# Executive Leadership Masterclass: Leading National and Enterprise Transformation Course

4 – 15 January 2027
London (UK)



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## Introduction:

Executive leadership masterclass training on leading national and enterprise transformation covers how senior leaders set direction, mobilise coalitions and make high-stakes decisions so that a whole organisation or public system changes how it works. This 2-week course serves chief executives, board members, heads of government entities and state-owned enterprises, transformation directors and rising senior leaders; each delegate leaves with a Transformation Leadership Case and Personal Leadership Plan. It is taught at executive, conceptual level through documented cases and a simulated board session, drawing on adaptive leadership, a Harvard Kennedy School model separating technical problems from those requiring learning.

## Course Objectives:

- Distinguish adaptive challenges from technical problems and apply the right leadership response to each in a live transformation
- Compare authority with leadership and select the coalition members, sponsors and champions able to carry change at scale
- Interpret the signs of cognitive bias in executive decisions and apply pre-mortem, red team and decision rights tools to reduce it
- Apply culture, talent and succession levers to sustain a transformation beyond the first wave of results
- Distinguish crisis leadership from crisis management and justify decisions to boards, top teams, political stakeholders and media
- Justify a Transformation Leadership Case and a Personal Leadership Plan before a simulated board under challenge

## Target Audience:

- Chief executives and C-suite members accountable for enterprise results, deciding when and how far to transform the organisation
- Board members of companies, government entities and state-owned enterprises, judging whether a transformation and its leaders deserve support
- Heads of government entities and state-owned enterprises leading public system change, choosing how to balance reform pace with service stability
- Transformation and strategy directors who run change portfolios, deciding which coalition, culture and talent moves to put before the top team
- Senior leaders and high-potential executives preparing for top roles, judging which leadership habits to build before taking a larger mandate



## Course Outline:

### Day 1: Foundations: Transformation, Complexity and the Executive Role

- Transformation vs Incremental Change: Discontinuous Shifts in Purpose, Model and Capability
- Adaptive vs Technical Challenges: Problems Expertise Solves Compared With Problems Requiring Learning
- Cynefin Framework: Clear, Complicated, Complex and Chaotic Domains for Executive Judgement
- Systems Thinking for Leaders: Feedback Loops, Delays and Unintended Consequences at Scale
- Why Transformation Efforts Fail: Recurring Executive Errors Identified in Kotter's Research

### Day 2: Frameworks: Adaptive Leadership, Kotter's Eight Steps and the Dual Operating System

- Adaptive Leadership Practices: Getting on the Balcony and Regulating Organisational Distress
- Kotter's Eight Steps: Urgency, Guiding Coalition, Vision and Anchoring Change in Culture
- Hierarchy vs Network: Kotter's Dual Operating System for Speed Alongside Stability
- Authority vs Leadership: Formal Power Compared With Mobilising People Around Hard Problems
- Holding Steady Under Pressure: Containing Conflict and Giving the Work Back to Teams

### Day 3: Setting Direction and Building Guiding Coalitions for Change at Scale

- Transformation Narrative: Case for Change, Destination Picture and Non-Negotiable Choices
- Guiding Coalition Design: Selecting Members by Position Power, Expertise and Credibility
- Sponsor vs Champion: Executive Accountability Compared With Distributed Change Leadership Roles
- Power and Influence Map: Allies, Blockers, Undecided Groups and Hidden Veto Holders
- Short-Term Wins Portfolio: Visible Early Results That Build Momentum and Credibility

### Day 4: Decision Tools: Executive Judgement, Cognitive Bias and Choices Under Pressure

- Cognitive Bias in Executive Decisions: Overconfidence, Anchoring, Sunk Cost and Groupthink
- Pre-Mortem Review: Imagining Failure in Advance to Expose Hidden Plan Weaknesses
- Reversible vs Irreversible Decisions: Matching Speed and Evidence to the Stakes Involved
- Decision Rights Matrix: Clarifying Who Recommends, Agrees, Decides and Executes Each Choice
- Red Team Challenge: Structured Dissent That Tests Assumptions Before Executive Commitment

### Day 5: Case Study: Week-One Integration on Documented Large-Scale Transformations

- Microsoft Culture Shift Case: From Know-It-All to Learn-It-All Under New Leadership
- IBM Turnaround Case: Reintegrating a Fragmenting Enterprise Around Customer Solutions
- Enterprise vs Public-Sector Transformation: Mandate, Accountability and Time Horizons Compared
- Case Coalition Diagnosis: Judging Whether the Leadership Team Could Carry the Change
- Week-One Leadership Log: Draft Inputs for the Transformation Leadership Case



## Day 6: Advanced Topics: Culture, Talent and Succession for Transformation

- Culture vs Climate: Deep Shared Assumptions Compared With Day-to-Day Working Experience
- Culture Shaping Levers: Leader Behaviour, Rituals, Symbols, Stories and Reward Systems
- Critical Role Mapping: Identifying the Positions That Make or Break a Transformation
- Succession Slate Design: Ready-Now and Ready-Later Successors for Top Leadership Roles
- Talent Redeployment for Transformation: Moving Scarce Leaders Onto Priority Initiatives

## Day 7: Risk and Governance of Leadership: Crisis Leadership, Ethics and Trust

- Crisis Leadership vs Crisis Management: Meaning-Making Compared With Operational Response Coordination
- Crisis Leadership Team Rhythm: Briefing Cycles, Decision Logs and Escalation Thresholds
- After-Action Review: Structured Learning From Crises and Transformation Setbacks
- Ethical Dilemma Analysis: Weighing Duties, Consequences and Integrity in Executive Choices
- Trust Repair After Failure: Acknowledgement, Accountability and Visible Corrective Action

## Day 8: Stakeholders: Boards, Top Teams, Political Navigation and Strategic Communication

- Board vs Executive Roles in Transformation: Oversight, Challenge and Delivery Accountability
- Top Team Effectiveness: Shared Agenda, Collective Accountability and Productive Conflict Norms
- Political Navigation: Working With Ministers, Regulators, Unions and Shareholders Across Interests
- Media Engagement Under Scrutiny: Message Discipline, Spokesperson Roles and Interview Preparation
- Executive Presence: Gravitas, Storytelling and Adapting Messages to Senior Audiences

## Day 9: Measurement: Transformation Health, Leadership Impact and Legacy

- Leading vs Lagging Indicators: Early Signals Compared With Final Transformation Results
- Benefits Realisation Tracking: Linking Initiatives to Measured Financial and Public Value
- Transformation Health Check: Pace, Energy, Adoption and Leadership Alignment Signals
- Leadership 360 Feedback: Multi-Rater Evidence on Executive Behaviour and Its Impact
- Institutionalising Change: Embedding Results So They Outlast the Current Leadership Team

## Day 10: Simulation: Board Defence of the Transformation Leadership Case

- Personal Leadership Plan: Applying Adaptive Leadership and Bias Insights to Own Role
- Transformation Leadership Case Pack: Applying Coalition, Culture and Talent Analysis
- Simulated Board Session: Applying Decision Rights and Crisis Questions Under Challenge
- Board Approval vs Conditional Approval: Recording Verdicts, Conditions and Follow-Up Actions
- Transformation Leadership Case: Final Assembly, Board Defence and Peer Challenge



## Skills You Will Gain:

- Adaptive Leadership
- Systems Thinking
- Guiding Coalition Design
- Executive Decision Quality
- Crisis Leadership
- Succession Planning
- Stakeholder and Political Navigation
- Executive Presence

## Why Attend This Course:

- From treating every transformation problem as a technical fix to recognising when people must learn and change before results follow
- From relying on positional authority to building guiding coalitions that carry change across units, sectors and political interests
- From making high-stakes calls on instinct to using pre-mortems, red teams and clear decision rights to test judgement under pressure
- From an untested change idea to a Transformation Leadership Case and Personal Leadership Plan defended before a simulated board

## Conclusion:

Leading transformation at national or enterprise scale means holding a large system steady while asking it to learn new ways of working, and doing so in public, under scrutiny and with incomplete information. The course makes three distinctions clear: adaptive challenges versus technical ones, authority versus leadership, and crisis leadership versus crisis management. It suits executives already accountable for, or about to inherit, a major transformation who need judgement and coalition-building rather than another change toolkit, and who want to test their own leadership case before a demanding board.

## Frequently Asked Questions FAQ:

### What should delegates bring to an executive leadership course on national and enterprise transformation?

Delegates should bring a real or anticipated transformation they lead, sponsor or oversee, with enough context to discuss its stakeholders, culture and top team. Senior management experience is expected; no technical preparation or prior framework knowledge is required before the first day.



## How does this executive leadership transformation course differ from a change management or strategic planning course?

It focuses on the leader rather than the plan or the change process. Change management courses teach methods for moving people through a defined change, and strategic planning courses teach how to set objectives; this course addresses executive judgement, coalitions, culture, crisis and board leadership during transformation.

## Why do large-scale transformations often fail even when the executive leadership strategy is sound?

Most fail because leaders treat adaptive challenges as technical ones, declare victory early, or never build a strong enough guiding coalition. Culture, talent and political resistance then reverse early gains, which is why the course gives these leadership issues more weight than plan design.

## What do delegates take back to work from the executive leadership transformation course?

Delegates take back a Transformation Leadership Case defended before a simulated board, a Personal Leadership Plan, a coalition and influence map, and a set of decision tools such as pre-mortems and decision rights matrices that apply directly to their own transformation.

