CYRIELKORTLEVEN.COM
global speaker

CYRIEL KORTLEVEN
MAKING CHANGE SIMPLE











For more than 20 years, Cyriel Kortleven has been helping organisations navigate change - with courage, clarity and creativity. Known as The Simplifier, he cuts through complexity and turns big challenges into practical, human-centred action.

WHY CYRIEL?

MOST SPEAKERS EXPLAIN CHANGE. I MAKE IT SIMPLER.

I've spent twenty years helping professionals navigate change - across industries, cultures and company sizes. From global giants like Unilever, IKEA and Bayer to organisations in every industry you can think of. Forty-two countries. Thousands of professionals. And 345+ recommendations from people who've seen it firsthand.

Different industries. Different cultures. Different challenges. But the same pattern, every single time: too much complexity, not enough clarity.
That's the problem I solve. Not with theory or frameworks - but with simple tools, unexpected humour and a direct style that makes people think differently and actually move.

I'm not a consultant who tells you what to change. I'm a speaker who changes how people think about change. That's a different job. And it tends to leave a different impression.

The best way to experience that is live. The second best is to watch my showreel - an honest snapshot of the energy, interaction and impact of my sessions.
www.cyrielkortleven.com/showreel

A few times a year I also host a free C.I.A. - Cyriel In Action session. An online taster where you can see me work in real time - before you decide anything.
www.cyrielkortleven.com/cyriel-in-action

Don't mind the Change. Change your Mind.

"Thanks Cyriel. You gave us incredible insights on the advantages of looking from different perspectives & crossing borders. It was very refreshing. The audience loved it."

Omar Hatamleh - Chief Innovation Officer @ NASA

"Cyriel is pro-active, interested, easy to work with and a pleasant person. Cyriel got the highest score of all speakers with a 4,6/5 followed by comments such as 'Absolutely brilliant', 'By far the best inspiration and needed session', 'Excellent thinking', ... This says it all and makes my day."

Michael Nielsen - organiser HRcoreAcademy @ Teneo Meetings

"Cyriel is able to apply enormous amounts of creativity to his sessions. Whether it's about behaviour, strategy, team-spirit or out-of-the-box-thinking, it's always worthwhile exchanging thoughts with Cyriel!"

Peter Lathouwers - Europe Business Intelligence Director @ Nike

"Brilliant speaker, very flexible and extremely relevant to the briefing. Painfully true and confrontational. Must do!"

Luc Houben - General Manager Benelux @ Kellogg Company



KEYNOTE

CHANGE MINDSET

FROM RESISTANCE TO POSSIBILITY





How do we deal with change differently?

Most change initiatives don't fail because of a bad strategy. They fail because nobody changed how people think.

You know the signs: people nod in meetings and nothing changes. Leaders push harder and get more resistance. Change fatigue sets in before the programme even starts. And that one person who says "yes, but" - and suddenly everyone does. That's not a process problem. That's a thinking pattern. No roadmap or town hall will fix it.

Yes - suspend your judgement. Your brain compares every new idea to everything that failed before. You don't need more convincing. You need to interrupt that reflex.

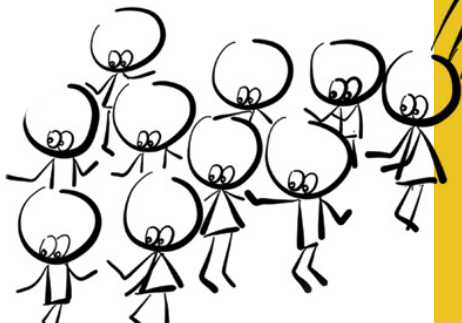
And - take a different angle. People resist change that happens to them. This shift makes them co-authors - not through endless participation sessions, but by exploring what becomes possible from a different perspective.

Act - start smaller than feels right. And unlearn what you think you know about failure. A Nearling is something you did with the right intention, that hasn't led to the right result yet. Not a failure. A first attempt. That distinction changes everything about how willing people are to try.

After this keynote, your people won't just feel inspired. They'll have the language and tools to act on it the next morning.

TAKEAWAYS

- A shared language to talk about resistance without blame
- The shift from "yes, but" to "yes, and" - in meetings, in teams, in culture
- Awareness of your own automatic thinking patterns around change
- Simple tools to open perspective and generate new ideas
- The concept of the Nearling - and why it changes how people deal with setbacks





KEYNOTE

CHANGE THAT STICKS

FROM STRATEGY TO EVERYDAY BEHAVIOUR

How do we make new behaviour happen?

Good plans fail every day. Not because they're wrong - but because they ask people to think and act differently without making it easy to do so.

Most change programmes focus on what needs to change. This keynote focuses on how behaviour actually works. Using the Brainflix metaphor, we explore how the unconscious mind drives decisions - and how to use that to your advantage instead of fighting it.

The formula is simple: Specific - Small - Smooth.

Specific: Make the desired behaviour concrete and visible.

Small: Start with steps so small they're hard to refuse.

Smooth: Connect new behaviour to existing routines, so resistance drops before it starts.

This isn't theory. It's a practical toolkit your team can apply to their own change initiative the same week.



TAKEAWAYS

- A practical method to translate goals into concrete, visible behaviour
- Insight into how the subconscious mind drives choices - the Brainflix model
- The SSS formula: Specific, Small and Smooth
- Tools to reduce resistance through small, safe experiments
- Concrete ideas to make behaviour change easier in your own context

KEYNOTE

GUERRILLA CHANGE

FROM STAGNATION TO MOMENTUM

How do we stop getting in the way of change?

You have the plans. The strategy. The buy-in. And yet - nothing really moves. Between intention and action, three invisible forces get in the way:

Rule Mafia
Rules, procedures and meetings that once made sense but now drain time and energy. Every organisation has them. Few leaders dare to remove them.

Yes-But Brigade
Too much attention goes to those who resist, while the people already moving forward remain invisible. Stop convincing every sceptic. Find the sparks and help them grow.

Doubt Dictator
The voice waiting for permission, certainty or the perfect plan. It doesn't only live in your people. Leaders hear it too.

Through real stories and unconventional experiments, you'll discover how to remove barriers, support initiative and create room to experiment.

And don't expect another slide-heavy keynote. There isn't a single slide. The entire story unfolds around a set of cardboard boxes that slowly transform the stage - and reveal what really gets change stuck.

The people who can drive change are already there. The only question is whether you're giving them the chance.





TAKEAWAYS

- Cut unnecessary rules and bureaucracy that slow down progress
- Recognise and strengthen the people who already want to make change happen
- Build confidence to act before everything is certain or perfect
- Create faster momentum through small, low-risk experiments

CUSTOMISATION IN ACTION

Every organisation faces its own challenges. That's why every session is shaped around your context, audience and goals - never copy-paste. During a short briefing call, we explore what matters most to your people. From there I prepare a session that fits your event and your objectives.

A few examples of what that looks like in practice:

Manufacturing - 75 leaders shifting from perfect quality to agile action. Interactive session on the Change Mindset combined with small experiments to build confidence and speed.

Banking & Insurance - 80 leaders preparing for a major merger. Practical tools and mindset exercises focused on communication, trust and psychological safety during transition.

Sports & Retail - 150 people from two teams struggling to collaborate. Half-day combining a keynote to create openness with a hands-on workshop on what to stop, continue and start.

Telecom - 300 leaders launching a new strategy. Practical session on translating strategy into daily behaviour, with tools to build early momentum in their teams.

Hospitality - 150 EMEA sales professionals building a more entrepreneurial mindset. Energetic session blending stories, exercises and reflection to spark ownership and collaboration.

Whether it's a merger, a new strategy, a culture shift or a digitalisation project - the human challenges are often the same. The approach is always yours.

MY IDEAL AUDIENCE

Every organisation faces change differently, so each session can be tailored to the audience and their daily reality. We can focus on one or several of the following groups:

All employees - the broad audience
Create shared energy and a positive mindset towards change. Ideal for company events or kick-offs.

Leaders - middle and senior management
Practical tools to inspire, engage and guide teams through change. Ideal for leadership programmes or offsites.

HR and change professionals
Boost internal change initiatives with simple, people-focused tools. Ideal for HR days or HR conferences.

Together, we decide which audience will benefit most - or we design a combination where different groups each experience their own 'aha' moment.

AUTHOR OF 5 BUSINESS BOOKS

His bookazine ‘the Change Mindset’, a mix between book and magazine, gets a lot of positive feedback from readers all over the world.

- The Change Mindset
- Yes and … Your business
- Less is Beautiful
- Timespiration
- Meer met Minder (Lannoo) - Dutch edition of Less is Beautiful, with seven extra stories



42
COUNTRIES

345+
LINKEDIN RECOMMENDATIONS

1,000+
PRESENTATIONS

Cyriel is one of 44 Global Speaking Fellows worldwide.

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WANT TO SEE ME IN ACTION?

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