an app on your mobile device, but there is a lot of infrastructure behind that. We had to set up a workstream for the Bluetooth work, doing the measurement and calibration of the contact tracing interface.”

“Put this all together, and you get an organization within our organization, with up to 14 sub-teams combining employees from SAP, Deutsche Telekom and T-Systems, totaling around 200 people. We got this set up in about a week.”



A project built on agile principles

In the early days, Wilfried's specific role was to get the project staffed properly, drawing on the whole Deutsche Telekom organization where needed. “It was helpful that I've been in the organization for 20 years – so I know a lot of people on an individual level, as well as within the management, VP and SVP ranks. It meant I knew where to go – which people and departments I should be talking to.”

“Working on Corona-Warn-App wasn't about what your business card said or how senior your position was.

It was about making sure we had the right skills and mindset in the project team to achieve all our goals – no matter where those skills came from.

We needed to work in an agile way to fuel its constant development and improvement.”



Getting people enthusiastic about working on the app was the easy part. It was so relevant to what everyone was talking about every day: giving us an additional tool to fight against the pandemic.

Everybody felt like it was an honor to get involved and to play a part in making this app happen.

“From my perspective, it was like nothing I’d experienced before. I’d never done so much in 50 days – which is how long it took until we were ready for go-live.”



Crossing boundaries

Wilfried may have got Deutsche Telekom employees collaborating, but that wasn’t enough – they also needed to collaborate with external partners from SAP, many of whom they had never worked with before. Crossing this organizational divide, and working as one team, would be essential to the timely completion of the project.

“It was easier than I imagined it would be!” says Wilfried. “SAP is a similar organization to us. It has similar capabilities at the employee level, and shares a focus on digitalization. So in a short time frame, we found ourselves speaking the same language. We had a shared understanding on how to steer the project, and quickly got our agile methods established: starting every morning with an internal project management ramp-up, then a daily scrum meeting with the heads of different substreams, and at the end of each day, a 30-minute stakeholder meeting with government representatives.”

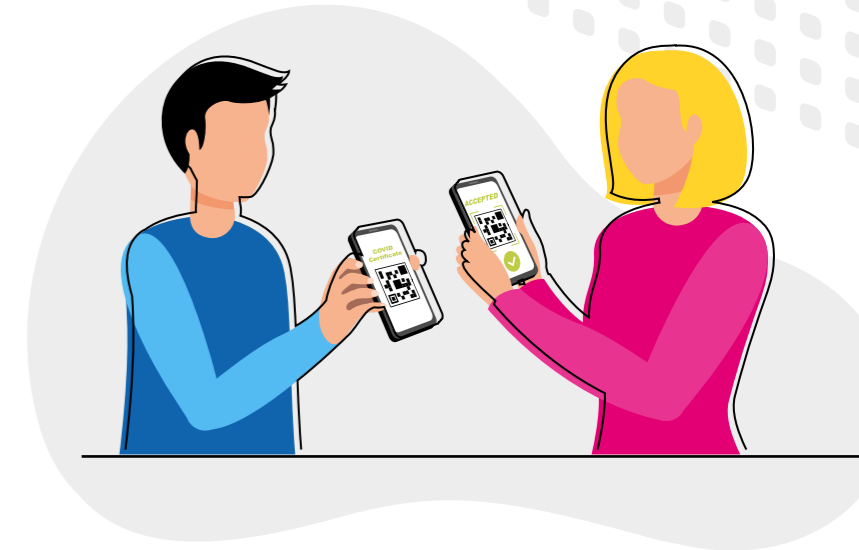
“In between all these meetings, we worked in an agile manner with a lot of virtual collaboration tools. Of course, we were in 100 % lockdown mode and unable to meet in person. We just got to know each other via virtual platforms. That ended up making it easier in a way: everyone had the same resources and the same obstacles to overcome. We made a clear plan on how to communicate our progress so everyone would understand the status of the project. And we made a shared commitment to the go-live date.”

Finishing the project is only the beginning

Now, the app is live and reporting Corona tests and contacts every day. Almost two years after the initial go-live, how does Wilfried feel?

I feel very emotional about it. I remember looking at the stats 48 hours after go-live. We had more than 6.5 million downloads.

We had never expected anything close to this. We thought that 2 million after a week might be realistic!



“But the work wasn’t finished, of course. I am still one of the heads of project management for the app now – continuously working with the same people and processes to further develop the app and add new features. Some 70 – 80 of the people who were initially drafted in are still part of the core team now. I think this has been a factor in its success: being able to work with a continuous group of people, on both sides.”

“There have been a number of highlights since the original launch, such as when digital COVID certificates were added. We see people using these whenever they make travel arrangements or enter a restaurant. When you see your hard work get into people’s hands and make a difference, it makes you feel like your contribution was really worthwhile.”



Find out more – download the Corona-Warn-App or even contribute to its open-source development at: <https://www.coronawarn.app/en/>

TAKING THE NEXT STEPS, TOGETHER

Let's start with a simple question: What next? In this magazine, you've read about a range of skills that are at the core of our culture – from self-awareness to authentic leadership – and how we're taking a forward-thinking approach to enabling these skills. How can we take it from there and make these principles a reality in our own working lives, creating the trustful, empowering environment we need?



HELP US TO GET BETTER

We'd just like to say, it's a privilege to be on this journey with you!

We're committed to constantly improving and would love to get your feedback on this magazine. Share your thoughts with us at:

T-Mindset@T-Systems.com



“ Culture is created by people, and we all have a role to play in developing the culture we want to see at T-Systems. ”



JULIA HERPEL
Lead Change Core Team,
Germany

To answer that, let's refer back to the title of the magazine in a literal sense:

People Make It Happen. Change programs are endorsed at every level in T-Systems, but the real change happens when people change their mindsets and behaviors, one person at a time. So here's our challenge to you. Take whatever interests you the most from this magazine – whether it's the principles of agility, the importance of empowering everyone to be a leader in their own working environment, or the insights into how to learn – and come up with ways to put them into practice every day. If that means abandoning old practices and designing new ways of working, be brave enough to do it. We will support you in your initiatives.

'Culture' contains many complex meanings, and we unpacked some of these within this magazine. But at the same time, let's remember that in its purest sense it means 'the way we do things around here.' Our culture is defined by all of us: the way that we think, act and work together. Culture is created by people, and we all have

a role to play in developing the culture we want to see at T-Systems.

That's a possible answer to 'what next' for you. For us in the Change Core team, it means something different: it means always improving, listening to team members, designing meaningful change journeys and making sure every colleague feels comfortable and confident to come along on that journey.

Because our target culture isn't fixed. Our ideas of transformation will evolve over time. And crucially, we won't ever say the journey is 'finished'. As technologies, societal trends and people's priorities evolve, so will we. Whatever the future holds, our culture transformation will continue to be a business priority. It is a critical component in future-proofing our organization.

Together, let's discover where it takes us next.

TSI Change Core Team

QUICK WAYS TO GET INVOLVED



If you want to play a more active role in our culture transformation, then why not join the **Magenta Change Champions?**

<https://yam-united.telekom.com/workspaces/magenta-change-champions/apps/content/home> (Please note: internal link only)

Follow us on YAM to keep up to date on our culture journey.

YOUR CONTACT PEOPLE

→ CHANGE TEAM

Julia Herpel

- Lead of the Change Core Team.
- Transformation and change expert with a profound HR and communication background
- Passionate about customer-centricity and deploying innovative approaches to make change stick.
- Sees Culture Change not as one initiative but as an enabler of all initiatives and thus our joint responsibility (Change starts with me).



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→ T-MINDSET

Yaïsa Gottenbos

- Member of the Change Core Team (responsible for the T-Mindset).
- Background in program and project management, delivery and sales.
- Special interest in psychology, deep expertise in and passion for intercultural competence development and (team) coaching
- Committed to driving change together; the whole is more than the sum of its parts.



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→ MAGENTA CHANGE CHAMPIONS

Jane Relph

- Member of the Change Core Team (responsible for Community Management, Behavior transformation and strategic topics).
- Background in psychology, change management, communications and marketing. Special interest/expertise in behavior transformation.
- Committed to driving change from the ground up and convinced that while the decision to change might be made at the top, real change happens lower down in the organization.



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→ T-LEADER PROGRAM AND WORKSHOPS

Maxine Blumfield

- Member of the Change Core Team (responsible for Change and Transformation Leadership Team Program, and supporting on community and mindset).
- Background is in communications, change consultancy and psychology. Special interest/expertise in coaching, workshops and events.
- Motivated to make a difference and inspire others to do so. Believe in the power of people.



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Kristina Zabbei

- Member of the Change Core Team (responsible for TSI People Leader Program)
- Program Lead We.Work.New.
- Passionate about making culture transformation visible in work places and team interactions.
- Special interest in transforming T-Systems' culture and work environment to make T-Systems an attractive employer for the next generation of tech talent



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→ DIGITIZE!

Verena Schindler

- Senior Expert Qualification at T-Systems Learning & Development (L&D).
- Squad Lead L&D Communication driving the Year of Learning campaign as well as the branding & promotion of Digitize!
- Project Leader of We.Shadow.Now. – Job Shadowing Program at T-Systems.
- Enthusiastic about learning! #everybodylearn #youlearn #lifelonglearning #neverstoplearning



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→ AGILE:HUB

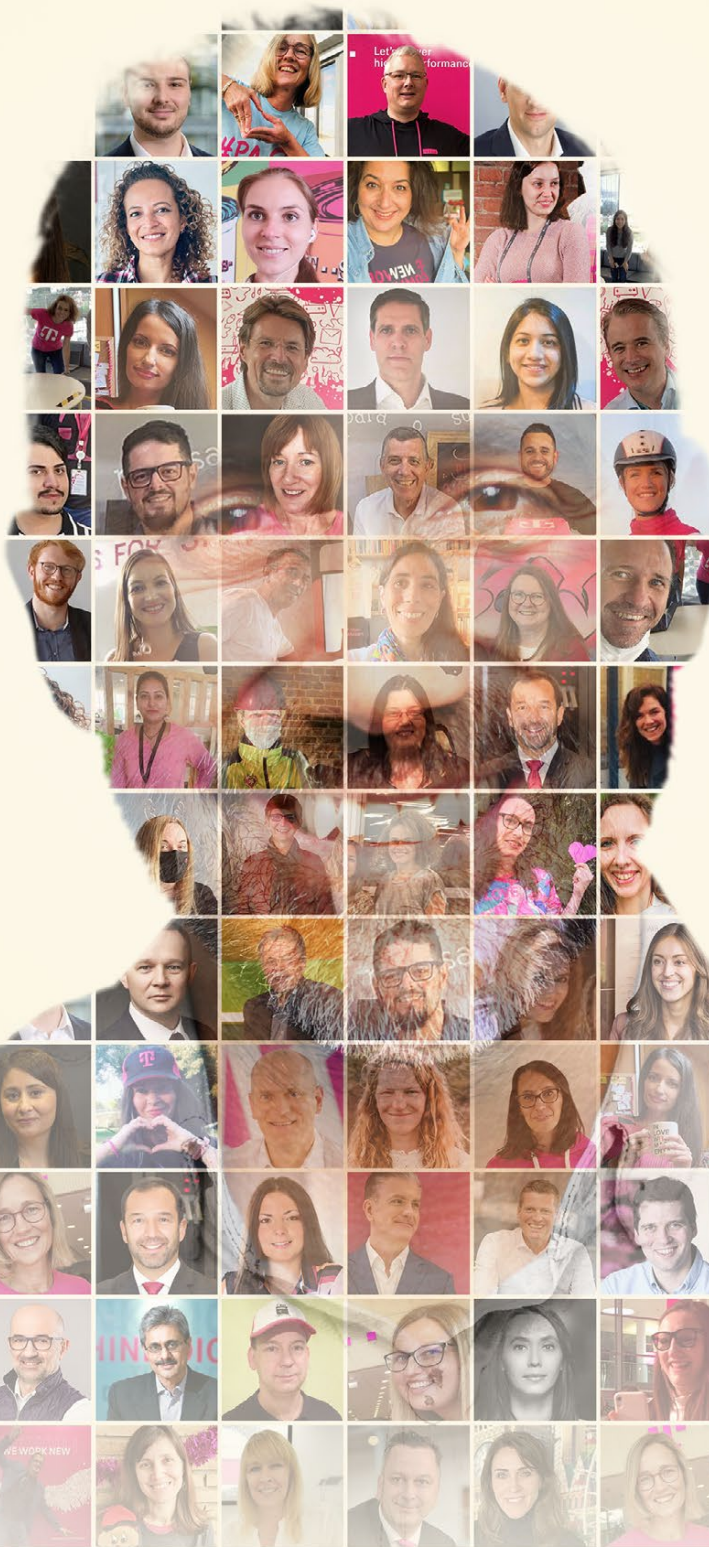
Raihan Kleinmann

- Tribe Lead Future Work & Collaboration Shapers/ T-Systems International GmbH
- Since 2020 responsible for the Future Work & Collaboration Tribe in HR at T-Systems. As a shaper and accelerator, the Tribe equips T-Systems and its employees with sustainable collaboration capabilities to succeed in its rapidly changing business environment.
- At its core engaged with the further development of T-Systems' organizational structure and processes into an all agile enterprise.



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