

**Editorial: *Enabling cultural transformation, empowering hearts and minds, without stopping making sense***



Asked at the beginning of the last year on CMO Moves (Adweek podcasts) about biggest challenges for marketing chiefs, culture appeared as the resounding theme (Palermo, 2022). In the same month the reputed David Liddle (2022) published in European Business Review an article about the enablers of a transformational culture, starting from the fact that “*Culture is the greatest asset, or the greatest liability, an organization has*”. Liddle underlined how he described a powerful organizational change model (see figure below) in his book (“Transformational Culture: Develop a people-centred organization for improved performance”, Kogan Page, 1st edition, September 28, 2021).

**The Transformational Culture Model™**

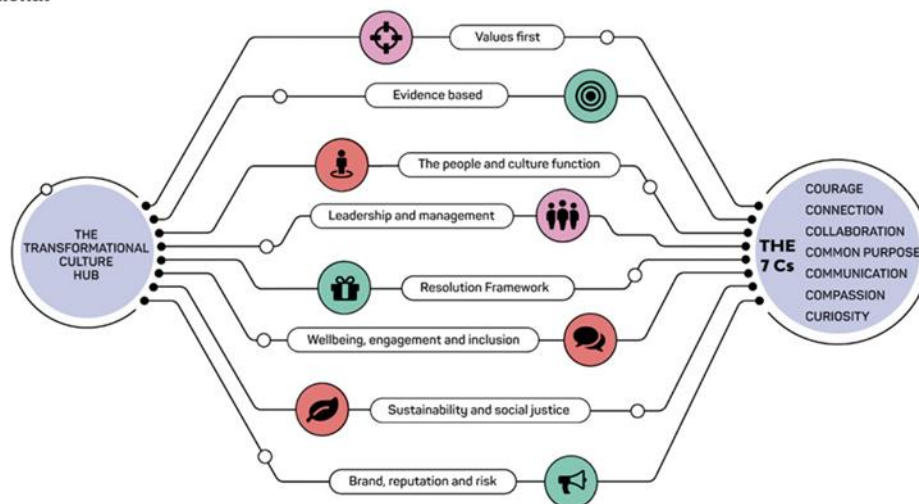


Figure no. 1: The Transformational Culture Model TM

Source: Liddle, D., 2022. The Eight Enablers of a Transformational Culture, European Business Review, January 10, 2022 (work cited)

More recently, Sharma and Arora (2023) stated: *“Given the speed of progress, it is more important than ever to consider culture’s dynamic nature and comprehend how forces at a global scale are changing the culture’s composition.”* While in the opinion of Taneja et al. (2023) *“Cultures are the beliefs of people and marketers should pay more attention to them when designing any product or any strategy to promote the product. Culture affects consumers’ lifestyles, so brands do focus on them to win their confidence that brands are well-versed with the demands of their customers and want a long-term relationship.”*

In November this year, the former FiveThirtyEight’s chief culture writer Walt Hickey (a Pulitzer Prize winner and data expert) and Vanessa Burke (a member of McKinsey Global Publishing) talked in a friendly and informal way about Hickey’s recently published book, *“You Are What You Watch: How Movies and TV Affect Everything”* (Hachette Book Group, October 2023), offering readers an interesting perspective (Hickey, 2023). Hickey expressed his belief that *“pop culture and film are absolutely critical elements of the global economy”*, film being, for instance, *“a really cool piece of technology”*, and *“an industry because of what it does for people... We are always informed by the movies around us and the things that we see and the ambitions that we have.”* On the other hand, it is well-known that Professor Tom Gunning (Art Department and the Cinema and Media Committee, University of Chicago) once wrote (within an overview of early film and how historians use it) that *“Every Hollywood film involved compromises between divergent viewpoints, often aimed at creating room for multiple interpretations”* (Gunning, n.d.). As in our lands, the discussions on the topic *“life beats the film”* (beyond the title of a film translated into Romanian) still continue, too.

In the current hypercompetitive work environment, according to Sayyadi and Provitera (2023), to achieve a thriving culture ensuring organizations’ long-term survival the only way is to develop the three-dimensional culture of trust (both mutual trust, and respect for the common good), collaboration (actively supporting employees), and learning (exploration and innovation), creating buy-in. In the recently expressed opinion of Deaver & Clawson (2023) culture can be differentiated by companies through a powerful combination of three things, timeless principles, brave leadership (considering both deep empathy and shared wisdom), and creativity (working creatively together), asking powerful questions to explore what is possible and getting energized by teams’ shared principles (the co-creative direction being given by the so-called Six Meta Principles), as well as empowering hearts and minds by letting the best ideas win.

As business operations were to a great degree impacted in 2023 by supply chain issues, geopolitical conflict, and AI transition, while consumers affected accordingly changed their wants, needs and expectations, Fenner (2023) recently recommended companies to keep up with the pace of consumers’ demand, ensuring customers’ engagement in authentic and valuable ways. What involves to pay attention to: loyalty becoming increasingly fluid due to customers’ budget management; their consumers’ need for short term wins; AI incorporation into a full business strategy answering customers’ needs not only in useful and useable ways, but also in

differentiated ways; the synergies of the human-machine combination, prioritizing workforce training and change management within their technologically driven transformation.

Coming back to loyalty, it is worth making reference to the signal recently given by Shaw (2023) with regard to one of today's biggest mistakes made today is confusing inertia (automatically and habitually buying) with loyalty (buying from the company on purpose, customers having an emotional relationship with it), most organizations having a way of measuring repeat business. And in order to distinguish between loyalty and inertia, Shaw recommended additional behavior measurement in addition to repeat business, separating then the loyal customers from the habitual customers.

And keeping-up with the above-mentioned pace of consumers' demand (including by considering change management within technologically driven transformation) we can say that is no doubt about the need of cultural proactiveness, but without stopping making sense. And when we say this, we are also taking into consideration the comment on the book *"The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity"* (Authors: Graeber, D., Wengrow, D., Publisher: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1st edition, November 9, 2021) made by Ian Morris (2022) from Stanford University, comment from which we will quote the last part of the conclusion (p. 14): *"It would be uplifting to think that whatever we dislike about our own age only persists because we have hitherto lacked the imagination and/or courage to put something better in its place. It would be empowering indeed for anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians to know that changing how our readers think about the distant past could change what the future will bring. But reality constantly intrudes. We do make our own history, but not in ways of our own choosing. To insist otherwise is to stop making sense."*

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