



What can we learn from visionary leaders who aren't afraid to break the mold of employee engagement and customer focus?

Elon Musk, Tesla Inc.

Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook

Ben Silbermann, Pinterest

Richard Branson, Virgin Group

Neil Blumenthal, Warby Parker

John Legere, T-Mobile

Jeff Bezos, Amazon

Sundar Pichai, Google

Craig Jelinek, Costco Wholesale

Akio Toyoda, Toyota Motor Corp.

Mark Parker, Nike

Jamie Dimon, JPMorgan Chase & Co.

**2017
Transformational
CX Leaders**



What makes a leader transformational?

While spotting a unique business opportunity is difficult enough, the ability to successfully carry out this idea is what separates the great leaders from the dreamers. Transformational CX leaders rise above challenges to become customer-centric leaders and create a prosperous business.

These leaders aren't afraid to take chances and break the mold. They develop cultures and operations based on employee empowerment and customer engagement.

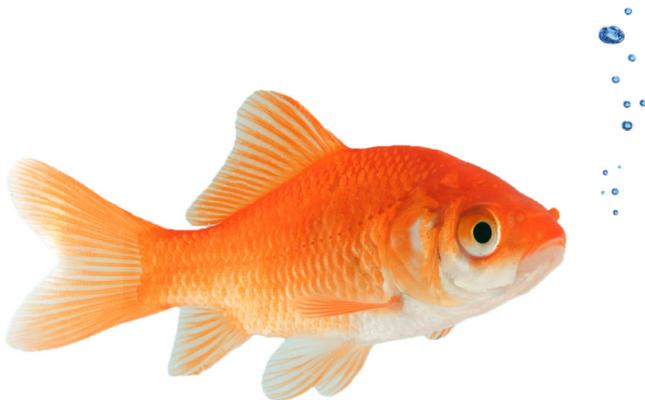
We've identified four areas in which strong leaders excel:

+ Set Direction

+ Engage & Excite

+ Enable & Execute

+ Sustain Momentum



A crash course in visionary leadership

Leadership success doesn't happen by accident.

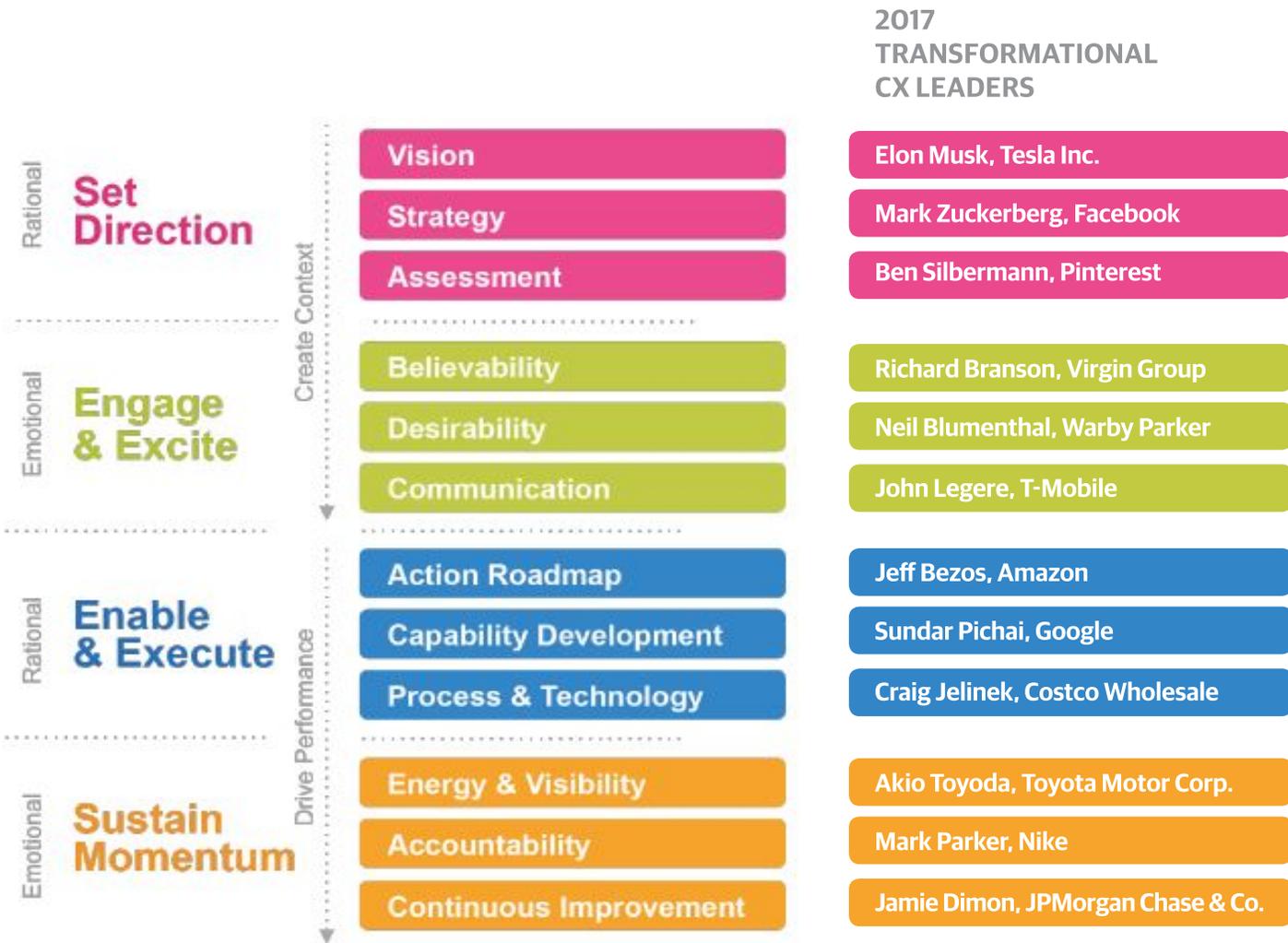
TTEC Consulting's Vision to Results leadership execution framework enables leaders to focus on the right things at the right time, and at the right level. A tight focus on results-oriented "leadership" -- rather than "management" or "task" -- reveal two important truths: If the context for performance is not clearly and firmly established, the prospects of effective performance are significantly weakened; and it is critical that leaders connect with their teams on both rational and emotional levels to most efficiently achieve the results they seek.

Those profiled in this e-book personify the characteristics of a great leader. They are only some of the many executives who make a difference to their employees and customers every day.



Vision to results framework

Based on TTEC Consulting's Vision-to-Results methodology, we identified four areas in which strong leaders excel — Set Direction; Engage & Excite; Enable & Execute; Sustain Momentum — and identified CEOs and/or founders who have succeeded in these areas to help their companies thrive.



SET DIRECTION // Create a vision people believe in



Image from Tesla

LESSON

Convince people that despite the challenges, his or her vision is worth following, even if the end goal isn't yet in sight. Use tenacity and creativity to spot opportunities that others overlook.

Elon Musk

Tesla
Co-founder, CEO
SpaceX
Founder, CEO, and CTO

Elon Musk's visionary ideas and ability to inspire others are a hallmark of his success as an entrepreneur and CEO. He is the founder of X.Com, which later became PayPal, one of the largest online payment companies. When PayPal was sold to eBay, Musk pursued other ideas, which turned into SpaceX, Tesla Inc., the Solar City acquisition, and more.

"The thing that makes Elon [who he is] is his ability to make people believe in his vision," Dolly Singh, former HR head at SpaceX, tells Fast Company. A clear example of Musk's charismatic nature is his ability to sell cars that haven't been built yet.

Last year, Musk unveiled the highly-anticipated Tesla Model 3, set for release in 2017. After only five days, Tesla received more than 275,000 pre-orders—an impressive number considering that the car had yet to be built or driven by potential buyers. Still, the brand's reputation and its savvy marketing strategy—including an emphasis on socially conscious values and a \$1,000 refundable deposit—were enough to persuade consumers to invest in Musk's vision.

SET DIRECTION // Align values across the organization

Mark Zuckerberg

Facebook
Co-founder, CEO, Chairman

Facebook's co-founder, Mark Zuckerberg, believed in the social network's potential and dropped out of Harvard to dedicate himself to making his vision a reality. The rest is history. Facebook has become a powerful media company and at age 32, Zuckerberg has a net worth of \$57 billion, according to Forbes. How did Zuckerberg do it?

There are a number of leadership qualities that likely helped him succeed. In describing Zuckerberg's leadership style, Tim Bajarin, president of market research firm Creative Strategies, tells Forbes, "the number one thing we've learned from Zuckerberg is to take the vision you have, put all your energy into it, and get a lot of smart people around you to execute on it."

Zuckerberg elaborated on his approach to hiring by stating at a conference: "I will only hire someone to work directly for me if I would work for that person." In other words, it's important to hire people whose values align with yours and the company's. Zuckerberg's approach is also strategic as it shows he's looking for employees who have a talent for leadership and can help the company grow.



LESSON

Live by a set of values that you believe in. And surround yourself with people who not only have the necessary skills but are people whom you would trust as leaders themselves.



Image from Pinterest

Ben Silbermann

Pinterest
Co-founder, CEO

Much of Pinterest's success can be attributed to co-founder and CEO Ben Silbermann's vision of a company built on teamwork. "Ben has humbly built one of the greatest management teams in Silicon Valley," said Angel investor Ron Conway at a conference. Pinterest employees have described Silbermann as the kind of boss who listens more than he talks, supports the best ideas, and lets the employee be in charge of them.

Silbermann is also eager to give credit to others: "So little of what Pinterest does is made by me and [co-founder] Evan [Sharp], and so much of it is made by the team," he said during an on-stage presentation.

Companies often reflect the personalities of its founders. In many ways, Pinterest is a reflection of Silbermann: the efficient interface lets people save and share images without being concerned about the bells and whistles of other social services, such as comments, likes, or followers. Though Pinterest has been relatively quiet, it reached 150 million monthly users last year and has an \$11 billion valuation.

LESSON

There's certainly a place for extroverted, attention-grabbing leaders in business, but the same holds true for modest CEOs who would rather focus on product development and less on making headlines. What matters more is how you inspire the right people to help you turn your vision into reality. This can be done by introverts or extroverts in many different ways.

Sir Richard Branson

Virgin Group
Founder

Sir Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group and a billionaire entrepreneur, has been known to try his hand at a wide variety of ventures. The Virgin Group currently owns or has owned companies in the hospitality, music, mobile phone, and space-exploration industries, among many others. And even when his companies encounter a setback, such as the private spaceflight company Virgin Galactic, in which one of its spaceships exploded in mid-air, killing a test pilot and injuring another, Branson continues to forge ahead.

Branson attributes his ability to convince other people to join him on his ventures to being passionate. "If you love what you do and if you believe in what you do, others will share your enthusiasm," he tells Forbes. "Passionate people find their way to the Virgin Group, and when they do, we snap them up and try to keep them within the family." Furthermore, Branson doesn't wait until he has a fully developed idea—he just does it. For example, in explaining his inspiration for Virgin Airlines: "If I fly on somebody else's airline and find the experience is not a pleasant one, which it wasn't...then I think, 'Well, you know, maybe I can create the kind of airline that I'd like to fly on,' Branson said in an interview.



Image from Virgin America

LESSON

If you have an idea that you're passionate about, don't be discouraged if you don't have all the details; just get started. Branson has pursued so many business ventures and ideas that it's unlikely he was an expert in all of these areas. A side effect of pursuing challenging work is that others will be inspired by the excitement you exude and help you realize your goals.



LESSON

Building a company culture that excites and motivates is a good first step to recruiting employees who share your vision. But high-minded philosophies can fade into the background as daily responsibilities take hold. Just as Warby Parker weaved its culture of giving into its business model, find a way to inject your company's values into mundane tasks as well.

Neil Blumenthal

Warby Parker
Co-founder and Co-CEO

The desire to help others was the inspiration behind the online eyeglass company Warby Parker, explained Co-founder and Co-CEO Neil Blumenthal in a blog post. "Along with the emotional rationale, there was a business rationale too," he writes. "The prospect of doing good is a powerful motivating force – for us, and, more important, for the people we hoped to hire."

The company's "Buy a Pair, Give a Pair" program, where a pair of glasses is donated to charity for every pair sold, is an example of this philosophy. The company also values collaboration and transparency. On Wednesdays, the entire organization comes together to hear updates from different departments. At these meetings, new hires are also encouraged to introduce themselves and share a fun fact about themselves.

The company was valued at \$1.2 billion after its last round of funding in 2015 and has expanded from e-commerce to opening brick-and-mortar stores across the United States.

ENGAGE & EXCITE // Walk in employees' shoes

John Legere

T-Mobile U.S.
CEO and President

When John Legere took the reins of T-Mobile U.S. in 2012, one of his first moves was to interact with employees. "On my very first day at T-Mobile, I demanded that every time I spoke publicly to the company, all employees across the country would be invited to watch," Legere told Business Insider. "We record it, too, so if somebody can't leave the sales floor, they can watch it later. And I take full, live interactive text and voice Q&A from all [our] employees."

Legere also makes it a point to visit the call centers. "Before I was CEO, I heard that no CEO had gone to physically visit [the call centers]," Legere says. "So I created...a color-coded sheet of paper showing me how many days it's been since the last time I visited each call center." During his visit, Legere poses for selfies with the employees, but believes it's more important that he thanks them for their efforts and helps them "see that their behavior and their work has driven the culture of the company."



LESSON

Never underestimate the value of making employees feel appreciated and supported. And whether your leadership style is loud and outspoken or subdued, smart leaders understand that satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers.



Jeff Bezos

Amazon
Founder, CEO, and Chairman

Amazon CEO and Founder Jeff Bezos' tolerance for risk has enabled him to build an innovative company, but that quality alone isn't why Amazon is incredibly successful. Much of the company's success can also be attributed to Bezos' data-driven focus on the customer. Bezos enforces what he calls a "culture of metrics" in the company's pursuit of customer-centric experiences.

It's common for employees to have to defend the metrics they think are important, Manfred Bluemel, a former senior market researcher at Amazon, told Forbes. "If you can stand a barrage of questions, then you have picked the right metric. But you had better have your stuff together," Bluemel says. "The best number wins."

A data-driven customer focus is essential because it allows the company to take risks to innovate, while tracking the results to identify the most promising experiments. "We are comfortable planting seeds and waiting for them to grow into trees," said Bezos in the Forbes interview. "We don't focus on the optics of the next quarter; we focus on what is going to be good for customers. I think this aspect of our culture is rare."

LESSON

Taking risks to uncover better and more innovative ways of meeting a goal can yield numerous advantages. But these efforts must be supported with intense data analysis to ensure the company is using its resources wisely.

Sundar Pichai

Google
CEO

Sundar Pichai is known for being “predictable and consistent,” a stark contrast to the stereotypical CEO personality. Some have even called him boring. And that’s a good thing.

Collaboration is essential, Pichai explained on a visit to his alma mater, the Indian Institute of Technology-Kharagpur: “When you’re trying to run something at the scale of Google, we have now over 60,000 people and...you rely on other strong leaders...It’s learning to let go and really empowering people at all levels of the organization, and trusting them to doing the right thing.”

“As a leader, a lot of your job is to make those people successful. It’s less about trying to be successful (yourself), and more about making sure you have good people and your work is to remove that barrier, remove roadblocks for them so that they can be successful in what they do. So that’s how I’ve always thought about it.” A study by Google, which was cited by Inc., indicates that the best leaders are predictable and consistent. That suggests that another reason for Pichai’s effectiveness may be his ability to be goal-oriented, even if it means not drawing attention to himself.



LESSON

There are different leadership styles but employees appreciate leaders who are calm and steady because it is extremely reliable in all market conditions. Organizations must be structured to encourage consistency while guarding against complacency.

ENABLE & EXECUTE // The ROI of respect



LESSON

Keep it simple by focusing on what matters to your customers and employees. The competitors will change, the technologies that are available will change, but the key customer and employee needs tend to remain constant and that is what you should build strategies around.

Craig Jelinek

Costco Wholesale
CEO and President

Despite Costco Wholesale's success as a big-box store, the company faces the same tough retail environment as other chains. CEO Craig Jelinek's strategy for dealing with this challenge is focused on three pillars: keeping prices low, volumes high, and the employees happy. "This isn't Harvard grad stuff," he tells Bloomberg. "We sell quality stuff at the best possible price. If you treat consumers with respect and treat employees with respect, good things are going to happen to you."

Costco is often held up as an example of a company that treats its employees well. Earlier this year, Costco came in at number 34 on Glassdoor's list of the 50 best places to work, up six spots from the previous year. In fact, the average salaries listed by Costco workers on Glassdoor are often double the federal minimum wage of \$7.25.

For customers, Costco has held on to its loyal base of customers by offering a consistent combination of value and shopping experience. It's a formula that drives traffic to the company's stores on a remarkably steady basis.

SUSTAIN MOMENTUM // Personally represent the brand

Akio Toyoda

Toyota
President

When Akio Toyoda, the grandson of the car company's founder, took the helm as president of Toyota Motor Corporation in 2009, he took responsibility for Toyota's poor past performance, as well as its future.

One of Toyoda's first moves was to cut the board of directors by half and eliminate layers of upper management. Toyoda also made it a point to visit dealerships, plants, and factories himself. He made a surprise visit to a Toyota dealership in Ann Arbor, Michigan to investigate a pickup truck recall, for example. After his surprise visit in Ann Arbor, he announced that he would be popping up in more places and promised to be the "closest president ever to the gembu" [a Japanese term that means where the real work is done], reports Fortune.

Despite numerous challenges, Toyoda's efforts are beginning to bear fruit: Toyota posted record sales of its RAV4 and Highlander vehicles in 2016 and is regaining consumer trust as other brands deal with the fallout from their own scandals, like Volkswagen. While Toyota's improvements can be attributed to many people, at the center of the turnaround is Toyoda and his vision of what the company can be.



Moto "Club4AG" Miwa Via Flickr

LESSON

To make meaningful changes, leaders must demonstrate a willingness to understand the problem and make changes. Requesting an internal investigation isn't enough; leaders should also meet with employees and examine operations at the frontline themselves.



Image from JPMorgan Chase
2016 Annual Report

LESSON

Openly admit mistakes when they happen, and welcome input from employees to make wiser decisions or uncover better ideas in the future.

Jamie Dimon

JPMorgan Chase & Co.
CEO, President, Chairman

As the head of one of the largest banks in the world, Jamie Dimon faces intense pressure to rarely admit a mistake or failure. Yet he used the words “mistake” or “mistakes” 17 times in a 2015 letter to shareholders, reported Fortune. Sometimes Dimon discusses what happens “if and when” the company makes mistakes; other times he acknowledges that the company will make more mistakes because they’re inevitable.

Dimon also believes that encouraging employees to share their thoughts and concerns is critical to running a successful business. “Sharing information all the time is vital – we should debate the issues and alternative approaches, not the facts,” Dimon wrote in a blog post. “The best leaders kill bureaucracy – it can cripple an organization – and watch for signs of politics, like sidebar meetings after the real meeting because people wouldn’t speak their mind at the right time.”

Anyone in a meeting should feel free to speak his or her mind, Dimon continued: “I once heard someone describe the importance of having ‘at least one truth-teller at the table.’ Well, if there is just one truth-teller at the table, you’re in trouble – everyone should be a truth-teller.”

Mark Parker

Nike
CEO

Mark Parker is charged with the formidable task of driving continual growth in a decades-old company that faces a soft retail environment and strong competitors like Under Armour and Adidas. A footwear designer who rose up the ranks to become Nike's third CEO in 2006, Parker earned a reputation as an inquisitive leader who pushes for innovation.

"If there is something truly out there and game changing and it's going to disrupt much of our current formula or approach, people can become quite uncomfortable, and that's a trap," Parker told the Wall Street Journal. "One of my biggest sources of angst is having people so comfortable with a formula that works that they are not challenging themselves or their ideas."

USA Today reported that employees in Nike's research lab say, "there's no telling when Parker will drop in and start reeling off questions." Parker said he likes to ask questions as a deliberate part of his leadership strategy and a way to support his employees' development. "I end up asking a lot of questions, so the team thinks things through," he told Fast Company.



LESSON

Push employees to do their best work without micromanaging them and give them room to explore new ideas.

Leadership in action

Banana Republic



Banana Republic, a clothing and accessories retailer owned by multinational corporation Gap Inc., operates more than 700 retail locations worldwide. Recognizing industry challenges, the company implemented a 'growth mindset' to encourage its leaders to take risks and better themselves within the evolving retail industry.

Banana Republic perceived that in order for its new growth mindset to be successful, it needed to equip its global leaders with the skills they would need—including mental toughness, stress management, resilience, and persistence—to drive the brand forward as the challenges continue to mount. We worked with them to facilitate workshops.

As momentum around the program grew, Banana Republic began to explore ways to reach additional leaders across regions. This culminated in a day-long workshop with 100 global district managers from North America, Japan, and Europe.

The programs played a key role in helping to move the company and brand in the right direction. In particular, the stress management and coping strategies introduced in the workshops have been especially appreciated by the company's leaders.

"This is an influential group of 100 people who indirectly have the responsibility for leading over 20,000 store employees around the world."

Become your own transformational leader

Customer centricity is a priority for strong leaders. Customer-centric leadership behavior serves as the catalyst for the wider organization to be engaged, excited, and motivated. Here are seven tips to help leaders move their customer-centric vision out of the clouds and into everyday business:

COMMUNICATE YOUR VISION for a customer-centric company as clearly and concretely as possible. Include prioritized actions and tangible measures. Also, make sure you consider the context of the wider organization, including other functions, service areas, and industries.

IDENTIFY YOUR TOP TALENT and turn them into champions. Understand their goals, involve them in the change process, and most importantly, listen to their advice.

COMMIT TO STOPPING or delegating one activity a week. Allow yourself "space" to focus on customer centricity. You can't move forward unless you let go of the past.

MAKE CUSTOMER CENTRICITY SUSTAINABLE. Weave customer-centric behavior into the annual business planning process, employee acquisition, performance management, and succession plans to ensure your investment and efforts stick.

DEFINE METRICS TO TRACK YOUR PROGRESS. These milestones and KPIs must be relevant to the customer's experience (NPS, CES, CSAT, etc.), and with the company's strategy (revenue targets, market share, customer churn, etc.).

SET EXPECTATIONS. Invite commitment. Measure progress. Provide feedback.

CELEBRATE AND COMMUNICATE. This goes for small wins as well as the large accomplishments. Progress on the journey should be rewarded.

ABOUT TTEC

TTEC (NASDAQ: TTEC) is a leading global provider of customer experience, engagement, growth and trust and safety solutions delivered through its proprietary end-to-end Humanify™ Customer Engagement as a Service offering. Founded in 1982, the Company helps its clients acquire, retain, and grow profitable customer relationships. Using customer-centric strategy, technology, processes and operations, TTEC partners with business leadership across marketing, sales and customer care to design and deliver a simple, more human customer experience across every interaction channel. TTEC's 49,500 employees live by a set of customer-focused values that guide relationships with clients, their customers, and each other. To learn more about how TTEC is bringing humanity to the customer experience, visit ttec.com.

