**RedZone Podcast Episode #57: How to Create an Anticipatory vs. Agile Organization – with Daniel Burrus**

Bill: I want to welcome you to the show today.

Dan: Great. Well thank you.

Bill:  
[00:03:00] Well thank you and it's a real pleasure because I recently took on the role of Singularity University’s D.C. Chapter Ambassador. I've really gotten deeply into learning about some of the exponential technology trends and such, coupled with a native background with my business building we’ve got within enterprise IT security.

One of the things that's really interesting to me is how business IT leaders are really thinking differently about the future. What do you see as one of the key skills that is needed for IT business leaders and C suite executives to have moving forward?

Dan: Well what I've been teaching is what I call The Missing Competency. To set this up, let’s just take a look at some of the key strategies or competencies that we use today. Of course a company might have a list of 20 or 30 core competencies. I'm not talking about those.

[00:04:00] What I'm really talking about is, for example, being lean, and we've been working on being lean for quite a long time, many decades, and companies have really done a pretty good job. However, you can always take lean to the next level and The Missing Competency helps you to do that. I'll come back on that in a second.

Secondly, we are working hard at being agile, and I think we're putting ... For the most part, most companies are thinking agility is the best way to counter the increasing exponential changes that are coming our way. That's good, but I was just with the Fortune 50 CIOs in a meeting held by Cisco. We had the largest CIOs in the world there, and I just asked them, “You know, how many of you already have an agile organization?” They all put their hands up, and I said, “Well that's good. I mean there's no competitive advantage obviously, but that's good.”

A bigger thing to ask yourself is, “Agility. What is the [advantage 00:04:55]?”

[00:01:00] Lean, (:44) being lean, is good. I'm glad you're doing it. You need to be doing that, and you can take it to the next level. (:49) Being agile is good, but once again, Uber, the guys who started Uber didn’t use Agility to come up with Uber and the guys that came up with Airbnb didn’t use Agility to come up with their concepts and so on, but they will help you react faster, which is good. There will continue to be a lot of incoming change. One last one I'll point out is execution. We all think execution is everything, but I would say BlackBerry was really good at execution and so was Microsoft, Dell, Sony, HP, and a host of others that have been struggling.

What is the missing competency? The missing competency is the ability to anticipate. Anticipate what? You can anticipate disruptions before they disrupt. You can anticipate problems before you have them so that you can pre-solve them. You can anticipate game-changing opportunities before the competition notices if you have a methodology, and that is what I'd love to talk to listeners about today is to help teach them some of that methodology.

Bill:  
[00:02:00] Yeah, I'd love to hear that because I think that’s ... What a great starting point, because I bought a bunch of books recently and I'm trying to sort of rapidly trying to understand these lean principles and agile thinking and organizational development, but I like how you're sort of even in front of that talking about the ability to anticipate, so continue on. It sounds great.

Daniel: Yes. This is based ... Just a little bit of background to where I got to this point. Before starting the 6 companies that I've started, I taught biology and physics. Now I only mention that so that you know that this is all based on research and over a period of 34 years. I came up with the methodology which I call separating hard trends. Those are future facts. Those are the things that will happen. You can see them ahead of time. They will happen, and no matter who you are, you cannot stop them.

[00:03:00] Then there are soft trends. Soft trends are all based on assumptions, unlike hard trends, which are based on future facts. There are several levels of assumptions. I'll just mention them very quickly to make it simple. I call them the hard assumption, which is research-based, and that soft assumption, which makes sense, but you didn’t research it, which means higher level of risk.

[00:04:00] First of all, just if you think about that a minute, in a world of mass uncertainty, which we have today, you have to ask yourself, are you certain of nothing? The answer is, well, you can be certain of quite a bit. I remember meeting several CEOs before I was speaking, and they said, of course, "Well, no one can predict the future and be right." I responded by saying, "It's summer. Next will be fall. Hey, I think I'll be right." What I was doing was I was pointing out that there is a science of cycles. There's actually over 300 known cycles, business cycles, weather cycles, biological cycles. For example, can an astronomer tell you in the year 2040 in March the exact moment we'll have a full moon? The answer is, yeah, they can nail it. You can't say the future is unpredictable. It's far beyond death and taxes.

Now economists use cyclical change as a way of predicting the future, and it's worked quite well until recently, because, as you know, economists have been increasingly wrong. Why? That is there's another kind of change. It used to be so slow that economists didn’t need to know about it, but today, it's changing our world on us left and right. I would call it one-way linear elevated to exponential change.

[00:05:00] Now, again, this is a one-way change. It's not a cycle. Once you get a smart phone, you're not going back to a dumb phone. That’s not a cycle. Once the people in China park their bicycle and get a car, they're not going back to the bike. Once the people in India get refrigeration for their home, they're not going to go back to no refrigeration. These are one-way and they’ve been exponentially now by technological change that have profound opportunities as well as predictable consequences.

Again, 30 years ago, I came up with this methodology of separating the hard trends from the soft trends. Let's face it, Bill, there's no shortage of trends. You can get them from all over the place. The Internet is full of trends. The key is which ones are going to happen and which ones aren't. That’s the science that I've got 34 years behind that works. Let's talk about it a little further.

Bill: Okay.

Daniel:

[00:06:00] Just to kind of make this clear, let's give you an example of hard and soft real quickly. When Bitcoin first came out ... that was the first cyber currency ... there was a lot of people that were saying, "Wow, this is the future. Bitcoin is the future." By the way, Bitcoin is still there doing quite well, but I pointed out in a early article when that came out that Bitcoin's success and future success is a soft trend. That’s an assumption. We don’t know that for sure. The hard trend is cyber currency. Once cyber currency ... That was the first one. Once that genie got out of the box, it was not going back in.

Bill: Sure.

Daniel:

[00:07:00] I even said there will be more cyber currencies, and today we have over 170 cyber currencies. Another quick example just to help our listeners understand, baby boomers, demographics. Baby boomers are not going to all of a sudden start getting younger again. They're going to continue to age. That’s a hard trend, and we can tell a lot about the future based on that, or let's take are we going to get more government regulations? The answer is, well, yes. As a matter of fact, you can't predict all of the future. Of course you can't. Actually, that would be quite boring. What this hard trend/soft trend methodology does is it allows you to predict accurately enough of the future to see quite a bit.

Bill: Quick question for you, Dan. In regards to your previous example about Bitcoin, Bitcoin you would say is a soft trend. How would you put blockchain and digital ledgering into that? Would that be something that’s a clear hard trend, or is that ...?

Daniel: Yes. You nailed it. It's a clear hard trend.

Bill: Okay.

Daniel:

[00:08:00] It will spawn other business models that might be good or might be bad. Take a look at Google. Is Google's leadership in search, let's say, since that’s their core, is that leadership a hard trend or soft trend? The answer, of course, is it's a soft trend. That’s on Google. As a matter of fact, in 1998, the leader of search was Yahoo, and nobody would have thought that Yahoo could have been unseated by that until a couple of guys formed Google. The idea of a soft trend doesn’t mean it won't happen. It just means that it is not a future fact.

Lets go back to future facts for a second. Will we see increasing virtualization of services as well as products? The answer is yes, and that's not going to stop. Increasing use of the cloud, putting every hardware up in the cloud, oh, yes. By the way, the cloud's not going to get full. After 3G and after 4G and after 5G, is that it? No. We're going to have 6G followed by 7G. Those are future facts. As a matter of fact, I've been tracking those since 1983, and they’ve been on a predictable curve.

[00:09:00] That, Bill, leads me to another thing I came up with back in '83 when I founded Burris Research, and that is I came up with the timeframe element. Back in '83 when I started the company and sold off the other 5 that I had started, I came across something pretty obscure back then. It was called Moore's Law. Of course, today people know about Moore's Law, but I can tell you in '83, not many were looking at Moore's Law.

Bill: Right.

Daniel:

[00:10:00] When I saw Moore's Law, processing power doubles every 18 months as the price drops in half, I realized, wow, that guy nailed it. As a forecaster, that gave me a powerful tool. For example, if you go back to me in '83, I could look at the year 2000 and with that law, I would know how powerful a computer would be and how much it would cost. Once I know those 2 things, I could make a lot of accurate predictions, which I did. Matter of fact, one of my 1983 predictions is we would sequence the human gene code in the year 2000, which we did. That was an '83 prediction. They didn’t even start doing it until 1990. Again, you can be quite accurate when you have that.

I needed more than Moore's Law back then, so I came up with the law of bandwidth and the law of storage. I called them the 3 digital accelerators. Why didn’t Apple release the iPhone a year earlier? They could have, actually, but why didn’t they? The answer is bandwidth, storage, and processing power. Those 3, that trifecta, were not ready yet. They would have given you a lousy user experience. Why didn’t we have, let's say, TED talks a couple of years sooner? The answer is those 3 would have given you a bad experience. That’s why when Netflix came out, they were still mailing out DVDs. They needed those 3 digital accelerators to be at the right point for them to offer streaming.

Bill: I see.

Daniel:  
[00:11:00] By the way, if you look at my 1993 best-seller, Technotrends, there's a little section in the book that says, "Blockbuster is busted," and if you read underneath it, I'm describing streaming media and Netflix and putting some accurate timeframes on it as well as things like the iPhone. What I'm getting at is it's actually much more predictable than we think if we can look at, again, the hard trends and then put those timeframes on there.

One last point I'll make about the controversy this last year about processing power and Moore's Law, whether that’s dead or not. The reality is that don’t think of it as processing power. Think of it as computing power, because now, of course, we're tapping into super computers in the cloud from our devices, and it's not so much about the processing chip in the device. It's more about the computing power you have from your device. By the way, that will continue to be exponential.

Bill:  
[00:12:00] Even if they run into chip limitations with quad-core processing and such, which is known ... The quantum computing, which is right around the corner, that'll change the game again.

Daniel: Yeah. I won't get all into it now, because I work with companies like Intels and others, and they know that, really, there's not a end to it, but in terms of exponential computing power, again, don’t think just in terms of the chip itself. One of the things they're doing is using the super computers to design the new chips, and the new chips are put into new super computers that then are smarter and can design the new chip. It's kind of an interesting thing. As you say, we've got other tools like quantum and other things happening right now.

Bill: The missing competency, Daniel, what is the missing competency? It's the ability to anticipate, and that’s what you're saying is that you know these trends, so now we can ...

Daniel:  
[00:13:00] Yeah, absolutely. For example, if someone said years and years ago, "Hey, don’t tell Kodak about digital photography. Let's keep that a secret from them," the answer is, well, no, it was there. Unfortunately, they treated it as a soft trend. Oops, that was a hard trend. Knowing the difference can make all of the difference when you learn how to separate those things. The core of anticipation is understanding hard trends from soft trends, and I did describe that quite well in my last New York Times best-seller, Flash Foresight, for those that are interested in learning a little bit more beyond this.

Bill:

[00:14:00] I think that Flash Foresight was very interesting. One of the pieces that came out of it for me is really nothing is down to an individual level. I'm really curious, when you're working ... I'll get into some of my specific questions, but I want to start at the top. When you're working with C-suite executives, where do you see this ... You're talking about missing competency from an organization and looking at hard/soft trends. What about individuals? What are we missing here? If you're born to be an NBA basketball player, you sort of have a DNA inclination towards a certain level of athleticism. Is this the same thing when you're talking about the ability to use your mind to think about the future and then map business to that future?

Daniel:

[00:15:00] Actually, it is quite personal and I do want to talk about that. You actually brought up a couple of different elements there when you brought in the basketball playing, which I can talk about as well, but let's stay with ... First of all, from a business standpoint, the hard trend/soft trend methodology I've used with the top 25 at GE, the top 40 of IBM, and so on and it's really changed how they plan and innovate. It's been embraced by the largest companies. I actually am a strategic advisor to the Joint Chiefs and the DOD, and they, as of last year, embraced it as well. Becoming anticipatory is something that is rapidly being embraced by some of the biggest and the largest organizations around the world, so I do want to say it's not a theory. It's actually in practice and creating results.

Now, let's take it to a personal level, and that is uncertainty, personal strategy, as well as corporate strategy. If it's based on uncertainty, you’ve got high levels of risk, but if it's based on certainty, you have low levels of risk. You have to really start asking yourself, "What am I certain about?" The stock market is a cyclical. It goes up, it goes down, it goes up. Now we know that. Again, separating the cyclical change from the one-way linear/exponential changes is extremely important to do on a personal level as well.

[00:16:00] Let's take your own credit card in your wallet or in your purse. We put a chip on that, but what is the chip in a credit card? It is the DVD just before streaming. In other words, it's absolutely obsolete already, but there are still people making money on it, so that’s why they're doing it. In reality, having it be in our smart phones with multiple biometrics for security is where we're going to be putting those things. For example, if all the shoppers a couple of years ago from Kmart would have been using, let's just say, the iPhone and Apple Pay, although they could have been using one of the other ones, there would have been nothing to hack because it creates a one-time number, but it does not share credit card information or personal information with the person you're selling to.

[00:17:00] Of course, I mentioned multiple biometrics. Right now, let's just take the iPhone, since I mentioned it. You’ve got the fingerprint reader, but that phone, all the phones, they have a really good camera. Now, you’ve got facial recognition, and that’s extremely good, plus you’ve got voice recognition and that’s really good, plus you’ve got heartbeat recognition, which is as good as a fingerprint, and a number of others. We will be using multiple biometrics, depending on the level of security.

Let's just be futurist now, between you and I, and just think. Let me ask you, if we're putting our credit cards in there because that’s more secure, and it is, what other things do you carry in your purse or wallet might you want to put in there that would be important? It doesn’t take long to start thinking, well, some people still carry around their Social Security card. Oh, that would be a good thing to have in there instead of in your wallet or purse. What about your passport? That would be a better thing to have in there. What about your driver's license? That would be better in there as well. You can start to see where we're going once you start thinking about it just a little bit.

Bill:  
[00:18:00] That makes a lot of sense. Basically, when you're coaching and working and advising people that are very high level in the business, you're really trying to make the future seem very, very logical for them so that they can feel free or be more unencumbered when they are acting and when they're taking action on their plans.

Daniel: Yes, Bill. A really important thing I want to make clear for our listeners is that you cannot predict everything. By the way, again, that would be a boring world if everything was predictable, but you can't predict everything. That’s why it's important to understand and be good at being agile, because agility helps you with change that’s coming from the outside in. What being anticipatory does, it allows you to drive change from the inside out based on the confidence that certainty can provide. When you do find things you can be certain about, what you have is the confidence to make bold moves, and secondly, there's risk management.

[00:19:00] Really, this has changed how people manage risk. Again, if you look at your assumptions, those soft trends, are the assumptions hard or soft? If you’ve got soft assumptions, you’ve got much ... In other words, they make sense, but they weren't researched. You have much higher levels of risk than a researched assumption, although neither is a future fact. If we looked at future facts, then we can start to see things that have lower risk and the ability to jump ahead with low risk. Think of it this way. Keeping up is a fool's game. What I mean by that is what's the advantage of keeping up? I still have yet to hear that. What do you want to do? You want to jump ahead, but that also has high risk, but if you use that hard trend/soft trend way of looking at the future, you can jump ahead with low risk based on the things that you do know instead of all the things you don’t know.

[00:20:00]  
Bill:  
Right. Also with micro experiments, too. Again, you can take measured risk based on experiments within the different pathways.

Daniel:

[00:21:00] Absolutely, absolutely. I think going with this .. Again, on a personal level, hard trends or soft trends, it's kind of like what do you know instead of what don’t you know, what are the things you are certain about instead of all the things you're uncertain about. When you're looking at a trend, what you want to do is ... To make it come to life, you have to add an opportunity to it. Let's say that you might say we are having an increasing number of people, baby boomers, retiring. We've even got statistics on that, so we can see, well, we have a tsunami of baby boomers retiring, and that has some predictable consequences. That is also predictable opportunity, because, again, there's 2 sides to every coin. There's the consequences and the opportunities.

In that, we can ask ourselves what's the opportunity, because if you just say that, a lot of baby boomers retiring, heck, we all knew that. Everybody else listening to this knew that. Big deal, so what? If you tie it to an opportunity for you, for example, if you have people retiring, do you have a mentoring program that’s really well so you can capture some of that knowledge before they leave? Have you got an opportunity, for example, of let's say some of the people that are leaving to be able to work from their home a couple of hours a week mentoring some of the younger people? See what I mean? Have you created a knowledge base and a wisdom base, or do you only have databases and information bases? Do we even know what the differences are? Again, those are things that I talk about in the book, in our learning system.

[00:22:00]  
Bill:  
You also wrote not too long ago, Daniel, about a chief innovation officer versus a chief information officer, which might be kind of an extension of what you were just talking about. Do we just have information or do we have wisdom? What I was curious about is I started to think about this in terms of offense and defense. From an innovation point of view, what did you mean by a chief innovation officer? Do you mean someone who starts to get really good at anticipating trends more from a offensive for the business or more in defense of process improvement or process innovation?

Daniel:

[00:23:00] Yeah. The reason I did that is right now, we are at a unbelievable tipping point in human history. This is a point that we have never reached ever before in human history because of the 3 digital accelerators, because of the exponential nature of the transformational, not change, but the transformations that are taking place right now. In other words, I'll give you a short-range prediction, and it's based on hard trends, so if you don’t like it, too bad. It's going to happen anyway. That is that in the next 5 years, and by the way, that 5 years is going by fast, we are transforming, not changing. We are transforming every business process, how we sell, how we market, how we communicate, how we innovate, how we train, how we educate, how we pay for things. All of our business process will be transformed because we have the tools to do it. Now that’s the hard trend.

[00:24:00] Now here's the soft trend. To you listening to me, the listener now, will you transform the business processes in your organization? That is a soft trend. I don’t know. That’s up to you. The good thing about a soft trend is you can influence it. You see, I can't change a hard trend, but I can change the soft trend. I can influence it. If there's a negative element to a soft trend, I can work on that. Let me give you a quick example.

[00:25:00] The U.S. government did some research recently to look at healthcare in the future, given all the baby boomers that are getting older, that hard trend. They wanted to see how many people would be obese in the year 2025 because obesity has been rising as a trend for the last 15 years, how many people would have Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes. Those have all been going up dramatically over the last 10 years, and they wanted to see, given that trend, where we're going to be in 2025, and they came up with a number. Why? Because they wanted to put their efforts into how can we pay for that. I would say all of those are soft trends. Why? They can all be influenced, every one of them. I'd rather put my money on how do we change those soft trends instead of figuring out how we're going to pay for them in 2025.

Bill: [Inaudible 00:25:02].

Daniel: You see? It creates something that’s very powerful.

Bill: A hard is something that it's in place, so you're transforming a business process over the next 5 years. That’s going to happen. The soft trend is the one we can influence. Can you just repeat what the soft trend is for us?

Daniel: Yeah. The hard trend is the tools to transform every business process are there over this next 5 years. We can do that. Anyone can do that. As a matter of fact, you're not limited by the size of the organization. A one-person shop can do that. The soft trend is will you do that?

Bill: Ah, okay. That makes sense. I totally understand that.

Daniel:  
[00:26:00] You see, there's an old saying, "If it is to be, it's up to me." You still have to take action in this case. The key is, again, once again, it's recognizing what those hard trends are. For example, we really haven't seen much in the way of augmented reality. The early augmented reality is you hold your smart phone up, use the camera, and you point it and you can see data overlaid what you're pointing at. That is augmented reality, a hard trend. That’s a technology hard trend that is going to be growing at an exponential rate.

Instead of just holding your camera up, you'll use your glasses, because we had Google glass, which, of course, was kind of ugly and techy and nerdy. Being able to have augmented reality regular glasses where you just move your finger on the side where it goes to your ear, left and right or up and down, to be able to control whether you're seeing it clear or you're putting data in front of you, that’s hard trend. That’s happening. We could even put timeframes on that.

[00:27:00] Just like we've got smart watches, but that’s just one element, the wearables, smart tattoos that stick on and come off for all sorts of different uses. Internet of Things with all of the sensors, the wireless and wired sensors, all of those are hard trends that are providing, again, great opportunity, and also there's problems because there's 2 sides to every coin. The key is take a look at both sides of that coin. Don’t look at just one side. Take a look at both sides. Usually, we see the negative side.

[00:28:00] The 3 categories of hard trends I'll share with your listeners, is technology. By the way, I have a little something, if anyone is interested, that I've been publishing for 34 years now. You could go to burrus, B-U-R-R-U-S.com. I have a list of 25 technology-driven trends that are growing exponentially you could download for free. You also have demographics, and remember, it's not just about baby boomers. You got to think of Generation Z, not just the millennials, and the impacts that are fully predictable. Then you have to take a look at government regulations, and that’s one I thought I would surprise you with, but that’s another one that creates hard trends.

[00:29:00] Someone would say, "Well, you surely can't predict any regulations. In this country, we have no idea who's going to be in, and even if whoever gets in, how would we know what will happen?" I would say, "Well, we can't predict every one, but you can predict quite a bit." Let me just prove it to you using regulations which seem to be completely unpredictable, but, again, they aren't. Will we have increasing globalization of auditing and accounting regulations? The answer is absolutely, that matter gets in. Will we have increasing regulation around cyber security? Absolutely, that matter gets in, because there are hard trends that are driving that that whoever is in has to deal with or we all go down.

Bill: Absolutely.

Daniel: You see, you can't predict it all, but you can predict a lot. You don’t have to predict everything accurately, but you have to predict enough.

Bill:

[00:30:00] You gave what I found a very interesting TED talk that I had watched on solving impossible problems and seeing invisible solutions to impossible problems and this concept of skipping the problem. I'm curious from when you're working with C-suite executives of which the digital, the CIO, whatever they call it, the innovation officer or the information officer, there's a digital partner in that group, hopefully. Where do the impossible problems lie for them right now? How do you teach people how to skip problems at the highest level in organizations?

Daniel: Yeah. I love doing that. It's one of my favorites. I think you might know, out of the 6 companies I've started, 3 were national leaders in the first year and 5 were profitable in the first year, so I practice what I preach here. I would say that there are a couple of elements to it, but to use this as a teaching moment, whatever problem you’ve got right now, no matter how big, no matter how impossible, that’s not it. That’s not it. You're working on the wrong one. That’s why it's so impossible. That’s why you can't solve it. You have to dig down. You have to peel the onion back to get to the core to find what the real problem is, which is there and perfectly solvable.

[00:31:00] Remember I mentioned in the beginning of this interview I was meeting with the top 50 CIOs at this conference, and I spoke to them first and then there was a little breakout where I was going to be talking to them about rapid problem-solving. Actually, I'll tell you how I started it. Again, we've got the top 50 CIOs there, and I said, "Any one of you, I'm going to show you how to solve impossible problems, so why don’t you give me your impossible problems right now. I will help you find a solution right now, and then I'll show you how to do it."

I won't tell you who it is, but it was one of the largest in the room, really big, wow. He said, "Well, I've got to get all of my legacy systems into the cloud as quickly as possible. That’s my biggest problem." When he said that, I responded by saying, "Let me see now, if you get all of your legacy systems into the cloud, won't you just have a legacy cloud?" He did, Bill, exactly what you did. He laughed and said, "Well, I guess that’s not it." I said, "You're right." Then he started digging down to what it really was.

[00:32:00] You see, it's kind of like years ago I was meeting with the CEO and a team of Eli Lilly and asked what the biggest problem was, and they said, "We got to hire 2000 additional PhD researchers, but we don’t have the budget because our stock price is down, but we got to hire them and that’s important." I knew that wasn’t it, so I started peeling the onion back by asking, "Why? Why do you need to do that?" He said, "Well, you know, we're a drug company. To get our stock prices in relation to how many new drugs are in the pipeline, to get new drugs in the pipeline, we have to solve molecular problems. To do that, we need researchers. Our pipeline is low. That’s why we don’t have the budget right now, and to really beef it up rapidly, we figure we got to hire 2000 PhD researchers now. Again, budget is the problem."

[00:33:00] Whenever I hear budget is the problem, I already know that’s not the problem. Money is never the real problem, and if you think money is your problem, that’s why you’ve never been able to solve it. What I did was I suggested, "Why don’t we just skip that. Why don’t we just put all of the molecular problems on the Internet and say, in multiple languages say, "We'll pay for a solution." They did that. Oh, boy, this is probably 10 years ago, 8 years ago, something like that. They started really getting great results. As a matter of fact, it ended up being written up in the Harvard Business Review, and a lot of people are using that. A lot of organizations probably listening to this are using that right now. The point is, was the problem related to having to hire 2000 researchers? The answer is, well, no. That wasn’t the problem. That’s why he couldn’t solve it.

[00:34:00] On a simple, personal level, I had my niece Hallie call and said, "I can't save any money, Uncle Dan." She has her first job. Her older sister can really save money like crazy, so she was frustrated. She says, "I'm really working hard at trying to save money, but I just can't seem to save money." I said, "Well, no wonder. You're working on the wrong problem. Why don’t you work at how you spend money? You'll save money by default." Of course, working on how you spend is a lot better than working on how you save, because it's all about the spending. It's usually not about trying to save.

Bill: Give us a particular personal discipline or personal process you use to keep your mind agile in this way. When you're presented, either a client presents you with a problem or you have your own personal business or person problem, do you journal it through? Do you have a process, some way, shape, or form that you go through?

Daniel:  
[00:35:00] Yeah. I definitely do not have an agile process because that would not help them with a transformational answer. What I have is an anticipatory process. It really is important to understand there is a big difference there. What I'm doing is in talking with them, I have several elements to it. One, again, I know to separate hard trend certainties from soft trends "ifs" or "maybes."

[00:36:00] Secondly, I know that whatever problem they have, that’s not it, and there is a way to get them to the real problem, which is fully solvable quite quickly when you understand the process. I understand that we're not in a period of change anymore. We're now in a period of transformation. If you're only changing a process, product, or service right now, you're actually falling behind every year. You need to be transforming it. Most companies don’t know the difference. I try to help them know the difference. Now we're in a time of redefining and reinventing every product and service, and I know that there are tools to do that right now. What I do is use some of those things I just mentioned to you as part of that process of being anticipatory.

Bill: How would someone know if they're only making a change and not a transformation? Would there be a governor valve internally that would switch, "Oh, that’s right. I'm in a change mode. I'm not actually really trying to transform here"?

Daniel:

[00:37:00] Sure, absolutely. If you're changing something, your change looks similar to the thing you were changing. If you're transforming it, it doesn’t look like it at all. Let me give you a example. When I was a young guy, I could listen to one album per spinning disc, 33-1/3. I could listen to my Jimi Hendrix and my Pink Floyd and all that stuff. You know my age now. As I got older, a change came along, a technological change. I could listen to one album per smaller spinning disc called a CD, and I liked that change, not just because of the size. I liked it because it got rid of the hisses and pops and scratches of my old music. I got all my old music, all my new music on CD. Cool. That changed how I listened to music.

Today, I've got all my music in my phone, and it didn’t change how I listen to music. It transformed it. That doesn’t resemble a physical spinning disc anymore. Matter of fact, thanks to the cloud in my phone, I can have access to intimate songs and music any time I want them. That doesn’t resemble the past, which was a limited disc with a limited number of tracks. That is something that is completely different. A transformation means it doesn’t resemble the thing that you have moved from. Change, it resembles it. You tweaked it, you modified it.

Bill:  
[00:38:00] Got you. Makes sense. That makes tons of sense. As we wrap up, I had a question for you regarding the neuroscience and our understanding of the brain as we go forward here is also exponentially changing and our knowledge of health and wellness. How do you counsel leaders in regards to what are the key factors to optimize their personal ability to remain healthy and be able to take on essentially the uncontrollable now with technology change?

Daniel:

[00:39:00] Yeah. There's a couple of elements that you mentioned in there that we could talk about, but I think the core of it is that from a health standpoint, most of us know what we need to do. We just don’t do it because we get busy. Actually, Bill, that’s my biggest worry for the people that are listening to this right now. You're all really busy and after you're done listening to this, you're going to go back and get busy again. Remember, today in this world of no longer being in change but being in exponentially-driven transformation, you can busy yourself right out of business.

I think it's important to build in time for your health, build in time in your calendar. Actually, somebody asked me what my most valuable application was out of all the applications I have, and I said, "It's my calendar because that’s how I make sure things happen, even the white space I need to think and the fun space I need to enjoy," because if you don’t do it, maybe it won't happen, especially if you're entrepreneurial like I am.

[00:40:00] I think we just need to keep that in our consciousness and also be aware that there are some hard trends, most around the genomics and proteomics and cosmeceuticals and all kinds of different things that will give us the ability to do some amazing things with our health. However, we got to have the core, and that takes some daily routine. That’s that I would be aware of, those hard trends that are allowing us to do things that we couldn’t do before from a health standpoint, like genetics and so on.

Back in '83 when I first said that we would be in a period of exponential change, in '83, again, not many people were talking about exponential change back then, but that’s because it was in the slow parts of the curve. It was predictable, going to get higher. Now we're in that time part of the curve. We’re in that holy-cow phase of the curve. It's important to realize we are in a tipping point and a unique period of time.

[00:41:00] Going back to the chief innovation officer versus the chief information officer, we're standing at the base of a mountain of technology-driven change and it is really a base of a mountain that is full of innovation, and we should be taking advantage of it. I think we need someone that understands technology at the C-suite that can help drive innovation, product and service innovation. That is why I suggested the chief information officer really be the chief innovation officer, because we need a C-suite person that knows how to do that.

Secondly, in that same Harvard Business Review article that I wrote, actually a second one, I talked about the chief technology officer needs to be the chief transformation officer, because, as I said, we're going to transform every business process. Someone at the C-suite who understands technology ought to be driving that internal transformation. I think that’s a good role for that one.

Bill:

[00:42:00] I'm definitely going to link up on the show notes to this, to our discussion. On the show notes page, I'll link out to those articles plus to burrus.com. In addition to that, you have that training program, which I found very, very interesting because building the anticipatory organization, which is that missing competency pieces. Is there anything else that you want to let the listeners know about how to reach you after we're done?

Daniel: Sure. I think if you liked what we've talked about, I know you would like Flash Foresight. It's been a New York Times, Wall Street Journal best-seller, and it's a required read, so I think, like many companies, I think you'd really enjoy it. If you go to burrus, B-U-R-R-U-S.com, you'll find quite a few resources. I think I've got a couple of million monthly blog readers. I think you'll find it good. Also, I'm one of the influencers on LinkedIn. I think I have just under 800,000 connections there. I think that might be a place to ... I write a couple of articles a week there, another place you could follow me.

Bill:  
[00:43:00] How did you get so many LinkedIn, 800,000? When I saw that, I was stunned. I said, gosh, I have to ask you that question. How did you go from ...? I have several thousand, but not 800,000.

Daniel: Yeah, I know. I think I'm in the top 35 in the world right now. Basically, it's providing value, giving insights. I do a lot of posting and writing, trying to help people either see the hard trend game-changers that they should be aware of or sharing strategies like the skip-it principle that I shared with you. I've got many that I've worked out over the years, or describing some of what I did to drive rapid results from some of the various businesses that either I've had myself or the companies I'm working with.

Bill:

[00:44:00] Daniel, I very much appreciate our time together, and I know my listeners are going to be so enthusiastic to listen to our discussion, and I'll link out to all of these resources on our show notes page. I appreciate you for your time today and your support in the community and to your holding all of us to a bigger vision of what's possible.

Daniel: All right. Thank you, Bill. I appreciate it.

Bill: Thank you, Daniel, Bye-bye.

Daniel: Bye.