

# Leading Tech, Talent, & Transformation

LED BY:

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**Rapid technology advancements—such as the current evolution of artificial intelligence—require you to lead differently. They oblige you to transform. Unless you adapt, you risk outside disruption to how you create value, the morale of your workforce, and what differentiates you from your competitors.**

*“If you want to drive transformation, you need to leverage technology. But to do that, you better have your talent ready.”*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

## 01 TURN TECH POSITIVE

### Change the rhetoric on technological disruption

Your workforce will likely assume that AI, like most new technologies, threatens their roles, reputation, or influence. If leadership promotes the benefits of new technology as cost reduction or increased productivity, people will feel they are replaceable. They will feel powerless and plagued by uncertainty.

*“You have to believe that by destroying your current services and revenue, you're going to do more, capture more value for the client, and grow.”*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

Your role as a senior leader is to change the story people tell about transition. Show your leaders and associates how technology allows them to work faster with fewer errors, solve more problems, and become better at what they do. Showcase technology as a talent enabler—as a way for them and the company to become more competitive in the market.

## CASE STUDY

### Seek value

When evaluating AI projects, Tiger refused to consider proposals that focused solely on cost savings.

He guided his teams to prioritize value creation in areas like revenue, market share, and customer retention, which he believed offered greater potential.

He showed his teams that cost benefits naturally followed from projects that focused on growth opportunities.

## CASE STUDY

### Change daily

Tiger led the integration of Generative AI into Genpact's operation and services. He presented his strategy to the board in early 2023, including his intention to review the project with his team every week.

One of the directors – a professor in AI – cautioned that a weekly review would be too slow.

Tiger adapted and his AI team met every day for a 30-minute stand-up meeting. Tiger partly attributes Genpact's successful adoption of AI to his team's agility.

## Review frequently

The unprecedented pace of technological change demands a reduction in cycle times. If you currently review technology and strategy every month, can you reduce it to every week? If you review every week, can you reduce it to every day?

## Compete with human differentiators

As AI becomes ubiquitous, distinguishing between what is real and artificial will become increasingly difficult. Increased use of AI in customer interactions will lead to greater homogeneity as machines will provide similar outcomes if dealt with in similar ways.

*“Curiosity will take you to new places that the machine can't because there's no past pattern.”*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

Differentiate your company by emphasizing the uniquely human elements of relationships and curiosity. Customers will choose the options they trust.

## Become tech agnostic

Reduce pride in owning technology. Unless it's your core value proposition, proprietary technology will likely slow you down and reduce your ability to adapt. Evaluate options based on where you get the most value. Place more importance on your data and relationships with clients.

*“Technology is going to become a commodity. The few commodity winners will win big, and then everyone else will use that technology with their proprietary data.”*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

## MEMBER RECOMMENDATIONS

### Books

[The Coaching Habit](#) -  
Michael Bungay Stanier

[Leading with Questions](#) -  
Michael Marquardt & Bob  
Tiede

### Podcasts

[Acquired](#)

## Build a transformation pipeline

Break the transformation down into tiny chunks. Prioritize each project or activity based on your capacity and the resources you want to allocate. If something doesn't work, free up resources and reallocate them. Have a pipeline of activity constantly waiting to form part of your transformation priorities.

*"The notion of continuous transformation has now become real."*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

Allocate a permanent transformation team and somebody to lead them. Consider them an internal consultant responsible for updating the transformation portfolio and prioritizing resources toward its objectives.

## 02 PREPARE YOUR WORKFORCE

### Hire for learnability

Even if you embrace technology fully, you still need talent to use it, experiment, and create value. Hire people not for their skills, as those can be augmented, but for their ability to ask questions and learn.

*"We are in a world where the highest returns to individuals, businesses, and society will go to those who learn the fastest."*

- Tiger Tyagarajan



## CASE STUDY

### Challenge the obvious

Tiger used the following exercise with his teams to showcase the power of curiosity and questions in the meeting room:

Suggest to your teams that tomorrow, the sun will rise in the west. They are not allowed to disagree with you or criticize your opinion. Guide them to ask questions such as:

- Why do you think the sun will rise in the west?
- What information makes you say that?
- What do you know that we do not?

## Build psychological safety

Create a work environment where people are comfortable exposing themselves through questions. Pay special attention to those who ask many questions in one-on-one conversations but remain quiet during meetings. Are there group dynamics or something about your leadership that inhibits open curiosity?

Avoid rushing to an answer when leading meetings. While you may know where you want to go, allow flexibility to unearth unexpected ideas.

## Role model great questions

Even as the senior leader, don't hesitate to ask basic questions that reveal your ignorance. Show your teams how to be curious. Frequently ask 'why' with a sincere openness to letting the answer reshape your perspective.

*“You must be humble. Assume the person you ask probably knows more than you, and be willing to listen.”*

- Tiger Tyagarajan

Ask questions that help connect the dots rather than seeking an immediate outcome. A question with an obvious answer won't disrupt thinking. The best solution may lie behind multiple layers of questioning.

## Allow time for curiosity

Provide mandatory prereading to remove pitches and presentations from meetings. Use group time for discussion, debate, and brainstorming to drive a culture of curiosity.

## CASE STUDY

### Use your board

Tiger viewed the board as an extension of the leadership team. He viewed them as a resource of knowledge beyond governance and encouraged his senior leadership team to call on board members for guidance in their areas of expertise.

He tasked board members with the responsibility of pushing back if they felt overburdened. However, in 15 years, Tiger never had a board member tell him that they didn't have the time to help. Most valued having a chance to contribute.

## Stay ahead of your clients

Have your leadership team spend at least 20% of their time talking to their peer group at the top 2,000 companies in the world. What are they doing? What challenges do they face, and how do they approach them? How do they learn?

Invite outside guests—such as industry experts, radical thinkers, or client representatives—to your senior leadership meetings.

Encourage your team to have 'agendaless' conversations with external contacts, free from the pressure of selling or forming business partnerships.



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