Corey Andrew Powell ([00:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hello everyone. I am Corey Andrew Powell. And welcome to Motivational Mondays. I am so thrilled today to be joined by Siobhan McHale, a global expert on workplace transformation. With over 30 years of experience in helping organizations become more agile and productive, Siobhan has been known for leading the radical culture shift at ANZ bank, which went from being the lowest performing bank in Australia to one of the most admired. Now, drawing from her new book, the Hive Mind at Work, Siobhan shares the lessons she learned from observing bees and how group intelligence can drive meaningful workplace change. Siobhan, welcome to Motivational Mondays.

Siobhan McHale ([00:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's great to be here. Thank you, Corey.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:37](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's my pleasure. We're glad you're here with us. And I will say, um, for anyone that's watching, um, there may be a little technical glitch here and there. I hear a little bit of a glitch in our audio, but it's for good reason because Siobhan is, is joining me today from Australia. So she's from Australia today. So, uh, just bear with us and hopefully we will get through this broadcast with very minimal technical glitches here today. So, uh, to begin with, Siobhan, your new book, which I have here. It's so great. It's called The Hive Mind at Work, and of course, as I mentioned, it draws inspiration from what you learned about how bees operate in an organ organizational sense. So please share with us how those, uh, observations, observations shaped this book.

Siobhan McHale ([01:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Sure, Corey. Well, as a child growing up in the village of Fane in Ireland, I was fascinated by the bees as they swarmed in the orchard of my family's farm. And that fascination with natural ecosystems led me on a career path to study human ecosystems or groups of people. Uh, I studied organizational psychology and then I went on to spend the first decade of my career as a management consultant, flying in and out of hundreds of organizations across four continents, helping leaders to manage and navigate change. And then I wanted to roll my sleeves up and actually do change myself. So I became the executive in charge of change in a series of international firms. And that's really the lens that I bring to the book, the Hive Minded work, that lens of being a change leader. And what do you learn as an insider?

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. So when you look at the observations you made with bees specifically, I mean, I'm very intrigued by that. And, and one thing that comes to mind is when I've always watched like these documentaries about bees, and there's like, for example, one behavior was like when there's like a queen of a hive and there are other bees who are sort of like designated as worker bees and then they know the to protect the queen. It's like all these attributes we would attribute to like humans really in a way. So that's one observation I've made. So share with me, like what are some of the observations you made where you thought, you know, bees are like people?

Siobhan McHale ([02:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Well, bees understand the power of role and the power of role reframing, which is one of the techniques that leaders can use to accelerate change. So every, in everyday life, the bees take up roles like, uh, forager going out, searching for nectar. Uh, they take up role of cleaners making the beehive one of the most sterile environments in nature. Or they could take up role of, um, protector of the hive. Uh, but when it comes to change, let's say the bees discover that the hive is overcrowded and they much must swarm to go in search of a new home, they split in the hive in two, then they take up very different roles. Uh, they, they, for example, 200 of the bees are sent out as scouts to search for, for a new home for the hive. So they take up the role where they go into old barns or into hollow trees, and, and they search out where is that perfect location for our next home. And they come back and report that to the rest of the hive members who might be temporarily staged on a tree branch.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Siobhan McHale ([04:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And they do a, a, a hi a, a dance, essentially a waggle dance in order to indicate to the other bees their excitement levels about the new home. And the more animated the dance, the more other bees go to check out this new potential real estate that they may eventually move to. So just fascinating their understanding of role, how they shift into different roles during change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([04:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. And then of course, if you were to correlate that to human behavior, it would be like, if you were to tell that same story as like there were some consultants who went out to find the next proposition or the next acquisition or the next whatever, and they found it and they brought it back to their colleagues or whoever sent them out to find it. And they all rejoiced and got excited and they took 'em, let me show you what we found. And they were like, yeah. I mean, it's sort of like it's mirroring human behavior in that way. That's fascinating.

Siobhan McHale ([05:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Absolutely. Absolutely. Because one of the things I talk about in the book, I give the bee story obviously at a high level, but also lots of business case examples of workplaces that have effectively, uh, navigated change by using what I call group intelligence.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes.

Siobhan McHale ([05:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And one of the things I say in the book is IQ and EQ are necessary but not sufficient for the complexity we face in workplaces today.

Corey Andrew Powell ([05:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. That's funny. 'cause you like literally like read my second question, which <laugh> was going to be how you discuss the power of group intelligence GQ in the book. But I do wonder how does that differ? Like how do you make the distinction between IQ and emotional intelligence?

Siobhan McHale ([05:48](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, so IQ or intellectual intelligence is fantastic for solving logical problems. So it's very good for technical challenges and uh, we can use IQ and we need to use IQ in order to solve those technical problems. EQ is good in terms of understanding the emotional landscape, so understanding your own emotions and understanding the emotions of those around you. However, those two intelligences are not sufficient for the complexity we face today. Often taking groups of people on a change journey. So for that challenge with groups of people, we need what I call group intelligence. And group intelligence enables you as a leader to understand group dynamics, to understand what's going on in the group, and to be able to intervene in that group in order to help the group to understand its reality, deliver its work, and adapt to its circumstances.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. So it would seem in that explanation you just gave a part of that has to be, when it comes to team members, a willingness to not try to be like the smartest person in the room, so to speak, um, to be collaborative and to sort of understand that it doesn't, it it takes more than one person sometimes to, um, I guess to, to to, to wield the results that we want. But it seems that you would need emotional intelligence to figure that out, though. That is a funny correlation between the two of them. Is that, is there a parallel there?

Siobhan McHale ([07:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I, I say it's an and not a neither or, so you need IQ plus EQ plus you need to now add GQ or group intelligence in order to understand what I talk about in the, in the book is the nine laws of group dynamics. You must understand these nine laws and be able to navigate the change. And I give people four steps in order to navigate group change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Siobhan McHale ([07:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And, uh, these nine laws are really important. And one of those nine laws to your earlier point is the law of multiple perspectives. And that is that with any group, there will always be multiple perspectives or lenses on the situation depending on where you sit. And you must be able to tap into these multiple perspectives in order to deliver the change and, and the best results in terms of the business outcomes.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. And that is so important as a timely message right now, because when we see corporations and there's a whole platform discussion now about what we call de and i or more inclusivity and, and diversity, people want a voice in what's going on in the organization. If they don't have a, a vested interest or someone has made them feel like their input is important, that would seem like it's already a, a non-starter for success. So I mean, in that regard, are you all, are you sort of also saying how there is an importance of getting those diverse opinions and voices and, and shared thought to sort of maybe even grow and learn and, and discover things that you might not have known otherwise?

Siobhan McHale ([09:10](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. If you want to create a movement or a swarm, you need to tap into the multiple perspectives in your organization. And this is not just a moral good <laugh>, it is the right thing to do, but it's also the best thing to do in terms of your business performance. It, it will yield much stronger results. It will, it will create a swarm of change when you tap into those multiple perspectives. And I give examples of this in the hive mind at work, how do you do that work? How do you understand these nine laws of group dynamics? And one of the things I've noticed is that as leaders, we we're taught about the importance of rationality and, and how to use and leverage our iq. We're we're taught about EQ and the importance of understanding our emotions and the emotions of individuals around us. But we're not taught about GQ or group intelligence. How do you deal with groups? How do you understand groups? How do you take groups on a change journey? Uh, this is what we need to rewire our brains for, for the systemic, for the collective, for understanding how groups operate and how they adapt.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. I will tell you how important this is for me because I've done this podcast now as the host, at least, uh, it's been three years, I would say. And we talk a lot about emotional intelligence and we talk a lot about the, the, uh, importance of what we call durable skills or soft skills.

Siobhan McHale ([10:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And like a digital world or an AI world. And it's always about emotional intel, emotional intelligence. I've never had a discussion about group intelligence before, like <laugh>, like this is really, oddly enough, it's a simple, um, construct and it makes so much sense what you're saying, but I don't think many people, um, are as verbose in promoting the group concept when it comes to intelligence like this is, do you find that that's sort of like a rarity that people are sort of like, I never really thought about that. It's more about individual and this is a different way of thinking. Like what is your, uh, what's the response been when you actually have tried to to share this?

Siobhan McHale ([11:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. I think it is a blind spot for us, but when people hear the concept, they go, oh, of course. It's in so sensible. And yet we haven't thought about this, which is quite bizarre. But as a leader, you know that when you are dealing with an individual, it's often very different to dealing with a group of people. You need a different set of skills because groups are paradoxically, they are complex, but underneath that complexity, there are often patterns if only we can see the patterns. So it is the same in all complex ecosystems, whether that be cities or, or cultures or families or climate systems or workplaces. We see this complexity. And often it's, it's almost like looking at a spider's web. You know, I talk to leaders about this concept of the spider's web because when they look to the left, they see a thread that's slow engagement. When they look to the right, there's another problem that they're facing, which might be poor quality. They look upwards and they see a safety issue and the trend of, of safety incidences going up. And they, they look down below and there's another thread where customers aren't satisfied and they think, wow, what, what thread do I pull? The more I pull these random threads, the more, um, enmeshed in this spider's web I'm becoming.

Corey Andrew Powell ([12:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Siobhan McHale ([12:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And actually they need to understand how to intervene in that complex system because it's not a mess. It's not a ramble jungle of, of random threads. It's actually a perfectly co-created pattern often, but they're not seeing the pattern and they're not understanding how they intervene in that complexity in order to find a way through and create meaningful, lasting systemic change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm.

Siobhan McHale ([13:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And those are the examples I've given the book about how do you intervene in complex systems in order to create the results that you want to create.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:31](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. Wow. Yeah, and I think you tap into something too about how the, these constructs are pretty universal. And I think when I hear things like that, I think of how that relays into everyday life too with our regular, um, relationships with people, whether they be personal relationships or friendships or, or our social environments as well as the business environment, everything sort of, you should always have that kind of critical thinking on. So everything is not something that's a tragedy, it's just another, another complexity that we can work through if we apply thinking methodical thought. And, you know, I just think it's universal in that regard.

Siobhan McHale ([14:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Absolutely. And one of the examples I've given the book, Corey, is the ANZ bank that you mentioned that went from the worst performing bank in the country to the highest performing bank in the country and the number one bank globally on the Dow Jones Sustainability Index. And when, when I walked into the bank, the executives were confused. They just restructured, you know, a technical intervention, let's restructure. That didn't work. And it actually had sent the bank backwards. So what we did was step back and see what is the pattern here. And what we noticed was that head office was in role of order giver, and the 700 branches in the bank were in role of order taker. And the pattern or agreement between head office and the branches was we take orders from head office.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Siobhan McHale ([15:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And that pattern was running the whole ecosystem and leading to the branches feeling disengaged, de-energized and very poor customer satisfaction rates. So we had to see the pattern, reframe the roles, and rewire the organization with the new operating model in order to create the change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([15:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. That's fascinating. And would you say a lot of that had to do with people, right? Um, we hear that term a lot, people first, but you actually, it sounds like those individual branches then had a vested interest in the overall wellbeing of the company because they were brought into the mix. That's sort of like what I take as the cliff notes there. Is that accurate?

Siobhan McHale ([15:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I think the key was the reframing at the collective level. Often we intervene with let's send the people on training. They, they, the customers aren't happy, they need customer service training or let's put in a new system, you know, these types of technical interventions. But what we did was see, see the pattern that connected between the branches and the head office and reframe the role of the head office from order giver to enabler and reframe the role of the branches from order taker to, uh, customer service leaders. So that reframing and the enabling systems that we put in, it was a long journey. It was seven years. But that reframing and the redesign of the operating model was really the start of the change because people hold a mental map of their role in their head at an individual and also an AC at a collective level. And these mental maps guide and shape our behaviors in a way that is just as powerful as personality, except we, we don't often realize that role is shaping our behavior in a way that is very powerful. So I would say reframing role is a good place to start your change journey.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. And that's a very familiar example too, because in my world, working in marketing as a copywriter for many years, very often a client would come to us and just say, we need a campaign that does this. And, you know, we'd run off. And of course you'd come back and it was like not what they wanted at all. And then someone just had the most magical idea, very simple, why don't we include them in the conversation first, the, the people who were asking us, because otherwise we feel like a short order cook just being given orders in a restaurant, and we're just.

Siobhan McHale ([17:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And it was this very similar dynamic and it, it, it had a whole other, uh, result once we started from the bottom and said, let's all meet collectively together on one level and talk through this project. What are your objectives? What do you hope is the outcome? And it makes all the difference in the world. So I love that it's cross industry what you're saying, it goes across every industry.

Siobhan McHale ([17:56](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Yeah. You can use these techniques in, in any change in any industry. The, the key thing is that you begin to rewire your brain for groups, not just for individuals and not just for the technical changes that you face. You, you, you know, often when I speak with leaders, they, um, they've been taught to think in terms of their functional expertise. So an engineer can design a bridge over a wide river. Uh, a marketing executive can create a, a plan for a product rollout. A finance manager can create a budget for a department, but ask these people to design an intervention to bring about change in a group. And, uh, they really draw blank faces often because we haven't been taught how to intervene in those complex human ecosystems in order to bring about change. And, uh, one of the first places you start is understanding the patterns. So in the ANZ example, what was the big pattern running the organization? It was the order taker pattern where one part was giving the orders to another. We had to see that pattern and reframe the roles in order to bring about change, putting in more systems, more training. All of those usual interventions were restructuring. They were not working.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. When it comes to reframing those roles, then, would you say that is one of the main difficulties or pitfalls that you have experienced when it comes to workplaces trying to bring about change? Or, or are there any others that you think are also problematic that you have helped people work through?

Siobhan McHale ([19:42](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Oh, very. Every change is different. So you must see the reality of what is going on in that particular ecosystem. For example, another, I give lots of examples in the book, but another example that I gave was at an infrastructure company where they were facing complaints, increased complaints from clients. And when I spoke to the newly appointed gm, she was quite frustrated and she wanted to, uh, she said, oh, I think we need new equipment because you know, the, it's an old fleet or equipment's out of date, and clients aren't very happy about that. And I said, well, before we spend millions of dollars on a new fleet, let me take a look at what's going on. Uh, so I went to some sites and on one of the sites, I, I talked to the project manager who was falling behind in terms of the laying of cables in, uh, one district. And, um, customer was very, uh, frustrated by that, but he was digging his way through hard quartz rock in an old goldfields region in, in Victoria, in Australia. And he said, well, the rock is harder and we need jumbo drills to get through this rock. And I said, but did you not know that in this region there was this hard quartz rock? And he said, yeah, we, we, we did know, but we just didn't factor it in. So now we're waiting for this, these jumbo drills to come. So this was an example of what I call the reactive pattern where nobody was really planning ahead. Then they were sending in the firefighters to compensate for that lack of planning and dig, dig faster. And the whole organization, it wasn't just happening on that project, it was happening on multiple projects where you had these heroes flying in to save the day or to compensate for lack of planning.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm.

Siobhan McHale ([21:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So that reactive pattern where you had a lack of planning, you had compensators, and then you had the people on site being the rescued ones, they needed rescuing that pattern was running the whole organization. So we had to see that pattern, the reactive pattern, and start to intervene to, um, rewire that pattern in the organization before change would happen.

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:53](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. That reminds me of a very common expression here in the US where we're always, uh, when someone comes to us in a panic because they didn't plan ahead, and the expression is a lack of planning on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine. However, if you're in a charge of a business, it does become your problem <laugh> and you have to try to fix it. And that sounds expensive, what you just mentioned too, like

Siobhan McHale ([22:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Well, you know, the, the automatic response of the general manager was, let's buy new fleet. We need new trucks, we need new Utes, we need new equipment. But that was a technical solution to an adaptive problem. Actually, the solution was that she needed to reframe the role of her project managers to the prepared ones, the planned ones. What she did in order to help that situation was she started to put in a review team that would review every proposal and make sure that they were looking out for risks. Like, is there hard courts rock in that region that might slow us down? We might need jumbo drills in order to get through it. So this intervention of a review team really looking out for and managing for risk, uh, started to help the organization to rewire and, uh, not sending in the firefighters afterwards to compensate for the lack of planning.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Siobhan McHale ([23:19](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

So, you know, the whole organization was, um, full of these firefighters. They were the heroes that got brought in to save the day when the sites needed to be rescued. Uh, so we had to see that pattern and, uh, find ways to intervene to, to shift that dynamic in the group.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. And again, that's one of those things too where you can translate to regular everyday life just, uh, preparation, preparedness. I mean, it's, it's funny how sometimes the most simple things that save the day, once we really look at them critically thinking, yes, they're really simple, just, Hey, but did anyone test the rock <laugh>

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Simple Concept.

Siobhan McHale ([24:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([24:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

That's very,

Siobhan McHale ([24:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And it's, um, it's that reactive pattern that the organization have become blind to, and that's another one of the nine laws of group dynamics is pattern blindness. When we're in an ecosystem, a human ecosystem, we can often become blind to the patterns that are running that ecosystem. And in the infrastructure company's case, it was the reactive pattern In the a NZ case, it was the order taker pattern. And when you're in that ecosystem, it's very easy to get caught by the pattern. And within a matter of weeks, you, you can become blind to it.

Corey Andrew Powell ([24:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Sure.

Siobhan McHale ([24:43](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

It's just the way things are done. So.

Corey Andrew Powell ([24:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm, <affirmative>.

Siobhan McHale ([24:45](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. For, for, for change leaders, they need to see the reality. They need to spend time diagnosing what's really going on and seeing these patterns that others may have become blind to.

Corey Andrew Powell ([24:58](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah. Yeah. I can't imagine how many times, I know I have personally, and I'm sure you have too, been in situations where someone tells you at an organization when you have a suggestion on how to do something different or differently, they will say, oh, well we don't do it that way. We've always done it like this.

Siobhan McHale ([25:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:14](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And that's how, right. That's always the go-to, but that's not working. So why would you respond that way, <laugh>.

Siobhan McHale ([25:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes. And the thing, when that happens as a change leader, 'cause often as change leaders, we, we face that response, what do you do then? Who teaches you this? You know, this is the response I'm getting. What should I do?

Corey Andrew Powell ([25:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right.

Siobhan McHale ([25:36](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And I talk about that in the, in the hive mind at work. What is your response when you face that resistance? And, uh, for, for some people they push, they push the change through, but what that emerges in the ecosystem is what I call the pushback pattern. The harder you push, the harder the system push, pushes back on the change, and often sabotages the change in subtle and often not so subtle ways. So how do you avoid what I call the pushback pattern? How do you intervene when you, when you face that resistance, and what is that resistance telling you and what should be your next move? So these are all the things that, you know, leaders are not always taught how to, how to navigate.

Corey Andrew Powell ([26:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. Yeah. And I can imagine some really great ideas die that way because they're not heard, because the leader who's trying to propose something new gets shut down with, we don't do it that way. That's not how we do it. And then you just retreat back to your corner and the company keeps going forward doing everything wrong again.

Siobhan McHale ([26:40](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes. Yes. So how do you enter a human ecosystem or a group and create change without facing what you could call organ rejection?

Corey Andrew Powell ([26:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>.

Siobhan McHale ([26:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Where the, the ecosystem spits you out because you're too radical, it's too scary. They're, you know, banging on about this change that nobody wants. Um, and I've seen that so many times where, you know, people just fa are, are rejected, eject, thrown out of the system because they don't know how to intervene.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Mm-hmm. <affirmative>.

Siobhan McHale ([27:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

In the group in order to, what I call nudge the change in order to hold the mirror up to the system in order to allow it to see itself.

Corey Andrew Powell ([27:30](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. Yeah, no, that's, that's a great point because just, it's about a couple things there. Accountability and just, um, transparency. You know, everybody, if they can see what's really going on and be honest about what they see, and then the accountability, what role do I play and what's happening here, how can that role be better? And then for leaders as well to, as we mentioned earlier, admit, you're not you, you're not always the smartest person in the room. The smartest person in the room will make sure that those around them have the great ideas so they can be a collective to make things work. So yes.

Siobhan McHale ([28:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yes. Also understanding role in system. So let's say you're a culture, you know, you're trying to change the culture. You might even be a DEI expert. Um, you know, often you're told, well, oh, great. You know, I mean, I've been in this situation where the culture is bad. You know, I've gone into that same infrastructure company that I talked about, and, uh, they were not commercial, they were losing a lot of money. And I was brought into change the culture to make them more commercial. And I had a conversation with the CFO, the chief financial officer, where he was explaining how bad it was and how they really needed culture change. And at the end of the hour, we stood up, he shook my hand and he said, wishing you all the best of luck, Siobhan with the culture change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([28:50](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm.

Siobhan McHale ([28:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

And in that moment, I realized that the CFO and probably all the other executives thought it was my role and my role alone to change the culture,

Corey Andrew Powell ([29:01](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Right, yeah.

Siobhan McHale ([29:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

About this change. So what we've often got to do, and particularly DEI leaders, is to enroll other parts of the system in their change leader role. Yes, you are a change leader, uh, from your expert role, but actually it's the CEO and the executive team who are the diversity and inclusion leaders. They must lead the change from their role, and you will enable that change from your lead role as the expert, providing them with tools, with support, with, um, yeah, with, with training, with, with expertise that you have. But you from your role as expert, cannot lead the change. And this is another one of the things I talk about in the group, understanding role and system. If you try and take up the role of change leader, uh, and, and step into their role, you will eventually fail. And, you know, the, the system will, um, after time eject you because you're in an inappropriate role. You cannot bring about that change from your role in the system, and eventually the system will become cynical and will spit you out because you won't be getting the results. So you must understand role and system and be able to intervene in order to frame people's roles and, and allow them to step into their unique roles in this change.

Corey Andrew Powell ([30:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. That is brilliant. That is great advice. And, um, it definitely drives home the whole organ rejection <laugh> analogy, because that's exactly what that would be like. So, um, that's amazing. So thank you for sharing that insight. Um, I have one final question for you, which is relating to leadership and, and today's workplace. And that question is, in your experience, uh, what skills you think are today's most important for leaders to survive in a very, like, constantly changing workspace, whether it be the whole idea with hybrid versus remote versus on site. I mean, there's a lot going on there. So what are some of the most maybe one or two important skills for navigating that landscape?

Siobhan McHale ([31:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Yeah, I would say, again, back to the point about if you think IQ and EQ are going to get you to where you need to get to, you need to think again. Because in a sea of change, we are drowning. And the only way to navigate in that complexity is to understand complex ecosystems. And that is where group intelligence comes into play. And as you said earlier, we haven't heard about this, and we need to get, um, to rewire our brains for the systemic. We need to rewire our brains to understand how groups function, and we need to rewire our brains in order to be able to intervene in complexity, make sense of it, and, uh, help groups to grow, deliver, and adapt. So I, I would say rewiring for group intelligence and for complexity is, is one of the, the skills that leaders really need to step into so that they can navigate in the grain, navigate in complexity.

Corey Andrew Powell ([32:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Hmm. Excellent. Wonderful. Very insightful, wonderful words of wisdom from Siobhan McHale. And, uh, this is, uh, I, you know, I'd love conversations like this because I think for our audience, which is a college age audience to non-traditional students as well, who are much older, there's just a wealth of knowledge there that can help you through various stages of your career. So Siobhan McHale, global Expert in Workplace Transformation, and author of the Hive Mind at Work, thank you so much for being here today with me on Motivational Mondays.

Siobhan McHale ([32:38](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/btRzaG8bTb0-NdIA9-pG8cVWty8kE4UNim3c1kW_pEn8r_zBBsESn8KK011ypw1HbvAHgIqU3-aev8LYioCuz9_5j9c?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink)):

Thank you, Corey.