

PAUL TONDEN, MBA

AI Adoption & Enablement • Leadership Development • Organizational Effectiveness

Orlando, FL • 703.638.5912 • paul@houseofpraxis.studio • linkedin.com/in/paultonden • houseofpraxis.studio

Talent development executive who can both hold the room and build the system. Ten years leading enterprise leadership development, organizational effectiveness, and change initiatives at a publicly traded education company, followed by three years designing and delivering human-centered AI adoption for executive teams and operating a services business on agentic AI workflows I built myself. Doctor of Business Administration candidate researching how leaders enact human-centered values when integrating generative AI. The through-line across a merger integration, a pandemic pivot, first-year student success, and now AI adoption is the same: helping people keep their footing through change they did not choose. The combination is uncommon: most practitioners who can facilitate a room of skeptical executives have never built an agentic workflow, and most who have built one cannot facilitate the room.

SELECTED WORK IN AI ADOPTION

- **Human-Centered AI Leadership, Canon Financial Services (2025).** Designed and delivered an AI adoption program for the executive leadership team and full corporate staff, built for skeptics rather than early adopters: responsible-adoption culture, leadership self-assessment, and team dynamics. Facilitated Maxwell Leadership's The Leadership Game for the executive suite as a licensed facilitator.
- **AI-augmented operating model, Blue Moon Estate Sales Orlando West.** Designed and built agentic workflows running client settlement reporting, month-end financial reconciliation, cash-flow forecasting, CRM maintenance, and marketing production, enabling a lean founding team to operate with enterprise-grade rigor. Audited the system in 2026 against acted-upon output and reduced scheduled automation by 78 percent with no loss of value, a discipline most organizations skip.
- **Doctoral research, in progress.** Qualitative study of how mid- to senior-level leaders understand and enact human-centered values, including creativity, learning, and well-being, when integrating generative AI into the work.

CORE COMPETENCIES

AI Strategy & Responsible Adoption • AI-Augmented Operations & Agentic Workflows • Leadership Development Program Design • Executive Education & Facilitation • Organizational Development & Change Management • M&A Culture Integration • Design Thinking • Instructional Design & Adult Learning • Emotional Intelligence (HBDI, DiSC, EQ) • Talent Strategy & Succession • DEIB Strategy • P&L Ownership

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Praxis Studio, Inc. | Blue Moon Estate Sales Orlando West • Winter Garden, FL 2025 – Present
Founder & Operator

- Founded and operate a services business supporting families through senior relocation, estate settlement, and downsizing, with full accountability for P&L, hiring, marketing, sales, and client experience.
- Operate the business as a live case study in human-centered service design and AI-enabled operations, directly informing doctoral research and executive teaching. Scaled operations deliberately in 2026 in response to market conditions, including restructuring staffing and cost base.

Paint It Black Design Group, LLC | Orlando, FL 2023 – Present
Principal, Human-Centered Systems Design & Leadership Development

- Advise organizations on leadership development, strategic innovation, and AI adoption; design and deliver executive education and workshops, including the Canon Financial Services engagement above.
- Co-host and co-produce the Thought Partners Podcast on strategy, leadership, and human-centered design.

Strategic Education, Inc. | Herndon, VA (hybrid) 2020 – 2025
Senior Talent Development Consultant, Human Resources

- **Built and launched Elevate**, the company's first enterprise-wide leadership development program, from scratch. It did not exist before. Engaged 300+ people leaders across every business unit and was delivered internationally to cross-functional cohorts.
- **Selected to lead cross-institutional talent integration** through the Capella, Strayer, and Torrens University combinations, aligning leadership practice across three institutional cultures on two continents.

- **Founded and facilitated the company's first Leadership Community of Practice**, connecting approximately 700 US-based people leaders across all business units.
- **Led enterprise talent strategy through the COVID-19 pivot** to fully online operations and the subsequent design of the hybrid workplace model; operated hybrid throughout, working across 40+ campuses nationwide and corporate offices in Herndon, VA and Minneapolis, MN.
- **Co-chaired the CEO's Council on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion** and led the global annual HR compliance training program across the enterprise.
- **Delivered 500+ HBDI cognitive-profile debriefs** and certified DiSC and emotional intelligence programs integrated into enterprise talent strategy; emceed the SEI Annual Summit Executive Leadership Conference, 2023 to 2025.

Strayer University | Washington, D.C.

2015 – 2020

Director, Academic Insights & Operations

- Led the institutional interface between the university and its academic partners, supporting adjunct and academic teams in curriculum alignment, program development, and learning outcomes measurement.
- Led a team providing training and development for staff and faculty in communication, coaching, motivation, and creativity.

Godiva Chocolatier / Gymboree Corporation | Multi-state, East Coast

2009 – 2015

Multi-Unit, Multi-Brand District Manager

- Owned operations, talent development, merchandising, and P&L across geographically distributed retail portfolios. Won the CEO Award for District of the Year (2013) on double-digit year-over-year improvement across all metrics.

EDUCATION & DOCTORAL RESEARCH

Capella University

Expected 2027

Doctor of Business Administration (DBA), Strategy & Innovation — Candidate

- Dissertation in progress: how mid- to senior-level leaders understand and enact human-centered values when integrating generative AI to support employee creativity, learning, and well-being. Qualitative inquiry, constructivist paradigm.

Jack Welch Management Institute, Strayer University

2018

Master of Business Administration (MBA), executive leadership focus

Rowan University

Bachelor of Arts • Former adjunct instructor, seven years

CERTIFICATIONS

Maxwell Leadership Certified Coach, Speaker & Trainer • HBDI® Certified Practitioner (Herrmann International) • Everything DiSC Facilitation Certification • LeadX Emotional Intelligence Certification • Host, Live2Lead Central Florida (Maxwell Leadership simulcast, 2026)