

future- proofing

creating an innovation
culture with massive
transformative purpose



introduction

Whether we notice it or not, we live in an exponential, innovative age— a time when anything is possible or pretty close to it. From biotechnology to artificial intelligence, powerful technologies once limited to large organizations and governments are now accessible and affordable to individuals and smaller companies. Many things once private, expensive, or tangible are now available digitally, often costing less than a cup of coffee. When paired with intelligent, intuitive thinking, you can cultivate a culture of innovation and turn what was once considered impossible into reality. Many leaders focus on building a company and hope the culture will follow, but to survive during uncertain times and thrive amid disruption, you need a strong purpose to unify and drive innovation.

Thanks to the increased demand, digitization, and democratization of exponential technologies, anyone within an organization can drive

large-scale innovation. The quickly changing landscape provides external motivation for companies to stay ahead of change or fall behind, but what makes space for this type of big thinking?

True innovation takes time and dedicated resources to cultivate. Within organizations, these innovation efforts tend to fail as the focus of leadership and employees ultimately shifts back to driving success in the present rather than the future. However, innovation thrives in companies where leadership and employees buy into a true north star. Without a massively transformative purpose, there's no collective buy-in around what future you're building towards, and as such, you end up splintered in multiple directions and stuck in a loop. Do you ever notice the following pattern? X happens in the market, and suddenly, there is a push for new ideas. You're given the time and space to think about solutions and ideas for a few weeks, only for the excitement

and passion to fade before you can execute the vision and things to return to "normal" before starting the cycle up again 6-12 months later with no actual output?

Purpose is one of the vital building blocks for innovation and can be the difference between a company that fails or grows. No one knows what's next for the future, but we know it will be "new and improved" and made possible by people who can see the impossible and decide to do it anyway. You likely already have these thinkers within your organization- it might even be you. If you're unsure what your purpose is, this e-book will help you identify and define your massively transformative purpose (MTP) for your organization, team, or yourself.

"Billion-dollar companies are springing up overnight, & billion-dollar companies are folding overnight."

- SU Co-Founder, Peter Diamandis



the motivating power of a massive transformative purpose

Eradicating diseases, mastering flight, achieving near-instant global communication, going to the moon—humans have developed a taste for making the impossible possible.

Though we still face a daunting list of global challenges, we've learned that science and technology can uncover big solutions. However, mind-blowing breakthroughs don't just happen. They take teams of bright, dedicated people chipping away at a problem day and night. They take tremendous motivation, toil, and at least a few failures along the way.

To solve our biggest problems, we need people to undertake big tasks. But what drives someone to take on such a difficult, uncertain process and stick with it?



enabling exponential teams

As we began to establish earlier, the secret to motivating individuals and teams to do great things is purpose. Social movements, rapidly growing organizations, and remarkable breakthroughs in science and technology have something in common—they're often byproducts of a deeply unifying purpose. And there's a name for this breed of motivation. It's called **massive transformative purpose** or **MTP**. The more we organize around an MTP, the harder we'll work, the more dedicated we'll be, the more fulfilled we'll feel, and the faster we'll solve big problems.

understanding the massive transformative purpose

In 2014, Salim Ismail, former Executive Director of SU, published *Exponential Organizations*, co-authored by Mike Malone and Yuri van Geest. In the book, the team analyzed the 100 fastest-growing organizations and synthesized

their key traits. As it turns out, every single company on the list had a massive transformative purpose.

massive

Audaciously big & aspirational.

transformative

Can cause significant transformation to an industry, community, or the planet.

purpose

There's a clear "why" behind the work being done. Something that unites and inspires action.

Simply put, an MTP is a "highly aspirational tagline" for an individual or group, be it a company, non-profit organization, community, or social movement. It's a huge and audacious purpose statement.

Elon Musk and SpaceX help underscore the value of MTPs. Musk didn't found SpaceX to have a luxurious retirement on Mars or for the sake of building an aerospace company. Rather, he's driven by the belief that humans must become a multi-planetary species—making this a reality is his purpose. Likewise, SpaceX's MTP to revolutionize space technology and enable people to live on another planet creates a shared aspirational purpose within the organization.

notice that spacex's mtp is:

- Huge and aspirational
- Clearly focused
- Unique to the company
- Aimed at radical transformation
- Forward-looking

MTPs are not representative of what's possible today—they're highly aspirational and focused on creating a different future. This aspirational ele-

ment is what ignites passion in individuals and groups—it engages people's hearts and minds to work together to realize a common goal.

keep in mind that an MTP is not:

- Simply a company's mission statement.
- Technology-specific or narrowly focused.
- Representative of what is possible today.
- Motivated only by profits.
- Just a big goal or even a "big hairy audacious goal."

Living your MTP sets the tone of your company culture. SpaceX's MTP has achieved this so successfully that it's even activated a cultural shift outside of the company's walls. This is a secondary effect of having a strong MTP. Other examples include the massive lines that form whenever Apple releases a new

iPhone or the huge waitlist that springs up each year to get a seat at TED's annual conference. MTPs can inspire whole communities and evangelists to form around them.

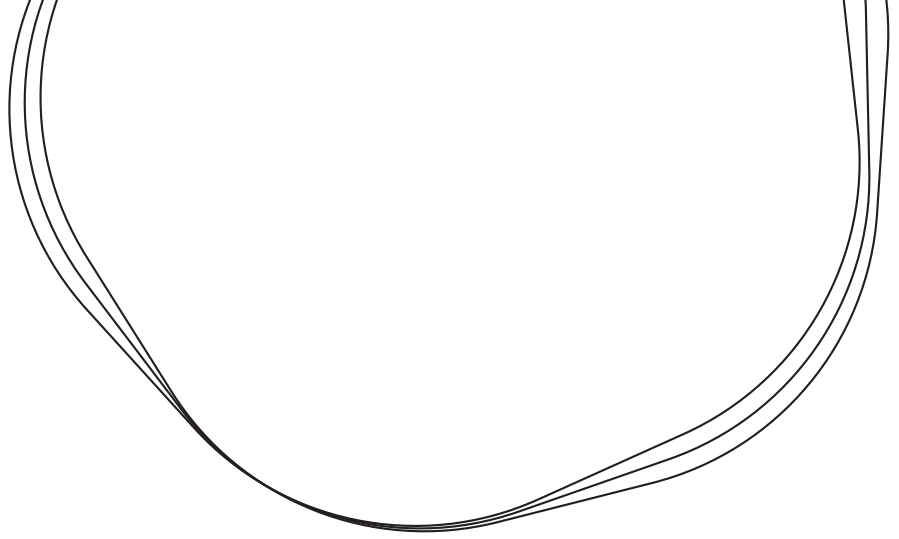
A purpose must drive you to create a transformative impact. A successful MTP can often be reframed as a question.

Questions can then be used to evaluate organizational decisions to determine if they align with the MTP. For example, suppose the organization TED is deciding whether to move forward with a particular talk. In that case, you can bet its team considers whether the topic is an "idea worth spreading."

consider how the following examples fulfill each word in MTP:

- TED Talks: "Ideas worth spreading."
- Google: "Organize the world's information."
- XPRIZE: "Bring about radical breakthroughs for the benefit of humanity."
- Tesla: "Accelerate the transition to sustainable transportation."





the competitive advantages of embracing an MTP

Having an MTP can trigger incredible outcomes, which is why high-growth organizations all tend to have them. SpaceX isn't where it is today because it focused on making 10 percent improvements to existing aerospace technology. Google's self-driving car isn't the by-product of a goal to make a 10 percent improvement to driving. Ten percent thinking leads to incremental progress, which doesn't lead to making the impossible possible, like sending people to the moon. Shift your thinking from 10 percent to 10x.

You have the recipe for creating a massive transformative purpose to push you and your organization to the next level of performance and impact. The aspirational quality of an MTP pushes teams to prioritize big thinking, rapid growth strategies, and organizational agility—and these behaviors all have substantial payoffs in the long term.



“You’re not going to push ahead when it’s someone else’s mission. It needs to be yours.”

- Peter Diamandis on your MTP

workbook

a guide to discovering your massively transformative purpose

Writing an MTP for your organization takes some time and reflection from the leadership team. Start by considering your organization's driving purpose.

focus on two main areas to identify your purpose:

1. identify the who: what community do you want to create a lasting positive impact for?

2. identify the what: what problem do you want to solve?

try this exercise created by peter diamandis to identify the “what” of your purpose:

Step 1: Write down the top three issues you are most excited about or get you most riled up that you want to solve.

Issue #1:

Issue #2:

Issue #3:

Step 2: For each of the three problems listed above, ask the following six questions and score each from 1-10 (where 1 = a small difference and 10 = a big difference).

Questions:

1. If, at the end of your life, you had made a significant dent in this area, how proud would you feel?
2. Given the resources you have today, what level of impact could you make in the next three years if you solved this problem?
3. Given the resources you expect to have in 10 years, what level of impact could you make in a three-year period?
4. How well do you understand the problem?
5. How emotionally charged (excited or riled up) are you about this?
6. Will this problem get solved with or without you involved?



Add up your scores for each idea and identify the one with the highest score. This is your winner for now. Does this one intuitively feel right to you? If you need more help, download this checklist for writing your own MTP.

Issue #1

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

Score = _____

Issue #2

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

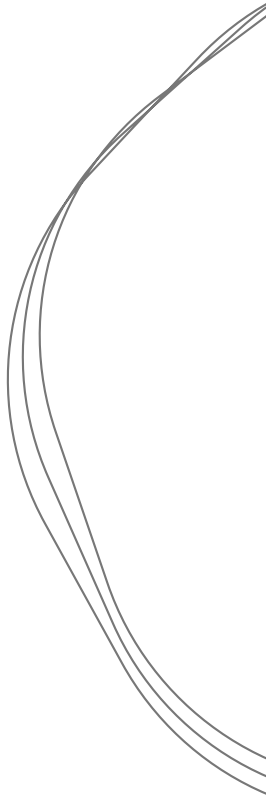
Score = _____

Issue #3

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

Score = _____

the problem I'll solve



put your MTP into practice

once you're clear on your organization's MTP, it's time to make things happen.

you might:

- Start a company to solve the problem.
- Invest in entrepreneurs already working to solve your problem.
- Create an incentive prize, e.g., an XPRIZE or a HeroX.
- Find others working on the cause and join them.
- Become a platform—connect talent with resources to solve the problem.
- Start a fund & invest other people's money in solving your problem.

Keep in mind that realizing an MTP requires a different type of thinking. It requires a mindset and work environment that leans into complex problems and dares to think big—really big.

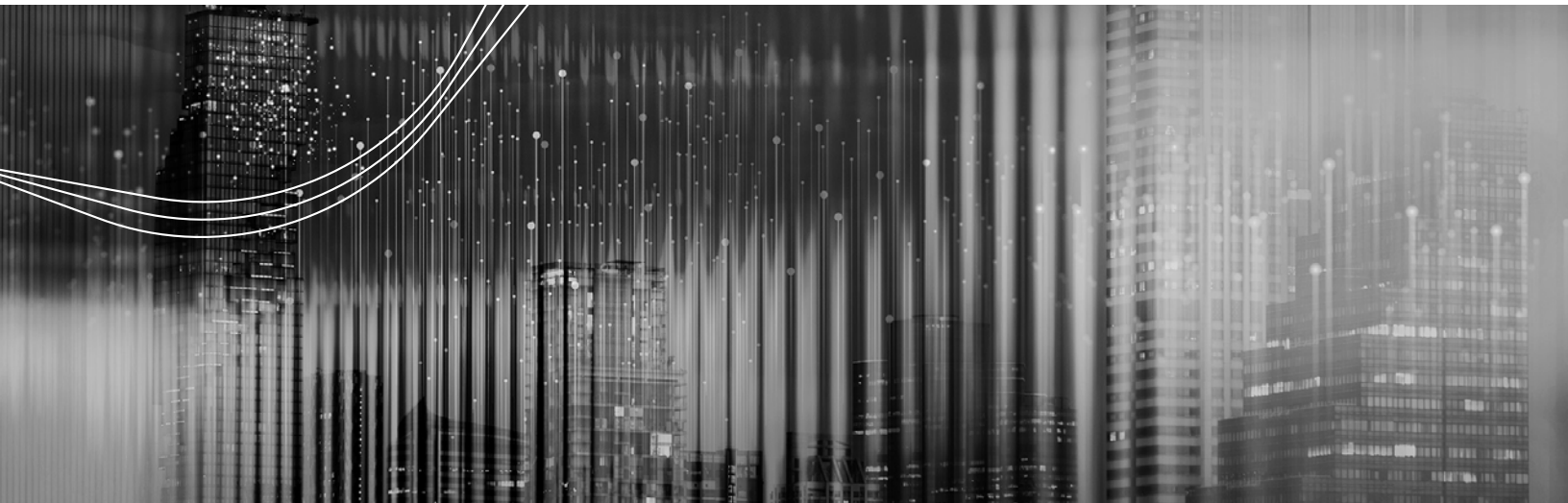
MTP takeaways

As an MTP harnesses passion within an organization, it also galvanizes a community to form outside the company that shares this purpose. This, in turn, can spark an incredible secondary impact by helping organizations attract and retain top qualified talent who are motivated by the cause.

Your MTP will play a huge role in defining your organization and fostering its culture. An MTP keeps all efforts focused and aligned, which helps organizations grow cohesively. As the organization evolves and scales, the MTP becomes a stabilizer for employees as they transition into new territory.

conclusion

Disruption and uncertainty are inevitable—it is a fact of life that everyone has to embrace personally, especially in business. Disrupting yourself can be challenging, but when it is your only option, that is when truly monumental things happen. The bottom line is if you want to create something impactful and exponential, having a purpose as the foundation to your work is vital in carrying you through both disruption and uncertainty. We all come from different walks of life, but our mission is still the same. No matter what our purpose is, although still important, we all want to be better and better.





At Singularity Group, we're laying the groundwork for exponential change.

Our executive education and custom innovation solutions, combined with proven tools, methods, and a global network of world-class Faculty and experts, help transform companies of all sizes into agile organizations that can get out in front of market disruptions and achieve exceptional business results. If you're ready to see the future more clearly, up-level your innovation efforts, and empower your leaders to thrive amid uncertainty and disruption, send us a note at sr@su.org or visit su.org/engage.

Cultivating a culture of innovation within your organization can be challenging without a solid understanding of your company's purpose. Our Enterprise Solutions are custom-tailored to your unique journey. Built upon proven strategy, leadership, and innovation frameworks, we take a consultative approach to guiding organizations through the fear of disruption. We help organizations and leaders create a better vision for the future and move toward transformative outcomes.

Not ready for enterprise solutions? Check out the Singularity Executive Program to start shifting your mindset and learn how exponential technologies will impact your personal and professional future. Email admissions@su.org or visit su.org/ep to apply for an upcoming cohort.

Content in this publication originally appeared on Singularity Hub. Special thanks to [Peter H. Diamandis](#) and [Jason Dorrier](#).