T1A EP 30 Adaptability Achieves Enduring Excellence

**Brian:** Welcome to the One Advantage Podcast, exploring the intersections of pure power, culture, and agility. Your host, Jason Richmond, Mike Richardson and Leo Bottary, co-founders of the One Advantage Community of Practice and Advantage Peer Groups. For more information, please visit us at idealoutcomesinc.com.

**Mike:** Hey everybody. Here we are once again for another episode of the One Advantage Podcast, and once again, it looks like we have just got a whole full house here. I'm just not sure anymore how that happens. We got Jason Richmond. We got Leo Bottary, and we got Mike Richardson here. Everybody freshly with a brand new e-book that just got released.

We're gonna talk more about that in a moment. We are here to do a fantastic, episode, All around vuca, volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, adaptability, Regi, resilience and agility. We'll talk more about that in a moment, but first, as ever, let's find out where everybody's been. Leo, you are here. Once again, it's awesome.

Thanks for being here. What have you been up to?

**Leo:** Great to be here as well. I was in Calgary. Earlier this week. Oh, and always love visiting Calgary. Love visiting Canada. Really enjoyed that quite a bit. And then I will be in Denver all week next week and so really looking forward to that as well.

I fly there Monday come back on Friday night and just a packed week. So really excited about that. Busy every day except on Wednesday afternoon. We'll be going to the Colorado Rockies game with my daughter-in-law and all that. So it'll be a fun time,

**Mike:** Unfortunately, I think you, Jason, are not in Denver next week, right? You're out here next week, aren't you? So you guys will miss each other like ships in the night.

**Jason:** Yeah, and I've been in in the lovely state of Colorado all week this week working in the home base, preparing for next week, getting ready for for a week in orange County in southern California.

Your guy's neck of the woods.

**Mike:** Yeah,

**Jason:** if you will.

I have a full week calendar dealing with a lot of the topics we're talking about today. Yeah. Changing the way we do things, continuous improvement, the speed and magnitude of change. It's an exciting time.

**Mike:** Yeah.

And are we gonna have a chance for a glass of wine then? Jason, when

**Jason:** you're out here? I think you probably will. Yeah, we'll figure that out for sure.

**Mike:** Can we sneak that in? We're about a hundred miles from each other, but yeah that hundred miles would be worth it. Jason, just have one glass of wine with you.

**Jason:** All right.

**Mike:** Excellent. Great, everybody. Look, I've been looking forward to this one. Not least of all, because this is my, Wheelhouse. It's Jason's wheelhouse. It's Leo's as well. Of course. Adaptability, achieves enduring excellence. Resility and adaptability are necessary to succeed in our world, filled with volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity.

There's that VUCA thing everybody. Successful teams don't just weather the storm of extreme situations, but they pivot to meet the immediate challenge and use the opportunity to improve on what they've previously been doing.

Wow, that's right down our street. The e-book that we just published, everybody that we will put the link in the show notes.

It's available as a Kindle version e-book is all about this. It's the one advantage how to introduce into your organization a pure powered culture. Of agility. So Jason, let's start with you. As you think about this whole thing, adaptability, resilience, vuca, how do you think about this? Tell us more.

**Jason:** I was thinking about this the other day, Mike and Leo and if you real, really peel back the onion it's the exact reason why the one advantage came to be.

**Mike:** Yeah,

**Jason:** We, we started, we, we started working together and partnering and developed the one advantage to tackle.

Exactly what we're talking about today. And in your opening there, you talked about improving on what organizations have been previously doing. And at the core, that's what the One Advantage does. That's what the One Advantage ebook is introducing, is the ability to not rock your world or necessarily do everything different.

But to adapt and improve on what you are previously doing, and it, it stuck with me and it really in the essence is why we exist, why the one advantage exists today.

**Mike:** Yeah. And everybody, the one advantage remember is a peer powered culture of agility. The real key word there is culture.

How do you have a culture of agility?

How do you have a peer powered culture, everybody to have that resilience, to have that adaptability, to have that agility to not only whether the storms, but to use every. Stress test to ratchet up to the next level and break through and take the game to an all new level.

Leo, how do you think about all of this?

**Leo:** I think the, of course, my inclination is to stress the peer powered part

**Mike:** exactly

**Leo:** as when it comes to culture, largely because leaders can do a lot to set the tone for the culture. But that's it. That's all they can do. Yeah. The culture is really about, everyone in it. Not only just what's top down, but what runs across.

And when we think about how we engage our peers in the workplace, they help us do two things to keep us agile. One, they help us look in the mirror, they help us see ourselves more clearly. But I think also more importantly, because you're dealing with peers that have a lot of diverse perspectives and experiences, that's your way to look out the window.

That's your way to see what's happening, what's coming, how to think about things that don't just aren't just rooted in one way of seeing or looking at the world. And with things changing as quickly as they do, having really strong, trusting relationships with peers who are committed to that level of agility, Mike, that you talk about so much.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Leo:** I think it's just so crucial to any culture.

**Mike:** And I've always loved, I've always loved Leo, your kind of description of the sort of horizontals and the verticals, and you I think, talk about the scaffolding that then becomes, and the horizontals make the vertical stronger. Just touch upon that again, because I think that is such a, Simple and powerful analogy that you use.

**Leo:** Yeah, I think it's just easy for people to look at their organizations in terms of their CEOs, their executive VPs, senior VPs, directors, managers, the whole thing there. And the reality though, of course, is while that vertical structure can be important, what runs horizontally gives that vertical structure, it's integrity.

People have to work together with one another. It helps break down silos, it helps us, helps do a lot of things to really keep an organization highly functioning. So I think it's essential.

Yeah.

**Mike:** Yeah. And of course, everybody and Jason haven't we've talked about cross-functional teamwork forever.

**Jason:** Yeah, for sure.

**Mike:** We've talked about interdepartmental collaboration and coordination and co and communication for ever. Yeah, so we're not just talking about that. Again, everybody at a back to basics level, what we're talking about here is what Leo calls a peer advantage. How can you have those horizontals strengthening your verticals within this sort of scaffolding analogy?

How can you have that clicking, to a level above what average companies can do so that it becomes an advantage, a peer advantage that you are enjoying in the minority, compared to those who aren't in the majority, they're still talking about interdepartmental, cross-functional, all this kind of stuff.

But that's just that's just a qualifier these days. It's not a differentiator. Jason as you think about all of that what would you add?

**Jason:** We're seeing it more and especially coming out of coming outta the pandemic, and now we're past the first quarter of the year, we're seeing more of this, cross-functional integration in all of our client engagements, right? It's, we're doing less and less in, with siloed groups and we're doing a lot more engagement from cross-functionally and not just cross-functionally from, from from a job role or a department but intersections of regions, cultures, even on a global basis.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Jason:** So instead of cohorts or learnings or engagements, within a department or within a team, now it's on a global basis where we're getting representation of different regions, into our engagements. Delivered on a virtual platform. And it's fundamentally changed.

You talk about VUCA and driving change and all these things, it's fundamentally changed the way organizations are developing the people, the way they're learning. They're,

**Mike:** yeah.

**Jason:** The consistency they're building across their leadership ranks and their culture, cause of this integration cross-functionally.

**Mike:** Yeah. Yeah. Everybody, I realize I got so excited about talking about having a glass of wine with Jason that I forgot to mention that I did get to have a glass of wine with Leo last week or the week before because I was invited to be the keynote speaker at the San Diego all member meeting of Ref.

Formerly Renaissance executive forums. And Leo was kind enough to go out of his way to come and be in the room with over a hundred people. And Leo, I spoke about what I called a sort of five level reset. Everybody the first three levels of which are all about a peer powered culture agility.

How do you develop that peer advantage level one. How do you develop that cultural advantage? Level two? How do you develop that agility advantage? Level three, and we went all the way up to level five, everybody that I called an intelligence advantage because I started talking about the fact that here we are everybody's, getting the big buzz going on about chat, G P T and all the other kinds of artificial intelligence that are starting to show up.

Human intelligence is still gonna be crucial. What the kinds of things we've been talking about here and the coming together of both of those things, human intelligence and artificial intelligence, we call collective intelligence.

And so really this is gonna become a battleground, everybody of who can develop an intelligence advantage, by the way that they bring together the collective intelligence of humans and computers to play the game at an all new level above to have the agility you need in a VUCA world.

Not least all. It was amazing, wasn't it, Leo? How many people were just like scratching their heads at that session We were at, frankly, relatively speaking, completely oblivious to the vuca.

That artificial intelligence is gonna introduce into our world probably bigger, faster, and sooner than we think.

What would you say about all of that, Leo?

**Leo:** A couple things. First of all, excellent keynote and. And you want a keynote or on a topic that is on top of mind with everybody right now? You'd need to give Mike a call.

Cause that was really well done.

**Mike:** Thank you.

**Leo:** It was excellent. But I think it also, I think it shined a light on the fact of we have to be very intentional, about how we're going to address the future. We can't wait for it to come upon us because it will wash over us in a way that the speed of change the rate of change and what's gonna happen in the next six months to a year, five years is going to knock the socks off of what people think they've experienced with change in the past.

It's gonna be that much faster and that much more impactful. That's gonna require, I think a hyper level of communication among people in a company. Mike, when you talk about the fact that this has gotta be beyond the basics, this is next level.

This isn't just about knowing what each other does and knowing who to ask for help about what, which in most organizations, they have a hard enough time doing that.

I'm talking about how do we really. Get a sense of ourselves, our strengths and what's going on in the world, and how do we become intentional and how do we exactly define what we expect of ourselves and others in terms of how we leverage the change in the new

**Mike:** world. Yeah. Get set. Everybody. We buckle up.

What we're really trying to say to you here is there's gonna be a massive reset. And whatever you thought was fast, the last 2, 3, 4 years, whatever you thought was fast is gonna get redefined as slow. Whatever you thought was winning in the last 2, 3, 4, 5 years is gonna get redefined as losing.

And whatever, whatever level of. Teamwork or cultural communication you thought you were at, you thought you were at level five, max used, Jim Collins, level five leadership, whatever it is, whatever you think level five is, it's gonna get reset to level zero. And those are just qualifiers.

They're not differentiators, they're not winning strategies that's gonna keep you playing in the minor leads, not the major leagues. What would you, what would, what fuel would you add on all of that fire? Jason,

**Jason:** Leo.

Leo, hit upon something strategic with this and. I think especially artificial to ai it's coming into the world very quickly.

And it's a lot more than just ChatGPT and being strategic and understanding how to use it to your advantage. So I like to compare it. It's a, it's an example and an analogy, right? Look at self-driving cars. What manufacturer now doesn't have a self-driving component? Now, if I'm driving through the bad line, bad lands, or driving through, man, Montana can see 50 miles.

I'm pretty comfortable there, right? If I'm driving on Interstate 70 through the Rocky Mountains, I'm not going

**Mike:** there.

I'm keeping one hand on the wheel.

**Jason:** Yeah. And in my world, and this isn't an old, this isn't a new model, but from a learning and development model, the 70 20 10 model where organizations today has really revamped this initiative where companies are expecting, leadership development, individual contributor development even executive development. 70% of it's learned on the job. And as, as AI gets integrated into our daily activities, the amount of learning that's gonna happen is gonna be huge. The 20% of that is, is your self-learning. You're responsible, with your mentor or go out and do self-development, right?

10% of people's learning and development and education now is being relied on from out outside sources. Yeah. So AI integrating in inside the organization as a learning tool is going to change learning and development strategy like we've never seen before.

**Mike:** It was interesting, wasn't it, Leo? When I was doing that keynote last week I asked for a show of hands, as I got started up, I said, okay, who's played with ChatGPT?

Most hands went up in the room and then I asked, okay, ChatGPT is just one kind of artificial intelligence application who's using some other kind of, Artificial intelligence application in their business. There were maybe six hands left up in the room out of a hundred and something people, and then I asked people, I said, oh, by the way it's called ChatGPT, who in the room knows what G P T stands for?

There wasn't one hand in the room apart from Leo's. Leo's hand was still up, right? There wasn't one other hand in the room. They will be playing with this thing, but they have no idea what G P T stands for. It stands for generative pre-trained transformer.

So yeah, playing with it is one thing, but really understanding it, really getting our heads into it and really getting out ahead, everybody of how can I begin to apply some artificial intelligence. A technology to my business. If you fall behind that curve you're gonna regret it. What would you say, Leo, on, on top of all of that?

**Leo:** I think that maybe my hand was stuck in the air, possibly. I'm not sure that I knew what that was either. But I appreciate the the whatever benefit of the doubt I was given there. No, you've really touched on it. We have gotta figure out how what's out there can apply.

Yeah. And not just what's out there right now, but where things are going. I think we've gotta get a sense of where things are headed directionally and what's gonna be available to us.

And by the way, there's an aspect of this, not only how we can use it positively, but how it, because quite frankly, there are people that are gonna be using it And have real nefarious motives and all that. And we have to understand where those things are gonna come from, especially if they can threaten our business in any way. Yeah. So I think understanding all of that becomes really important.

**Mike:** Yeah, and it was interesting. I had one, one when we did the breakouts.

I had one. I was wondering around the different breakouts, and I had one audience member sort of say hang on a minute, Mike, what you're telling me is that this is all gonna shape up in the next year, 3, 5, 7 years. How on earth am I supposed to be able to predict that future seven years out?

I clearly can't, and therefore there's nothing really that I can do. I can't put a strategic plan together. For those seven years because I can't predict where things are gonna end up. And therefore, I'm, I, there's nothing I can do. And I turned to him and I said, that's exactly the point.

Being agile is not about predicting the future. How could you possibly predict the future? You couldn't, possibly 30 years ago, you couldn't possibly predicted the future of the internet. 30 in 30 years time so being agile, everybody is not about predicting the future, it's B, it's about being ready for a range of futures.

Imagine 30 years ago when the internet was emerging that you decided to sit on your hands because I can't predict the future. There's nothing I can do about the future, and therefore I'm gonna almost ignore it. You couldn't po you didn't do that, number one, and number two, you couldn't possibly do that.

It's the same again, everybody, it's like the beginning of the internet. Many pundits say that this wave of change that's gonna come at you again, the tsunami of change that's gonna come at you again out of AI is similar to what it was like 30 years ago. When, do you remember when we first started getting into the internet and we thought it was just gonna be a place where I could put up a website that was a digital replacement for my brochure.

That's, that's all we thought it was. And 30 years later, look at us now. Yeah. It's just amazing, Jason. You get to walk the hallways a as does Leo. You get to walk the hallways of a lot of organizations. Yeah. What are some of the things that you see people starting to do right? To be ready for a range of futures and what are some of the things that you see them continuing to do wrong, to be ready for a range of futures.

**Jason:** Something I start some, a big trend, something I've seen an initiative in all organizations that I've been working with. Mike has been this higher level of collaboration.

**Mike:** Yep.

**Jason:** We are seeing it daily in organizations not just by the way they've restructured their offices and as people are coming back to work in their different work structures.

We've talked about all that on podcasts in the past, but truly driving collaboration groups, teams, peer groups to forecast or to plan or to identify problems or solve problems. We are seeing that I more than I've ever seen it in 20 years, the level of collaboration within organizations I've seen is a big increase.

And, part of VUCA is complexity, right?

**Mike:** Yep.

**Jason:** And complexity is all about managing relationships between different factors. Mike, you mentioned earlier, collective intelligence Yep. Versus artificial intelligence. I just published a blog about collective intelligence will never be truly replaced.

By artificial intelligence, but there's a relationship there now.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Jason:** And the relationship between those two levels of intelligence. Is creating a higher level of collaboration within organizations.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Jason:** And part of overcoming this book issue is dealing with that complexity that's gonna enter every company.

**Mike:** Yeah. Because you, you're never not gonna need the human intelligence

**Jason:** Correct.

**Mike:** Piece of the puzzle. Yep. The more that artificial intelligence comes on stream, it's actually gonna be the exact opposite. The more that you need the human intelligence to be going to the next level.

**Jason:** Correct.

**Mike:** So that the collective intelligence of both is breaking through.

By the way, everybody the domain of research for collective intelligence runs as broad and as deep and as rich, as the domain of research for artificial intelligence, it is a whole domain all of its own. And it's all about how do you get human intelligence and artificial intelligence to come together to achieve more than either could achieve alone.

And that's the key. And I think Jason, really, you could frame it this way, couldn't you? That this added degree of collaboration that we're seeing on a bigger scope and scale than ever before, really is a way for organizations to take their intelligence advantage to a next level.

I've got all of this brain power, I've got all of this horsepower. Yep. How do I get it to click and use it to my advantage more? Than ever before. What Leo, as you travel around as much as you do and you interact with so many CEOs and executives of diverse industries and businesses and shapes and sizes globally, what do you see and hear of people beginning to do things right versus continuing to do things wrong?

**Leo:** I think two things. One is all of the stuff we've been talking about with adaptability, really involves us building muscles around two things. One, experimentation. We have to learn to experiment. We need to try things, learn, try things again, learn. But then among our peers, it's now try things, learn, communicate what we've learned, share what we've learned, and drive up that learning curve for everybody and that's what's gonna keep us.

So that. So I would encourage, for example, if you've got a ChatGPT, ai, app on your phone, or if you don't have one, get one and start playing with it. Start experimenting with it. By the way, one of the breakouts, as you recall after your keynote, Mike, was we were all supposed to get together and talk about some questions related to your.

Keynote presentation. So we had an hour to do that. So I'm sitting there with all these folks, right? There's 10 of us. I'm like, screw that. Why don't I just put the questions into Chad, jp, it out, the answer in like about four minutes. We said, all we're good. We're done. About 30 seconds, I think, and all just ripped down.

All the key points were all made. I said, alright, what else do we wanna talk about? And but we had some fun with that, but the, and the point of course is that, And this is where we learned to ask better questions, because now the more precise the questions, the more targeted we can be about things, the more we can find out.

So when you got to your question about how am I supposed to predict the future on one hand you have a tool you can ask. You can look at economic trends, you can look at all kinds of things now that allow for a whole different level of understanding about maybe what's next. Yeah.

And it's not gonna be, the exact piece, but it's, but directionally, it's gonna give you some things to think about. It's gonna open your eyes to a lot of possibilities.

**Mike:** Yeah. So we we've now got ourselves a great new ebook. Everybody that's out there and we just literally released it in the last few days, frankly, or certainly week or so, and we'll put the link in the show notes. You can get it up there in Amazon as a Kindle version. It's about, I think 60 pages, everybody. So it's it's a fairly quick read and it's I think it's in five chapters. And it really steps through this idea of how do you introduce into your organization a, the, this concept of the one advantage, a peer powered.

Culture of agility. And so the real meat and the sandwich of that book is a chapter devoted to each of those three things, peer power, culture, and then agility. And we've even got a nice little cover quote there from Alan Mulally who used to be the CEO of Ford and before that, the CEO of Boeing.

And in both cases, frankly what he did was a massive turnaround of peer powered cultures of agility in both places. Cuz Boeing has been through challenging phases in its history, and we certainly know that Ford has which is why Alan Mulally got called in there and in many ways what he did.

And there's a whole, there's a whole chapter in there devoted to this, that. That Alan Mulally himself reviewed and signed off on in many ways. What he did is really develop a collective intelligence advantage inside of Ford. Between 2006 and 2014, I think it was that he was there. So I knew ebook is out, everybody.

It's it's a really cool and really quick read. And Jason what would you say about about the work that we did together that produced the ebook?

**Jason:** I think it really is a foundation of transformation organizations today, whether they realize it or believe it or not, are in the middle of a transformation period.

**Mike:** Yeah.

**Jason:** And VUCA and outside factors and artificial intelligence and the way we work. All of those things combined are gonna transform almost every company we know. Yeah. In some way, shape, or form. And I think it sets a really good foundation for all of that.

**Mike:** Yeah. Excellent. Yeah. And Leah, what would you add?

**Leo:** Just that working on the book created a whole new level of interconnectedness. We understood how the three might work together, but then now you dig much deeper. And that's where I think We certainly benefited in terms of advancing the work, and I think the readers will also.

**Mike:** Yeah, the concept, everybody, of course, is a peer powered culture of agility is your one and only competitive advantage really, at the end of the day.

It's the only thing that has any degree of permanence. Everything else is increasingly temporary, increasingly quickly, probably bigger, faster, and sooner than you think. Maybe even bigger, faster, and sooner than your worst nightmare in this exponential age of change that we're heading into.

If you thought that was fast, think again, that was slow. If you thought that was winning, think again. That was losing. And check it out everybody over there at Amazon and as a Kindle ebook. We'll make sure that the link is in the show notes.

There we have it once again, another full house of a One Advantage podcast on our favorite topic of all time.

Adaptability, achieves enduring Excellence. Everybody. Thanks for being here, Leo. Thanks for being here, Jason. Thanks for being here, listeners. We will see and hear you next time.

**Jason:** Thank you, team.

**Leo:** Thank you.

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