



# A survey report on the quality of transformation

2 Q 2020

# IN A NUTSHELL

Transformation and New Work are at the center of attention. But are we on the right path to drive this important change in the right way?

In a study with over 250 participants, we investigated this question from three perspectives:

- Internal perspective: HR & (Transformation) Managers
- External perspective: Transformation Consultants
- Leadership perspective: C-Level

## The conclusion:

Those who want to drive transformation with ambition cannot be satisfied with the results.

Only about half of the respondents believe that managers are acting as role models to drive transformation.

The C-Level assesses the quality of transformation more optimistic than that the other groups.

Implications for action clearly arise at three levels:

1. Focus on leaders as role models
2. Provide more clarity and orientation
3. Foster the development of skills to cope with the new challenges

These are three of the four building blocks of organisational change according to the McKinsey Influence Model (2016).

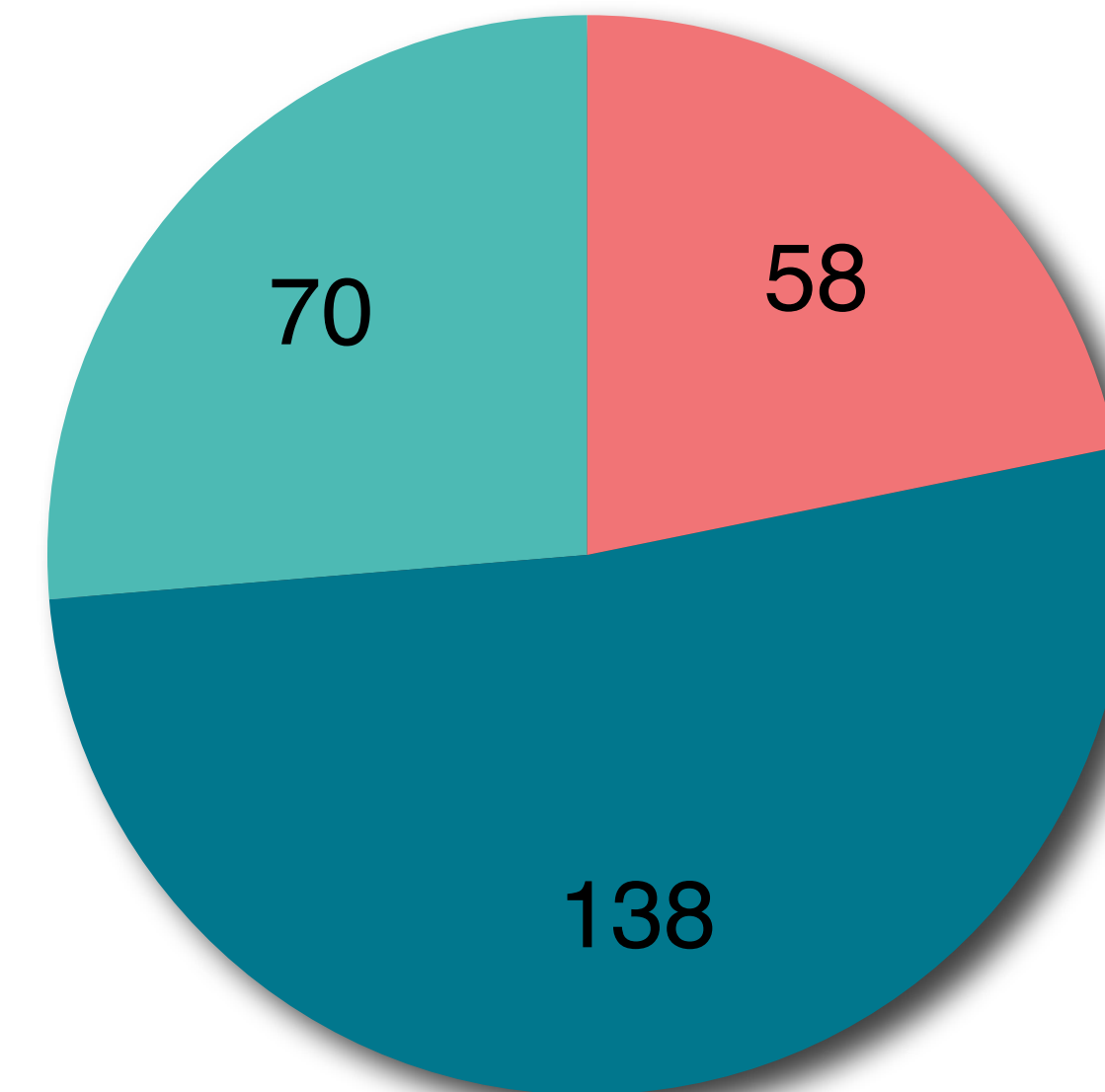
Good news: All of them can be influenced by a strategically designed change process.

# THE PARTICIPANTS

266 participants took part in the study.

From three different groups:

- Leadership perspective: CEO or C-Level
- External perspective: Consultants
- Internal perspective: Employees involved in transformation internally (e.g. as HR or transformation manager)





# IT'S GOING OK-ISH

Couldn't be better

The average rating

It's going  
really badly

The change processes in companies receive a mediocre rating. The average rating was a 6,3 on a 10-point scale.

The good news is: Many participants believe that employees are generally willing and motivated to participate in the changes to come and that the participation is indeed welcome.

The question is: What's good enough?  
If it were true - as research suggests - that up to 70% of all transformation initiatives fail, only those rated 8 or higher will succeed.  
Scott Keller (2019). Beyond Performance.

# DO MANAGERS ACT AS ROLE MODELS?

## THE VERDICT: 50/50



Glass half empty or half full?

50% of the participants of our study clearly stated that they perceive managers as role models driving transformation.

28% of our participants viewing transformation from the inside, clearly say 'no' when asked if the managers act as role models.

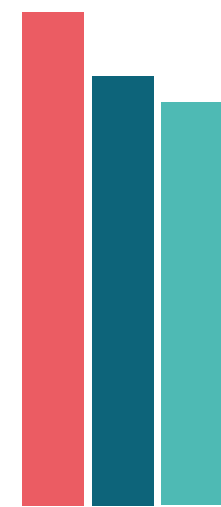
Role Modeling is one of the four building blocks of change.\*

How managers act has a particularly great influence.

\* McKinsey's Influence Model. (2016)

# CEO'S ARE MORE OPTIMISTIC THAN OTHERS

The different groups of participants showed slightly different tendencies. One stood out: CEOs view the change process in a more optimistic way.



CEOs rate their transformation processes with an average of 7,1 compared to consultants with a 5,8.



When it comes to leadership, 68% of CEOs state 'Yes' when asked if their managers act as role models compared to only 42% of those viewing the transformation from within the company.

Do CEOs have a more or a less complete picture of the change process?  
Should they take a closer look?

# WE NEED MORE SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE & CLARITY

Maybe,  
Rather not.  
No.

Definitely.  
Yes, I think so.



70% Yes to knowledge and skills  
64% Yes to clarity

Two thirds  
of all participants  
responded with an unequivocal 'yes'  
when asked if more knowledge,  
skills & clarity are needed.

According to the Influence Model<sup>\*</sup>,  
Understanding (here called clarity) and  
New Skills are two of the four building blocks  
of organisational change.

<sup>\*</sup> McKinsey (2016)



# THE NEW SKILLS NEEDED

## TOP THREE

- 1 New methods & organisational design
- 2 Virtual Collaboration
- 3 Technologies & Leadership

2/3 of everyone who saw a need for additional training named new methods like design thinking or agility and/or organisational design as topics needed. 58% named virtual collaboration and about 47% specified new technologies and leadership.

*It's a tie*

Also interesting:  
Even though, they didn't make the top 3, topics like resilience, trust and empathy were still named by about 30% of all the participants who see a need for training



# AND MORE CLARITY IS NEEDED ON...

Where is the company headed?

Named by 75%  
of all participants  
who see a need for clarity

What exactly are the expectations on the employees?

Named by 52%

Leadership is supposed to be different, but how exactly?

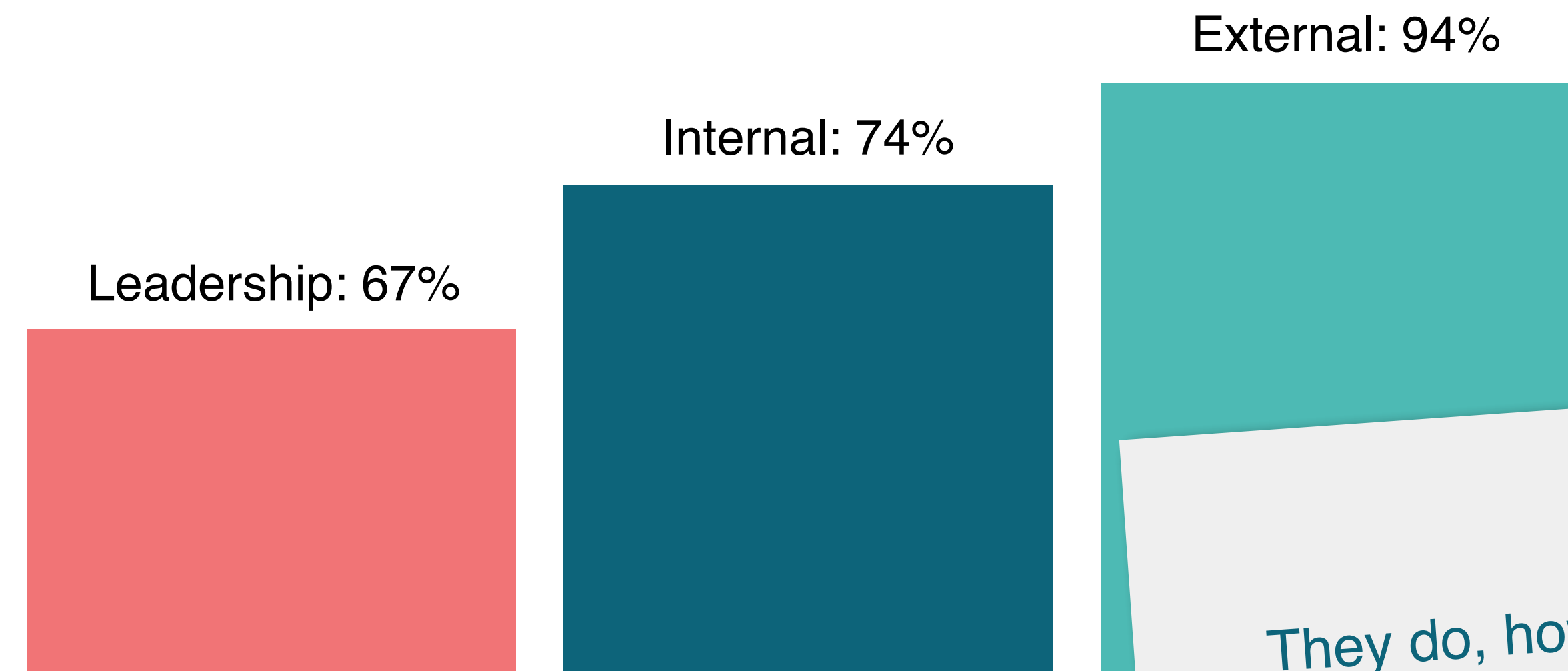
Named by 49%

In line with the belief that their managers are good role models, for CEOs 'clarity on leadership' does not make the top 3 but falls on position no.5, while it's no. 2 for those viewing transformation from within the company.

# AND YES, INSECURITY PLAYS A ROLE

Insecurity plays a role. The question is: How much.

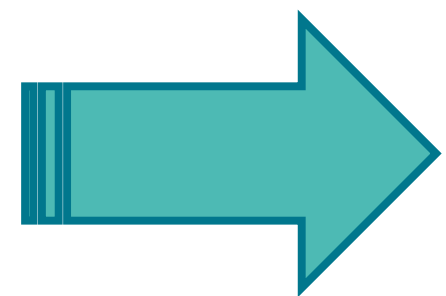
The participant groups differed greatly in the degree they see insecurity as an influencing factor during the transformation.



They do, however, all agree on what the biggest question is:  
What exactly should I/we do?

# Make your transformation more successful by supporting your leaders

- Help them to become role models
- Build skills for a digital world
- Increase clarity



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**About the study**

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