Karl Johnson

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organizational EFFECTIVENESS leader

Business transformation expert with extensive experience leading high-performing teams to execute organizational design, M&A integration, change management, culture, team effectiveness, leadership development, and strategic workforce planning initiatives. Trusted advisor and partner to boards, C-suite, business leaders, and HR partners, aligning short- and long-term strategies while identifying, analyzing, and addressing organizational gaps. People-focused leader balancing creativity with business acumen to collaborate effectively on cross-functional teams.

Team Leadership | Organizational Design | Change Management | M+A Integration | Culture | Team Effectiveness | Workforce Planning | Management Consulting | Operating Models | Agile | Data Analytics | Systems Thinking | Vendor Management

Professional Experience

Mars – McLean, VA

**Global Director, Strategic Capabilities Practice** | 02/2023 – 05/2025

Led internal COE of 9 organizational effectiveness consultants and 1 data analyst and managed third-party vendors in executing portfolio of transformation efforts for global CPG, Snacking, Food, and Petcare firm with $70B in annual revenue.

* Led analysis/redesign of commercial excellence operating model across marketing, sales, and customer service to establish franchise model for retail stores offering consumer experiences and products tied to one of Mars' $1B brands.
* Oversaw organizational design, workflow redesign, governance structure, and change management required to transition into and sustain global product-based operating model across 10 global product teams spanning 4 regions.
* Managed operating model/organizational design required to reconcile redundancies, inefficiencies, and unclear governance of digital initiatives resulting from siloed digital technology and digital commerce groups.
* Established signature strategic workforce analysis and planning procedure to inform 3-year integrated value capture process (IVCP) and annual business planning processes for 4 business units, with independent study by McKinsey estimating impact of $280M in value capture over next 7 years.

Cargill – Minneapolis, MN

**Director, Organizational Development** | 10/2019 – 02/2023

Oversaw COE of 16 internal organizational effectiveness and change management consultants and managed third-party vendors in executing sustained outcomes from portfolio of global Transformation Management Office (TMO) programs and M&As for Commodity Trading, Risk Management, Logistics, Bioindustrial, Food, and Agribusiness firm with $170B annual revenue.

* Led operating model/organizational design and change management of global customer service and sales support function for Cargill’s Agriculture Supply Chain business, spanning 50+ countries and affecting 4,400 employees.
* Introduced, trained, and led regional teams to adopt Agile and UX practices to improve and simplify digital experiences of customers/suppliers, leading to launch of 4 new digital products worldwide in 4 months.
* Oversaw operating model/organizational design, change management, process/workflow development, talent fulfillment, stand up, and sustainment of new centralized data function. Led subsequent integration into IT group, including workflow design, decision rights shifts, and frameworks/governance, enabling execution of project- and product-driven approaches.
* Directed global organizational design and change management to align $35B Bioindustrial business with annual and long-term goals, including centralized oversight of EMEA, APAC, NA, and LATAM regional change management teams.
* Provided operating model/organizational design, change management, process/workflow development, and sustainment for 11 global initiatives targeting plant managers, line managers and employees across 40+ food processing plants.
* Advised early-stage seafood business by creating and applying a strategic alliance and joint venture (JV) playbook covering opportunity assessment, partnership models, establishing appropriate governance, and managing performance and risk.
* Managed integration planning for 4 acquisitions, developing M&A playbook to guide leadership and HR in culture assessment, organizational design, location strategy, and change management from due diligence to post-close.
* Created and deployed playbook to shift organizational culture for Animal Nutrition and Health business’ leadership team and 20K employees, aligning mindsets, language, behaviors, processes, and performance measures with future-focused vision.
* Conducted external research across 17 corporations to author “Demystifying Digital Transformation,” which was published in the Cutter Technology Business Journal.

Professional Experience (continued)

Syngenta – Minneapolis, MN

**Regional Director, People & Organizational Development** | 10/2016 – 04/2019

Directed COE for organizational design, talent review, succession planning, leadership development, and DEI in global Science & Biotechnology company with $14B in annual revenue. Managed 1 learning and development specialist and 1 HR coordinator.

* Launched marketing “war room” to deliver data analytics and customer insights to drive market share within region, leading organizational design, governance, process/workflow development, and change management.
* Managed operating model/organizational design, governance, process/workflow development, and change management across sales, customer service, supply chain, R&D, marketing, and related groups during restructuring of seed sales organization from 3 large geographies into smaller “agricore zones.”
* Designed and deployed regional “strategy to capabilities” approach to workforce planning adopted as global process.

THE LEADERSHIP CIRCLE – Salt Lake City, UT

**Senior Vice President, Leadership & Organizational Development** | 08/2015 – 09/2016

Established organizational effectiveness practice group within global consulting firm.

* Led organizational design, process/workflow development, change management, and executive coaching at Pixar following Disney’s acquisition, maintaining Pixar’s culture of innovation while doubling movie production capacity.
* Managed multiple employee workstreams to design and implement new HR organization for Baxalta (divestiture of Baxter Healthcare with 15K employees acquired by Shire and, in turn, acquired by Takeda) as resource for David Ulrich and Norm Smallwood’s RBL Group consulting firm.
* Oversaw internal teams in creating new organizational values and culture in support of Caribou Coffee’s acquisition and integration of Einstein Bagels.

University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management – Minneapolis, MN

**Assistant Dean, Executive Development Center** | 10/2008 – 08/2015

EDUCATION

**Master of Business Administration (MBA)** | University of Phoenix – San Francisco, CA

**Bachelor of Arts (BA), Art & Art History** | Rice University – Houston, Texas

TRAINING / CERTIFICATIONS

Change Management | Agile Change | Change & Transformation | Immunity to Change | Real-time Strategic Change | Polarity Management | Leadership Circle 360 Profile Assessment | Leadership System & Culture Survey | Team Effectiveness

PUBLICATION

**Johnson, K.**, Meyer, J., & Ray, S. (2020). Demystifying digital transformation: Start with the digital mindsets of leaders. Cutter Business Technology Journal, 33(12). 28-31

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

The Conference Board

* Council Member, Future Workforce Strategy & Planning | 01/2025 – Present
* Speaker, “Leveraging a Honeycomb Model to Transform Mars’ Food & Nutrition Business” – Change, Transformation & Organization Design Conference | 05/2024
* Panel Member, “Simplifying Change: Emerging Tools & Techniques” – Change, Transformation & Organization Design Conference | 05/2023