

Leading in the Cloud: Embarking on a New Transformation at a Global Enterprise Software Company



Over the last several years, a global enterprise software company has been navigating difficult market shifts and business model disruptions. Customers have changed preferences for how they want to buy, manage, and use software – shifting from traditional license models to SaaS or transaction/consumption based models, and from on-premise to cloud. These are fundamental transformations that require new ways of thinking, working, and leading.

New Business, New Challenges, New Strategy

This software company has a particular challenge given its legacy, size and historical success. While Wall Street looks favorably upon many fast growing start-ups who are investing for growth with no profit, companies transitioning to the cloud are often expected to compete with those new entrants while maintaining profitability. The pressure is to do two things in parallel: protect the core business while driving growth in the cloud.

In response to these market shifts, the company has embarked on a new strategy to transform the business – and recognized that it wasn't just about products and processes. The change would succeed or fail based on employees' ability to execute, and that was driven by the leaders. The leaders needed to develop new capabilities, behaviors, and ultimately shift the DNA and culture of the company.

Transforming How Leaders Lead and Live the Strategy, at All Levels

For this reason, the software company partnered with BTS to design a comprehensive roadmap to deeply engage leaders in the change and the implications to them as leaders of people and the business. The roadmap focused on four key themes, identified as critical to making the transition:

1. Simplicity
2. Customer success
3. Developing talent
4. Accelerating business performance

The initiative spanned all levels of leaders in the company, from top executives to the mid-level, front line, and even future leaders. It used specific roadmaps tailored to what “great” leadership needs to look like at each role, along with common “red threads” that spanned all roles.

A Roadmap for Change

All the roadmaps were designed and implemented to ensure:

- **A clear path for leaders:** For every leader level, the roadmap outlined a clear path for leaders based on the company’s journey through the transition as well as a leader’s evolution in his or her role – from transitioning into the position, to building experience, performing, and ultimately building excellence.
- **A focus on deep mindset and behavior change:** To really pivot the company to its future state, leaders need to let go of, or “unlearn,” a lot of old behaviors and mindsets, and adopt new ones. The designed experiences focused on immersing leaders in this change and allowing them to explore, in a safe environment, these new ways of leading and making decisions.
- **A holistic approach:** The roadmaps focused on *all* of the experiences leaders need, not just classic classroom learning. This includes elements like on-the-job experiences, virtual learning, tools, and coaching in addition to powerful in-person interventions.

Driving Results

The company’s transformation, and its journey with BTS, are by no means complete – this is a change over the course of many years. At this time, one major phase of the roadmap is nearing completion and results are extremely positive, with the performance of the cloud business exceeding expectations while employee engagement and trust in leaders have increased.

The company and BTS will now embark next on the second major phase of the roadmap, engaging with leaders on themes critical to this midpoint in the transition.

About BTS

BTS focuses on the people side of strategy, working with leaders at all levels to help them make better decisions, convert those decisions to actions and deliver results. At our core, we believe people learn best by doing. For 30 years, we’ve been designing fun, powerful experiences™ that have profound and lasting impact on people and their careers. We inspire new ways of thinking, build critical capabilities and unleash business success. It’s strategy made personal.

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