

*Seven steps for a bulletproof transformation
in only 100 days.*

The 100-Day Transformation

By Fletcher McCombie



Strategic Business Transformation is often viewed as a major multimillion-dollar investment. It takes years to complete, crosses the entire organization, and often requires a centralized transformation management office to ensure success. But what if you had only 100 days to implement a transformation plan? What would you do in just three months to materially change your business, and what value gain could you prove in a single quarter?

The data are unambiguous: transformations drag on and on without producing results. Some studies suggest performance is half that originally planned, with timelines extending 70 percent longer or more. So, it's time to reframe transformation to focus on impact and value, and more importantly timeline.

Several options are likely swirling in your head on how to drive transformation in 100 days: trim scope, lower your investment amount, or better manage expectations — all low-hanging fruit that you would no doubt easily implement. But what should you do next after accomplishing those quick wins?

To deliver true business transformation in only 100 days, executives need to focus their efforts on seven key areas of the organization: people, technology, leadership, process, customers, risks, and value realization. Together, executives can move from years to months and create game-changing transformation. Start your 100-day transformation with these seven simple steps:

Step 1:

TELL YOUR TEAMS ABOUT THE CHANGE RIGHT NOW — OR BETTER YET, YESTERDAY

What you know: The 100-day transformation can't afford to wait for change management, can't risk the handoff to change managers who weren't involved from the start, and can't use hope as a method of planning to get the transformation to work for your people.

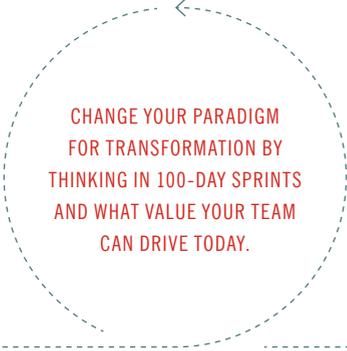
What you do: You tell your teams about the change right now, today. You communicate early and avoid any nondisclosure that would effectively gag the moves you need to make. You engage change management from the start, as there won't be time for a handoff. Change management coming in at the finish line is like deciding to fill up your gas tank on the last lap around the track — it just doesn't make sense.

Step 2:

IMMEDIATELY ESCALATE BLOCKERS WITH YOUR THIRD-PARTY TECHNOLOGY VENDORS

What you know: Technology vendors are notorious for overselling and under-delivering, but there are also vendors out there who truly "get" your business.

What you do: You are selective about your third-party partnerships, seeking only vendors that share your vision for speed and results. You demand rapid response times that are both articulated in the contract and built on a strong executive relationship. Before technology delays have an opportunity to derail your transformation, you immediately escalate blockers with your counterpart vendor executive, and you reap the benefits of having that relationship with a common understanding of supporting one another in this transformation.



CHANGE YOUR PARADIGM
FOR TRANSFORMATION BY
THINKING IN 100-DAY SPRINTS
AND WHAT VALUE YOUR TEAM
CAN DRIVE TODAY.



Step 3:

IDENTIFY AND ELEVATE LEADERS
WHO WORK WELL TOGETHER

What you know: Not everyone in the organization will be a champion of transformation, but those who are will need to bring others with them.

What you do: You put leaders in place who have experience and are hungry for career growth. Identify leaders who will work well together, get work done effectively, and understand both what your business does and challenge the status quo to create opportunity. These leaders are passionate, but also realistic, knowing that too many moves on the chessboard lead to confusion. You select these leaders and pull them in tight, ensuring that you remove any roadblocks and prioritize their overall effort because you don't have any time to spare, and these stars not being productive would be a waste of time and money.

Step 4:

CHANGE ONLY PROCESSES THAT
HAVE OUTSIZED IMPACT

What you know: You don't have time to touch all your processes, but when you do, you focus on simple and prioritized actions.

What you do: You are very cautious about tackling too many processes with too many process exceptions and equally cautious about vendors from the fourth industrial revolution that are offering a panacea with <insert miracle here>. You see process design as a way to drive common understanding across business teams, identifying the necessary handoffs and the technology that isn't just optimized for delivery but prioritized for largest value impact and largest importance to your customers. You take an evenhanded approach for operational efficiency and focus on revenue — because, at the end of the day, your customers are the ones paying the bills.

Step 5:

MAKE CUSTOMER PAIN POINTS
YOUR TOP PRIORITY

What you know: Transformations that focus on customer value produce sustainable results for growth, but that means you really need to understand your customer.

What you do: You understand the biggest pain points of customers and ensure that they are top of mind in every discussion. You ask: *How do we make it easy for our customers and partners to see us as more than just a transaction, more than just frictionless, and as a standout experience?* Encourage rapid prototyping, so you don't arrive at the end of your 100 days and suddenly have the wrong solution built for your customers.

Step 6:

IMMEDIATELY ADDRESS RISKS AS THEY ARISE

What you know: Risks don't age like fine wine. When they age, they're more similar to past-due milk.

What you do: You don't let risks or decisions sit. They are swarmed, mitigated, and immediately addressed so team members can get back to important, clearly, concisely defined imperatives. Your steering committee, if you have one, doesn't act like the "wait and see" team; they are an executive rapid solution team that is massively opportunistic, and ready and willing to create value. Your stakeholder engagement is empowered by your right hand, the TMO leader, who drives the tight functional cohesion across teams from executive to frontline execution.

Step 7:

BE RIGOROUS ABOUT VALUE AND LEADING INDICATORS

What you know: Outcomes are critical, more critical than just effort alone.

What you do: You optimize each minute you spend of the precious 100 days to ensure that teams are delivering value. You are rigorous about leading indicators and expect self-funding transformation that won't just end after a few months but proves the planned value and creates momentum. These metrics are a mix of growth, operational efficiency, customer experience, employee experience, return on investment, and the creation of net new capabilities. Your performance indicators are shared widely, are publicly available, and drive action.

When you first started reading this article you probably wondered if it was possible to transform in 100 days, thinking to yourself: *How is it possible to transform that quickly?* Yet, as you read through these seven steps, you may have started to realize the real possibility of enacting each of these recommendations.

And if you would do this in 100 days, why wouldn't you enact these steps for a longer transformation? Why assume that your massive investments should be treated any differently? Change your paradigm for transformation by thinking in 100-day sprints and considering what value your team can drive today. ✈

Fletcher McCombie

fletcher.mccombie@jabian.com