How to Make Digital Transformation Succeed

Companies have been embarking on digital transformation efforts to reduce costs, transform their company and better serve their customers. Companies often find that it easier said than done. Digital transformation efforts need to have a well defined strategy and experienced teams to successfully execute.
Technical Debt

One of the biggest drivers of digital transformation is the elimination of technical debt. Technical debt limits the ability for IT to adequately support the business and increases IT’s support and delivery costs.

So what are the main contributors of technical debt? Based on our experience, here are what we see as the main causes of technical debt.

01. Executive Directives To Minimize Costs
Companies operating on the brink of profitability or preparing to sell the company will limit IT investment. This forces IT to operate with what they have, even if it means their systems go out of maintenance and support.

02. Mergers And Acquisitions
When a company is acquired, you get everything, including aged systems, IT processes and staff. It could very well be that they also have a different philosophy and approach towards IT. For example, a decentralized approach to IT service delivery vs a centralize approach.

03. Business Decisions
In an effort to deliver a solution quickly to the market, business stakeholders will make decision to limit scope or force IT to take shortcuts in order to deliver the solution.
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04. Software / Architectural Decisions

Poor software / application architecture decisions will require the solution to be refactored in the future. Often times, applications are over architected, creating a nuclear fly swatter which is difficult to maintain and has poor performance.

05. Poor Software Selection Decisions

Packaged applications typically go through a software selection process. This process can be highly subjective and often times is too focused on cost. Although a solution may be lower in cost that the competitors, it can also be less flexible, unscalable and difficult to maintain.

06. Dated Or Non Existent Enterprise Architecture

IT organizations need an enterprise architecture which defines the tools, technologies and platforms that are used to deliver solutions. If this is non-existent or dated, there is no technical blueprint to adhere to.
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07. Poor Software Quality

Poor code quality developed by an unskilled team can result in refactoring. Developers are eager to use the latest tools and technologies, but don’t truly understand how to build scalable solutions with them.

08. Poor Software Development Process / Lifecycle

Software development methods were developed for a reason, to ensure quality code delivery. However, if software development teams are lax, poor code is the result. Code needs to be reviewed and ensure best practices are followed and the code is solid.

09. ERP customizations

ERP platforms are abundant with features and functionality. However, each ERP implements business processes that can be customized to allow companies to tailor the ERP to their business process. The challenge comes when trying to upgrade. Too many customizations can make it difficult to upgrade and costly to maintain. The result is an ERP platform that becomes dated and out of maintenance.
Digital Transformation
Is More Than Technology

Digital transformation goes well beyond eliminating technical debt. It entails much more than replacing old applications with new ones or migrating an on-premise application to the cloud. Contrary to what ERP vendors are espousing, digital transformation is more than implementing and ERP platform. It is about transforming your business processes and people to better serve your customers. Technology is a tool that is used to support and facilitate these efforts.

Digital transformation spans the organization, from the business units, suppliers, manufacturing facilities, distribution centers and IT. To be successful, leaders from all these areas need to be involved, aligned and accountable. A solid plan and roadmap need to be defined which outline the initiatives, dependencies, investment, business value, roles and responsibilities, timing and governance. Governance and KPI’s will ensure the digital transformation is on track and if not, detects early course correction is required.

From an IT perspective, it’s about speed and agility. Getting the tools, technologies and processes in place to deliver solutions quickly. IT teams need to be reorganized to have representatives from a product, technology and user experience perspective.

From a customer’s perspective, giving them the information they need, at the right time and making their interaction with your company easy and frictionless.
10 Reasons Why IT Initiatives Fail

Since digital transformation efforts span across the company, it requires a significant investment of money, time and commitment. The last thing companies want to do is embark on an enterprise initiative, only to have it fail. Failure negatively impacts the credibility of executives, business leaders and IT.

01 Focusing On The Wrong Initiatives
Focusing on initiatives that don't drive value or transformation are a waste of time and resources. Leaders need to ensure each initiative will result in transformation or is a component to support transformation. The focus should be on transforming customer experience, business efficiency, employee experience or IT efficiency.

02 Taking On Too Many Projects At One Time
With teams challenged to keep up with current projects and support, you can easily overextend them. This will result in project delays, frustration and ultimately more time and money.

03 Thinking It All Can Be Done Internally
It is rare that companies have the internal talent and leadership to understand the latest business trends and emerging technologies. Not only that, internal resources are typically bogged down with day to day support and project initiatives. You can save time and money by bringing in a partner.

04 Insufficient Strategy & Roadmap
digital transformation spans the enterprise and requires alignment across the organization. Initiatives need to be laser focused on driving transformation. If they are not, resources will be wasted and transformation will fail. Technology strategy is a key component. The future state platform, technologies and enterprise architecture need to be well defined to ensure support of the digital transformation.
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05 Insufficient or Missing Objectives
If you don’t know what your end goals are, how can you achieve success? Clear goals and objectives are required to provide the guardrails and scope of the digital transformation effort.

06 Lack of Executive Commitment and Alignment
Enterprise initiatives require executive sponsorship, commitment and accountability. Executive leaders will be required to make the final decisions on new business processes and provide their guidance on how to best address issues. In addition, executives also need to make sure their teams are committed, focused and understand priorities, otherwise delays will occur impacting the entire effort.

07 Lack of Change Management
Digital transformation is more than technology, it’s about people transformation as well. Business processes, technologies and staffing models may be drastically changed. This means that people’s jobs will change, therefore, it is imperative to develop a sound change management strategy and plan. If employees don’t see the value in the transformation, they will reject it, causing friction and making transformation more difficult to achieve. People need to be comfortable about being uncomfortable and will need assistance to embrace change.

08 Not Treated Like a Program
The size, scope and magnitude of digital transformation can be enormous. As with any large IT initiative, it needs to be managed like a program. Stakeholder alignment, progress, costs, timeline, risks and status need to be understood and communicated on a frequent basis. Risks need to be identified and addressed.

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Insufficient Governance & KPI’s

Enterprise governance and KPI’s are critical to ensure the digital transformation effort is tracking as planned. If governance and metrics are not in place, you have no way of knowing if you are achieving your objectives and are making progress. KPI’s can provide an early indication that course adjustments are necessary.

10

Lack of Technical Vision

Technology is the foundation for digital transformation. The existing technology platforms and applications may not be using the latest architecture and tools. Microservices, cloud, use of the edge, AI and machine learning are emerging technologies that can help position IT for the future. However, if IT does not know what emerging technologies can be leveraged, IT may be creating more technical debt.
It’s A Journey

One thing to remember, digital transformation is a journey and not a final destination. It is an ongoing process and it is not something that is accomplished overnight.

Technology needs to be maintained and kept up to date, otherwise, additional technical debt will be created. Business processes need to be continually refined.
How We Can Help

As companies embark on their digital transformation efforts, they need IT service partners that have their best interest at heart. They need a firm that is transparent, listens to their client’s needs, offers advice and provides an outside thought leadership.

Full On Consulting operates as a Trusted Partner, helping companies on their digital transformation journeys. We know that business is dynamic and needs are constantly changing. We are flexible, easy to work with and offer a number of services in which we can provide significant business value. Here are some ways we can help.

**Digital Transformation Strategy**
Our best in class technology and business consultants can help you define your strategy and roadmap, offering outside advice and leveraging our 25+ years of experience. We can help you find high value areas to address and show you the best place to start.

**Technology Advice**
Our technology experts are well-versed in the latest tools and technologies that will help you lay the foundation for your digital transformation. We also understand it’s more than just technology, but the processes that need to be in place to leverage those technologies such as DevOps, cloud, AI and machine learning.

**Program & Project Management**
Our program and project managers are not just note takers, but leaders. They can help define your program, KPI’s and governance structure. They are experienced in Agile practices and can help your organization adopt an Agile approach. They also have the vision to identify risks early and face them head on to ensure successful mitigation is taken. Our program and project managers are proactive and know what it takes to successfully deliver.
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Cloud Strategy
The cloud offers a number of benefits, but companies need to understand what those benefits are, how to architect your cloud environments, which applications to migrate and what processes need to be in place.

Change Management
Our change management experts can help you formulate a strategy for your digital transformation. They can provide their insights, expertise and help you identify challenges you may face. People are a critical component of digital transformation and our team can help ensure your teams are aware and engaged.

Staff Augmentation
We can provide our business and technology experts on a staff augmentation basis, helping you to shore up areas where there are skill gaps. We pride ourselves on providing business value, offering competitive rates and we don’t charge $400/hr for college grads like some of our competitors.

Projects
Don’t have the capacity or skills to complete a project? Our teams can help you deliver a project to keep your digital transformation moving forward.
Have questions?
Give us a call or email us for a free consultation.

Contact Us

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