

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**Gary Burnison**

CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER

**Jill Wiltfong**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

**Jonathan Dahl**

MANAGING EDITORS

**Meghan Walsh  
Russell Pearlman**

CREATIVE DIRECTORS

**Dwayne Shaw  
Jonathan Pink**

COPY CHIEF

**Nancy Wong Bryan**

COPY EDITOR

**Jeff Anderson**

SENIOR VISUALS EDITOR

**Alex Washburn**

AD MANAGER

**Kristen Walsh**

SENIOR DESIGNER

**Hayley Kennell**

DIGITAL MARKETING MANAGER

**Edward McLaurin**

MARKETING COORDINATOR

**Nadia Bianchi**

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

**Arianne Cohen**

**Simon Constable**

**Patricia Crisafulli**

**Daniel Goleman**

**Glenn Rifkin**

**Annamarya Scaccia**

**Ian A. Stewart**

REPORTER/RESEARCHER

**Vindhya Burugupalli**

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS

**Son Of Alan**

**Edmon De Haro**

**Rob Dobi**

**Maria Kalavera**

**Sean McCabe**



CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
**GARY BURNISON**



## Our Defining Moment

**W**e've reached a defining moment, one that will shape our future. We know what that feels like—we've had these moments before.

When I was 10 years old, I stood at the window on a cold, rainy day as a truck pulled up in front of our house. Two men appeared at our door and carried all our furniture away. My dad had gone bankrupt, and everything was repossessed. And I can still remember how embarrassed I felt as a young teenager by my dad's rusty, 30-year-old car that I didn't want my classmates to see. Then there was going to the grocery store and not wanting anyone to be behind us in line as we paid with food stamps.

Painful at the time, but pivotal over time.

Our colleague Mark Arian, who heads our global Consulting business, reached out to me to share another pivotal experience, from his early life. He was 11 years old when his mother was diagnosed with bone cancer and had to have her jaw removed and replaced with a mechanical device. Despite being in terrible pain, his mother refused to take painkillers, so she could be fully present for Mark and his two siblings. Just before Mark's 12th birthday, his mother died.

"Looking back now, I am filled with incredible pride for what she did," Mark told me. "I am reminded every day of her courage and sheer determination. She continues to inspire me, both as a parent of six children and as a leader."

All of us can think back to our own tough times. We all shared March and April 2020—the widespread fear and despair, the pain and suffering that followed. And yet, what if we

could have projected what the world would be like today?

Throughout our lives, we've all said, "If only I knew then what I know now, I would have ... [fill in the blank]." In today's defining moment, though, we do have that opportunity to anticipate what the world will look like tomorrow.

It starts by accurately perceiving the reality of today. All around us, we can feel the tremors. There are fault lines underfoot—fragmentation everywhere.

It's called remote work.

There is cataclysmic change in the workscape, the likes of which we haven't seen since the Industrial Revolution. Full time, part time, back to the office, hybrid, or something in between ... We've gone from subways and freeways to home-office bedrooms and kitchen-table desks. Liberating, yes—but also isolating. Here are some thoughts:

\*\*\*\*\*

### OUR TIES THAT BIND.

People want to become part of something bigger than themselves. With a strong sense of purpose—an overarching "why"—they are more likely to be aligned with the mission and values of the organization. But the truth is, when that purpose is lacking, disconnection happens. After all, people are the activators of purpose and the ultimate connectors within an organization. Purpose makes all the difference. And where does that



**“It’s never about the org charts or necessarily even about the products and processes. People make organizations. These are the ties that bind us together.”**

come from? Us—our experiences, the casual conversations, the happenstance connections, the accidental meetings. It's never about the org charts or necessarily even about the products and processes. People make organizations. These are the ties that bind us together.

\*\*\*\*\*

### HOW WE'RE WIRED.

As we go through this period of transformative change, we can find peace of mind—literally. While human brains are adaptable

and malleable (a very good thing!), they're also hardwired in ways that serve us well right now. Our brains are adaptive to change, which helps us break out of old habits and the rut we've been stuck in—a workscape of fragmentation, disconnection, a lot of Zoom, and individual ecosystems. The brain is also hyper-wired for connecting with others—and that's a fundamental need we all have.

Flash forward—six months, a year, two years. What do we foresee? We don't need to be prescient. Indeed, the answer lies in this defining moment. █