

From Management Crisis to Business Recovery

A 2021–2023 transformation that began as a response to a deepening management crisis and was later rebuilt under wartime conditions. The engagement stabilized leadership, protected critical client revenue, improved profitability, and helped the company adapt to a radically changed operating environment.

CLIENT	SCALE	GEOGRAPHY	MY ROLE
Digital transformation consultancy & engineering firm serving Fortune 500 and global technology clients	International, boutique business 8-figure revenue, USD	USA, Western & Eastern Europe	Operating Partner reporting to shareholders

I was brought in by the company’s major shareholder in early 2021 to address a worsening management crisis. Revenue was declining, clients were leaving, and leadership lacked the alignment and capability required to reverse the trend. Less than a year later, the Ukraine-Russia war fundamentally changed the operating environment. The transformation roadmap had to be rebuilt, leadership assumptions revisited, and critical interventions accelerated under conditions no one had planned for.

The Transformation System

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Crisis Diagnostic & Adaptive Transformation Roadmap

CHALLENGE

By H1 2021, the company was in active management crisis. Revenues were declining, client retention was deteriorating, and the leadership team lacked both the alignment and the capability to arrest the decline. The shareholders had visibility into the symptoms but not the root causes, and no structured plan for how to respond. When the Ukraine-Russia war broke out in early 2022, it rendered the original transformation roadmap insufficient. The operating environment, the risk profile, and the demands on the leadership team changed overnight — requiring the diagnostic work to be revisited and the entire plan to be rebuilt under crisis conditions.

SOLUTION

- Conducted a comprehensive analysis of organizational processes, financial metrics, and operational performance across all geographies and functions.
- Performed a structured assessment of the C-level and senior management team, evaluating capability, strategic alignment, and fit for the transformation ahead.
- Delivered a detailed diagnostic report to the two major shareholders: root cause conclusions, prioritized recommendations, and a phased transformation roadmap.
- Defined key financial and operational metrics for each department, establishing the measurement infrastructure required for operational transparency and transformation progress visibility.
- Designed and facilitated a regular C-level meeting cadence - both internal and with shareholders - sustaining strategic and operational alignment throughout the first six months of the transformation.
- When the war began, revised the roadmap in full: reassessing priorities, accelerating critical interventions, and reconsidering leadership team composition in light of the new operating reality.

BUSINESS RESULT

2

Transformation roadmaps delivered

6 months

C-level governance cadence designed and facilitated

2 years

sustained delivery across management crisis and war conditions

For the first time, shareholders received a structured view of what was driving decline. The company stopped reacting to isolated symptoms and started making decisions based on a common diagnosis.

The ability to revise the roadmap rapidly when the war began, rather than attempt to execute a plan designed for different conditions, was itself a critical outcome. It meant every subsequent intervention was calibrated to the actual environment, not the one that had been anticipated.

WHAT CHANGED

The company moved from crisis response to disciplined transformation management. When the operating environment changed dramatically, the transformation adapted instead of stalling.

Organization Design & Leadership Restructuring

CHALLENGE

The diagnostic confirmed that the management crisis had structural roots: role boundaries were unclear, accountability was diffuse, and several key leadership positions were held by people who were misaligned with the company's strategic direction, contributing directly to the revenue decline and client attrition.

The war significantly intensified this challenge. The original assessment of which leaders could carry the transformation had to be reconsidered entirely: the demands of operating through active geopolitical disruption required a different kind of leadership than the pre-war roadmap had anticipated. The composition of the top team had to be rebuilt again.

SOLUTION

- Redesigned roles, responsibilities, and reporting lines across the organization using a RACI matrix, establishing clear ownership and decision rights at every level.
- Introduced, changed, and removed roles based on both the original diagnostic findings and the revised requirements that emerged after the war began.
- Replaced 4 of 7 key roles with new talent, selected specifically for alignment with the company's strategic goals, the revised transformation roadmap, and the demands of operating through sustained disruption.

BUSINESS RESULT

4 of 7

key roles replaced with strategically aligned talent

RACI

matrix implemented across all functions

↑ eNPS

employee satisfaction improved despite scale of change

↑ CSAT

recovered alongside leadership rebuild

Replacing more than half of the key leadership positions, including the CEO role - first as a response to internal management crisis, then revised further when the war changed what was needed - was a high-stakes intervention at the most sensitive moment in the company's recent history.

The result was a leadership team that was built for the conditions the company actually faced, not the ones it had planned for. Despite strong organizational turbulence, intensified by the war, eNPS and CSAT both improved, indicating that the new leadership structure created stability rather than disruption.

WHAT CHANGED

The organization moved from a leadership structure shaped by historical tenure and informal relationships to one designed around the demands of transformation and crisis resilience. Accountability became explicit, decision-making became faster, and the company had a team that was aligned to where it needed to go.

Compensation Architecture & Equity Redesign

CHALLENGE

The compensation model reflected a different stage of the company's history. Incentives were weakly connected to business outcomes, equity was not being used as an alignment tool, and ownership ambiguity created friction.

In a context where the right leaders were essential to survival and recovery, the compensation architecture was not designed to keep them.

SOLUTION

- Designed and formalized individual and team compensation structures for C-level leadership with direct linkage between pay, performance, and the strategic outcomes defined in the transformation roadmap.
- Ensured compensation design was coherent with the new organizational structure from Stream 02: accountability, expectations, and pay were aligned end-to-end.
- Introduced equity as a retention and alignment tool for key C-level roles, ensuring that senior leaders had a meaningful stake in the company's recovery and long-term performance. Restructured the Cap Table to reflect the new ownership and incentive reality.

BUSINESS RESULT

+25% EBITDA increase in 2022-23	-12% OPEX reduction	C-level equity introduced and Cap Table restructured	70% of company revenue protected through retained major clients
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The rebuilt leadership team gained a direct stake in the company's recovery. Clearer incentives, stronger ownership alignment, and greater accountability contributed to measurable financial improvement despite ongoing wartime disruption.

WHAT CHANGED

Compensation moved from a legacy structure that predated the crisis to a forward-looking architecture designed for the company's current scale, the demands of the transformation, and the realities of operating through sustained disruption. C-level leaders moved from fixed pay to equity-aligned incentives with their financial outcomes tied to the same outcomes the company needed to achieve.

What This Work Created

This engagement began as a response to internal management crisis and had to adapt, in real time, to one of the most disruptive geopolitical events in recent European history. The critical success factor of achieving the outcomes was in building and maintaining a structured but flexible approach through conditions that continued to evolve.

Business Impact

The integrated business effect of the transformation streams

- **Revenue decline reversed and key client relationships stabilized** – the core crisis that triggered the engagement
- **EBITDA increased by 25%** in 2022-2023, during active war disruption
- **OPEX reduced by 12%** through structural and operational redesign
- **4 of 7 key roles rebuilt, including CEO**, with leadership composition revised twice to match evolving conditions
- **eNPS and CSAT both improved** - stabilization confirmed by both employees and clients

What Changed

The company entered the engagement in management crisis: declining revenue, client losses, leadership dysfunction, and growing uncertainty. It emerged with rebuilt leadership, a redesigned structure, clear responsibilities and aligned compensation, transparent processes, and a retained client base. The Ukraine-Russia war tested every assumption the transformation had been built on. What held was the discipline to diagnose honestly, adapt quickly, and execute through conditions that demanded both.