

# **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND COVID-19**

**For Leaders Not Sure Where to Start**



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# Introduction

The Coronavirus crisis is accelerating a [global digital pivot](#), forcing businesses to rethink their processes and strategies for a new reality.

Analysts from HBR, Gartner, Forrester, McKinsey and more are all saying the same thing – investing in technology will help mitigate the impact of this event, both right now and in the long term.

But what if you're among the 30% of organizations who haven't yet made any major digital shifts, even before the pandemic started?

With the sudden disruption to business worldwide, you may feel caught flat-footed, simply scrambling day-to-day to shore up your infrastructure and remote systems.

You may feel overwhelmed at the thought of adding a full-scale "digital transformation" to your efforts.

If so, please take heart.

Now that transitioning to digital is not just important but urgent, you could actually be in a better position than some of your competitors, who may be partway through their technology initiatives and must now suddenly shift gears.

You have the opportunity to transition to technologies that reflect where your systems and customers are now, where they're headed, and the trends that will shape business in the long haul, post-crisis.

But while there's a ton of information out there, it often ends up raising more questions than it answers.

This can leave you with an even worse case of analysis paralysis, especially now, when so much is uncertain already.

This ebook is to help you cut through the noise, get a little clarity, and feel more confident about moving forward in a post-COVID world.



# Digital Transformation Defined

It's likely that you've long understood the need for at least some digitization of your organization, but have been uncertain about the right move or the ideal long-term strategy.

This could be because, even though the concept of "digital transformation" has been around since the late 1990s, there's still a lot of confusion over exactly what it is.

One of the reasons digital transformation is hard to grasp is because there are so many different definitions floating around.

Some use it to mean a complete integration of technology into all areas of business, changing the way you operate and deliver customer value.

Others use it to mean any digital adoption or transition, such as moving to the cloud or starting an analytics project.

As [Melissa Swift](#), Global Leader, Digital Transformation Advisory at Korn Ferry tells us:



**Poll the C-suite of many digitally transforming organizations, and you'll hear a completely different account of what digital transformation means from each leader.**

**Or you'll hear somewhat similar, but really convoluted accounts – which is equally unhelpful.**

To add to the confusion, "The term digital transformation has been overused, misused and hijacked to the point where it has become a meaningless catch phrase," as Scotts Miracle Grow CIO Marc Sims points out.



If you share this frustration, you might like the way Dmitry Bagrov, Director of DataArt puts it:



**The term is irrelevant; the key issue is how to transform business to match changing reality.**

That's what businesses are really trying to address with any technology implementation or digital solution.

Especially today, when everything has changed almost overnight, with many of the changes likely to stick.

In fact, in our new reality, the concept of "digital transformation" is almost meaningless.

Being a business and being digital are now one and the same.

With that in mind, here's the way we encourage you to think of digital transformation, for as long as the term remains in the lexicon:

**Digital  
Transformation:**

**Embracing best available technology to increase profit, streamline efficiency, empower teams and customers, and gain long-term competitive edge.**

Because no matter what you call it, those are the ultimate goals, right?



# Why Is Digital Transformation Necessary?

Even before this pandemic turned the business world on its head, you were already being reminded every day that you had to "adapt or die," that transformation is "key to survival," that your company must "evolve or go extinct."

What did all those warnings really mean, though?

If things were going along just fine and your customers were satisfied, why the big rush?

It's useful to examine the reasons in a bit more detail, in order to connect them to the even more pressing need to transform today.

## Reason #1: Change

One simple reason is that change is inevitable, and was already well underway before the crisis started.

Which company is going to have better insight into what customers want – the one still doing focus groups, or the one leveraging data from transactions, social media, and IoT sensors?

Which company is going to be more efficient and profitable – the one using spreadsheets for supply chain management, or the one using predictive inventory analytics, real-time logistics performance metrics, and material-sourcing artificial intelligence?

Technology has made a whole lot of things obsolete or near-obsolete in just the last 10 years – fax machines, paper maps, film cameras, landlines, classified ads, DVD players – the list goes on.

It's done the same to almost all standard business processes as well.

**The industrial era is virtually over, along with industrial-era ways of thinking and doing business.**





Technology is creating hundreds of new business capabilities, leaving last-century business design unprofitable and unsustainable.

Before COVID-19, a company that didn't change might have been ok for five or ten years, just like paper maps hung in there as long as they could after GPS came on the scene.

But with the arrival of the pandemic – and the way our lives have changed as a result – the industrial era is virtually over, along with industrial-era ways of thinking and doing business.

## Reason #2: Customers Demand It

Again, even before COVID-19, customer expectations were changing drastically and rapidly.

And not simply within your company, or even your industry.

Customer expectations are based not just on their interactions with you, but on all of their digital experiences.

**Each experience  
resets expectations  
on what your  
company should be  
able to deliver.**

”

As [Nigel Fenwick](#), VP and Principal Analyst at Forrester put it:

"When I get next-day delivery at home via Amazon, it resets my expectations for delivery from anyone. When my hotel allows me to select my room from a floor plan on my phone and check in before I arrive, my expectations on any self-service have been reset. Each experience resets expectations ever so slightly on what your company should be able to deliver."



"So what happens if your business delivers exactly the same experience today as it did last year – or even last month?" Fenwick asks. "Over time, the perceived value of your product/brand diminishes. And it continues to get lower and lower until at some point, the customer decides to switch to an alternative supplier."

This is true for all businesses, whether B2C or B2B, in all industries.

In fact, 64% of consumers and 73% of business buyers say their standards for good experiences are higher than ever, according to [Salesforce](#).

Thus, before the pandemic, we already had a view of customers as more connected and more empowered, meaning that they were also more in control of their own customer experiences.

The necessity of moving much of our lives online has exponentially multiplied this control, as companies have quickly responded to customer needs.

This includes moving sales to ecommerce platforms, increasing app features for order and delivery of a range of goods, increasing social media presence and communication, and offering new products for quarantine life.

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and 73% of business  
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During the pandemic and after, the vast majority of customers are going to choose the experience that best lines up with their ever-evolving digital expectations, all else being equal.

So, "adapt or die," isn't a scare tactic, but a simple reality for today's businesses – now more than ever.





## Reason #3: We're Not Going Back

Many people will continue to work remotely. Even companies who were initially reluctant now see the cost savings and productivity increases that occur with the right systems and processes in place, as well as the talent benefits of being able to hire from around the world. And of course, employees will demand it.

Consumers recently forced into ecommerce now understand its convenience and benefits, further accelerating the growth of online shopping and on-demand delivery.

Telehealth, tele-education – really, tele-anything – will go on as well, due to cost savings and convenience.

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**The digital changes happening right now  
are here to stay.**

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Data analytics are even more important in understanding your changing customers and pointing the right way forward.

Data-enabled services will proliferate into almost all aspects of our lives.

And the cloud will continue to be indispensable.

All of these changes were already underway, and would have become part of our day-to-day regardless.

It's just that the pandemic is dramatically accelerating them all, making them part of our standard reality now, rather than in 10 or 15 years.



In fact, this is just the tip of the iceberg. There are industry-specific changes occurring as well.

These include automation in manufacturing, real-time supply chain awareness, and AI-focused digitization of the insurance and mortgage sectors.

The new normal IS digital, and businesses must be digital as well.

We spoke with Michael Gale (CEO of [Inc.Digital](#), Forbes contributor, and WSJ bestselling author of [The Digital Helix](#)), who describes this ideal scenario:

"The Nirvana is what I call 'digital platforming,' where everything you do has an interconnectedness. This lets you respond, react, and deliver at speeds exponentially better than ever before.

So if you have a problem with a product, you can instantly relay that problem straight back to product design, marketing, sales, and even supply chain.

Take Zara, for example, the world's most successful clothing retailer. They get feedback on the shop floor from customers that instantly goes to other departments.

So they may say, 'We don't have the right color or size in the Barcelona store,' and the supply chain is instantly alerted.

Or, 'Customers say this item is too small around the arms,' feedback that instantly gets delivered to product design."

Gale goes on to say, "It's this sort of adaptability and transformation at the core that will define the new business normal."



# Digital Transformation

## Myths and Misunderstandings

If any of the below myths resonate with you or your team, here's the good news:

Resolving digital transformation misunderstandings doesn't require any in-depth technical knowledge.

It's really about a perspective shift.

If you've been feeling uncertain – or even overwhelmed – then straightening out these common myths may help you approach your journey in a new, less stressful way.

### Myth #1: You Need a Digital Strategy

It probably sounds crazy to say that you don't need a digital strategy when undertaking your digital transformation, right?

But it makes more sense when framed this way:

What you really need is a reliable business strategy structured around the digital capabilities of the new normal, and of the future.

This is more than just semantics.

Before the pandemic, many companies were making the same mistake:

Creating a business-as-usual legacy strategy and applying some elements of digitization to it, such as moving to the cloud or going paperless.

**Move away from a stand-alone business strategy and a stand-alone digital strategy that you try to mesh together.**



And while there's certainly merit in both of these technologies, it's kind of like putting a Tesla motor in a Model T.

It's bolt-on digitization – a short-term solution that may or may not work – as opposed to a big-picture strategy that has ongoing digital capability at its core.

The digital acceleration brought about by COVID means that you must move away from a stand-alone business strategy and a stand-alone digital strategy that you try to mesh together.

Instead, one business strategy grounded in evolving technology, with the ability to quickly adapt to customers' changing needs and demands, will sustain your organization in the new normal and into the future.

## Myth #2: Digital Transformation is About Technology

**People, not technologies, ultimately change the organization.**

We've all heard the alarming statistics about digital transformation, including an estimated 70% failure rate and \$900 billion gone to waste in just one year.

[Harvard Business Review](#) blames these failures on the false belief that successful digital transformations are rooted in technology itself.

However, as the authors point out:

"Digital technologies provide possibilities for efficiency gains and customer intimacy. But if people lack the right mindset to change and the current organizational practices are flawed, digital transformation will simply magnify those flaws."



Researchers from [Deloitte and MIT Sloan Management Review](#) reached a similar conclusion:

"The real challenge is how to change people's mindsets, the company culture, and the way people think and do things. It's a much more fundamental shift than simply adopting technology."

So, digital transformation is actually about people.



**It's a much more fundamental shift than simply adopting technology.**

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The people who:

- Create and execute a future-focused business strategy
- Know your company, industry, needs, and goals
- Use your products and services
- Work in your organization every day
- Make your company agile and able to evolve
- Proactively understand business and technology trends
- Lead your company capably through a culture and mindset shift

People, not technologies, ultimately change the organization.

We spoke to [Kaihan Krippendorff](#), bestselling author and Fortune 100 digital strategist, who reiterated the importance of people and culture to a transformation's success.

**The answer starts with leadership prioritizing a broad cultural change effort.**



Krippendorff organizes a group of strategy officers from large enterprises, and notes that the challenge of advancing along the digital journey comes up often.

"Invariably," he says, "our discussion leads fairly quickly past the tangible – understanding the technology, mapping customer journeys – to the softer and more human challenges of changing culture so that people shift their behavior. The answer starts with leadership prioritizing a broad cultural change effort, which requires true belief and persistence."

### **Myth #3: Experimentation is risky and expensive**

Experimenting does NOT mean settling on a technology, implementing it, and hoping for the best.

That would indeed be risky, and could definitely end up in an expensive mistake.

**When you start small, you ensure the proposed solution meets company goals.**

In fact, true experimentation is a cost-effective and productive way to get buy-in, test assumptions, and significantly increase your odds of a successful transformation.

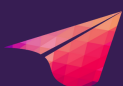
When you start small, you ensure the proposed solution meets company goals.

If not, you can adjust, re-iterate, and test again.

Consider the alternative:

Jumping in to a full-scale implementation based on an incorrect assumption, with no testing and no user feedback.

Which move is going to be costlier?





In this post-COVID world, technology is even more ubiquitous, and it's moving even faster.

This makes it crucial that your processes, experiments, and implementations are adaptable and agile.

We discussed this idea with Isaac Sacolick, President of [StarCIO](#) and author of [Driving Digital](#). Here's his advice:

"Starting doesn't require a substantial upfront investment. It can begin with a leader, a dedicated team, a vision, and a series of quickly executed experiments that enable data capture and learning.

Leaders should focus on customer-facing and growth areas first as these should help define the new products, customer experiences, and business models. To be successful, executives must be willing to challenge the status quo and promote data-driven decision making."

## **Myth #4: Our competitors are in the same digital position, so it's better to wait**

On its surface, this conservative approach makes a certain amount of sense. Why not let someone else roll the dice and learn from their success or failure, especially now that we're all dealing with so much uncertainty?

Research from [BCG](#) showed that pre-emptive transformation (or self-disruption) results in higher long-term value than reactive change – and it does so faster and more reliably.

In contrast, companies that take a reactive approach to transformation spend more money, take more time, have more leadership changes, and end up with a 50% lower ROI.



You may be saying to yourself, “Wait a minute, obviously I’m in reactive mode, we all are!”

Of course, you’re right. To one extent or another, businesses of all sizes are reacting as best they can to these sudden new circumstances.

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**It’s always better to get in front of change than to wind up in a defensive posture you may not be able to get out of.**

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If you think about your competitors who came into this pandemic in generally the same digital position as you, though, which of you will win out in the long term?

The ones who continue to simply scramble and react, or the ones who encompass big-picture, proactive thinking and implementation into their re-imagined processes?

This is certainly a stressful and worrisome time for business leaders.

But it also truly presents an opportunity for making your organization stronger and more competitive than ever.

In short, “I would advise companies to accelerate digital transformation efforts to better position their company after the pandemic passes,” says [Kamales Lardi](#), Managing Partner at Lardi & Partner Consulting and Chair of the MBA Advisory Board, Durham University.



# Common Digital Transformation Mistakes

In addition to what we've already covered so far, let's go over a few other common mistakes that can lead to unmet goals or outright failure.

## Mistake #1: Shiny object syndrome

Sometimes, whether because they feel pressured to digitize or because an idea seems exciting, companies will jump on a technology trend, like AI chatbots or automation.

Especially in our current climate of uncertainty, many companies are reflexively grasping for a quick fix, or a dropped-from-the-sky solution that gets everything back on track.

But these single-technology solutions all by themselves will not live up to the hype.

Any new technology implementation must be part of a larger vision for the company and for customer experience, not a one-off adoption.

## Mistake #2: Staying siloed

Digital transformation is not just a job for the CIO or the IT department. It reaches into every branch of your organization, from HR to sales to marketing to finance and more.

If you try to roll out a transformation without involving all departments, it's very likely to fail.

As we have seen, transformation is a top-down cultural issue that requires understanding, mindset shifts, and buy-in from everyone.

And now that transformation is no longer a nice-to-have, but a necessity for just about every business worldwide, it's crucial that everyone in your company is aware, on-board, and empowered to adapt.



## Mistake #3: Doing too much too soon

This may seem counterintuitive to the very real urgency businesses face in becoming digital.

Yes, you need to move fast.

But you also need to do it in a way that gives you the greatest chance of success.

Right now, you might be focusing on your “no fail” missions – the essential business processes that must continue in order for the company to keep going.

This is a good example of how our new normal is going to dictate transformation priorities.

What do customers (and employees) suddenly need and expect today, that you are not currently delivering?

**Slow down to speed up.** ”

Start there, and proceed in a way that allows you to move quickly but safely. This means working incrementally, being able to pivot when needed, and experimenting continuously.

Because what’s needed and expected next month or next year might be something quite different, and you want to be able to quickly adjust.

We asked [Melissa Swift](#) (Global Leader, Digital Transformation Advisory at Korn Ferry) for her take on this idea. She told us:

"Moving from strategy to implementation, you often see problems because the organization went for a ‘big bang’ approach and realized all of the leaks in the pipes, so to speak, too late...when small experiments could have allowed them to learn more, faster, at lower cost.



Or maybe they start with great momentum, but wear their leaders and talent out just as quickly with 'too much, too soon.' Starting digital transformation off right means slowing down to speed up."

She further advises, "In kicking off a digital journey, think 4 S's – Have a SIMPLE objective in going digital, make SURE your leaders are actually aligned behind it, start SMALL, and SUSTAIN energy by not overloading leaders, people, or teams."

## **Mistake #4: Underestimating the extent of change**

It may be tempting to restrict your digital efforts to immediate needs such as telecommuting, supply chain diversification, and infrastructure security.

Companies with this approach are generally hoping to minimize costs, get through the crisis, go back to business as usual, and then consider larger digital efforts once revenues are a little steadier.

However, we strongly believe this is a mistake. While no one can predict the future, it's hard to imagine that we will ever go back to "business as usual." [Harvard Business Review](#) agrees:

"Vision is especially urgent during a crisis as global and systematic as this one. Inflections that you might have had five years to anticipate in a normal environment might unfold in a matter of weeks or months. Trend lines, such as those towards telecommuting, telemedicine, online shopping, and digital media consumption, are suddenly much steeper..."

Some of the fundamental assumptions underlying your current business model may have been (or may soon be) upended. In short, the business environment that you land in when the pandemic comes to an end – which could be one to two years from now – may be very different from what it was before the crisis began. You need to begin preparing for it now."



# Top 3 Digital Recommendations

COVID-19 has brought about the need for the same general digital implementations for most companies, regardless of industry.

These are not necessarily the right recommendations for your specific situation.

But for companies who were not already fairly agile, did not have stress-tested systems in place, and were not prepared for a sudden shift to remote work, below are some good places to start.

## Priority #1: Legacy Modernization

Legacy systems make it impossible to provide the kinds of agile processes and that today's market demands, a harsh reality that many companies have had to suddenly grapple with.

And these systems will only get older, more difficult to integrate, more expensive to maintain, and harder to support.

**Legacy modernization is about keeping your organization competitive in an ever-changing business environment.**

The pre-COVID "If it ain't broke, don't fix it" approach isn't viable anymore.

Legacy modernization is no longer a nice-to-have or a back-burner idea to return to later, but an urgent priority in keeping business running.

The good news is that legacy modernization doesn't have to mean a total overhaul of your systems, costing huge amounts of money.

You certainly can rebuild from scratch – and that can be the best bet, as it allows you to design a platform that fully serves your goals.

But you could also modernize through [digital decoupling](#), where some elements are replaced, some are migrated, some are redeveloped, and some remain as is.





This lets you continue extracting value from your legacy IT, while achieving agility and reducing technical debt.

Ultimately, legacy modernization isn't just about a hardware or software update.

It's about keeping your organization competitive in an ever-changing business environment.

## Priority #2: Data Analytics

With so much information available about your customers, competitors, transactions, and processes, there's no reason to base business decisions on anything other than the actual facts.

Especially now that we are already embroiled in so much uncertainty.

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**Data analytics removes the guesswork and gives you clear direction.**

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If you are among those who don't have an analytics program just yet, don't worry.

This is an opportunity to do data analytics the right way – the way that will actually bring you the insights you're looking for, along with ROI and bottom-line growth.

Just for starters, here are a few ways analytics can help you navigate through this crisis, and remain strong on the other side:

- Build resilience into manufacturing and supply chains with real-time knowledge
- Create optimal products and offers that reflect customers' changing needs
- Determine adoption and effectiveness of work-at-home tools and processes
- Build and test new business models and contingency plans
- Increase operational efficiency and enhance risk analysis and detection



However, as [Harvard Business Review](#) points out, there are multiple approaches to analytics, and not all of them work out.

In order to get the most out of your data project, ensure the following:

- There is clear communication and understanding between data scientists and business leaders
- Initial goals are small and well-defined
- Start with problems that can be quickly addressed, and will produce value
- Create a robust governance and architecture
- Work with high-quality data

In short, remember that data analytics requires more than simply purchasing a BI tool and telling your team to have at it.

That's a mistake already made by hundreds of companies, and one that you can avoid.

### **Priority #3: Whatever the data tells you**

The results of your data analytics initiative will tell you exactly what your next digital priority should be.

Maybe you'll discover that visitors to your website have questions that can be answered by AI.

Maybe you'll find inefficiencies in your supply chain that real-time insights can resolve.

Or maybe employee training could be achieved more quickly and cost-effectively through VR – especially with social distancing.

Just keep in mind that each digital implementation should be done in the larger context of your company's full digital vision, as well as the context of customer expectations and experience.



# Tips for Beginning a Digital Transformation

This section is designed to give you a starting point for your company's digital journey, along with an awareness of your current strengths and vulnerabilities.

From there, you can begin thinking about how you can shore up vulnerabilities and leverage strengths into processes that make customers see you as the only logical choice.

## Tip #1: Understand the possibilities

How did Netflix put Blockbuster out of business? By understanding what technology could do for their business and their customers.

Blockbuster understood that they could rent movies to people who came into their stores.

Netflix understood that they could provide a much larger selection of movies, let customers browse from home, mail them out, not charge any late fees, and ultimately provide unlimited streaming movies and TV for a modest subscription fee.

Taxi companies understood that they could transport people from A to B.

Uber understood that they could transport people, pick them up within minutes, introduce the driver, show what it costs, and automatically process payment.

What could technology do for your customers? What would their experience ideally look like in our suddenly-changed world and beyond?

Naturally, many of your initial answers will be dictated by customers' immediate needs.

That's fine. Just keep the larger picture in your mind.

**In our suddenly-changed world, what processes, features, and experiences do your customers want most?**



## Tip #2: Imagine the destruction of your business

You're likely thinking that Coronavirus has already done this.

But try to think of what opportunities might be found amid the challenges.

Gather some team members and ask the question, "In addition to the changes we need to make as a result of the virus, how could competitors and potential disruptors further destroy our business model?"

After all, remember that everyone in your industry is making the same basic changes that you are now; but how might they be going above and beyond?

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**Here is your opportunity to create the customer  
experience of the future.**

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Answers will depend on your business, of course, but might include things like, "They could provide made-to-order products at scale, with two-day delivery."

Or, "They could provide ingredient traceability and production information from field to fork in one click."

Or, "They could make telemedicine the standard for primary care consultation."

Here is your opportunity to create the customer experience of the future, instead of clinging to a dying business model.

## Tip #3: Evaluate current processes

Where are the inefficiencies and bottlenecks in your current processes? How can technology help you streamline your operations?



You don't need to understand every technology solution out there.

Just ask your employees what is slowing things down, or what seems harder and more complicated than it needs to be.

Ask how it's affecting them, and how it affects customers.

Ask them what they would do to change it, if anything were possible.



**Transformation  
creates a new  
future without  
the constraints of  
the past.**

You've likely already discovered a lot about what's working well with your processes (and what isn't) as your workforce has moved to fully or largely remote.

Just as you're making continuous strides in transforming the way your team works, you can do the same with all your systems.

It's important to keep in mind that you aren't merely making changes – the goal is to fundamentally shift to a digital business.

We asked Rob Llewellyn, CEO of [CXO Transform](#) and bestselling author of [The Transformation Files](#) for his take on this crucial distinction:

"Digital sugar coating and the delusion of digital transformation have already resulted in countless leaders announcing their 'transformation' when in reality they were only undergoing 'change.' As a consequence, many well-intentioned CEOs led their companies into decline.

It is vital that leaders understand that transformation creates a new future without the constraints of the past, while change only creates a better version of what already exists."



## Tip #4: Evaluate your digital platform

Is your company trapped in legacy spaghetti?

This is a term technologists use to refer to digital platforms with tangled code, proliferated systems build on top of one another, and unnecessary complexity.

As a result, processes are harder to change, full customer views are almost impossible to accomplish, assumptions are harder to test, and agility is unachievable.

On the other hand, a well-designed digital platform allows for instant analytics and customer personalization, synchronized multichannel operations, scalability, and centralization.

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**A clean platform is the foundation for all the rest of your digital efforts.**

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If your platform is mired in legacy spaghetti (which is almost always the case for any company over 10 years old), focus your initial digital investments on platform redesign, as mentioned above.

In fact, there's a good chance you've already started this as part of your COVID-related efforts.

As you continue, take care not to recreate the problem by haphazardly bolting things on, Frankenstein-style.

A clean platform is the foundation for all the rest of your digital efforts.





## Tip #5: Build awareness among stakeholders

In many companies, especially in slow-to-change industries, lack of urgency has been a big barrier to transformation.

Until this current crisis began, senior-level team members may have been in the "wait and see" trap. Others may have been in the "too much hype" trap, and still others may have been in the "overwhelm" trap.

Now that everyone is forced to transform whether they want to or not, it's a good time to discuss the big picture rather than just the immediate patches.

Stakeholders, now more than ever, are suddenly aware of the impacts of doing nothing, as many companies are now dealing with the fallout of postponing their digital changes.

**Stakeholders, now more than ever, are suddenly aware of the impacts of doing nothing.**

That awareness allows you to more easily make the case for steady and incremental digital implementations.

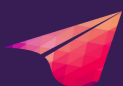
After all, as Jack Welch famously observed, "If the rate of change on the outside exceeds the rate of change on the inside, the end is near."

## Tip #6: Just get started!

Ok, so you know that COVID is forcing every business to become digital.

And you know that ultimately, becoming digital is a wise and profitable business move.

But you still may be not be sure of your first step.



If you're thinking of legacy modernization, do you choose a full or partial migration? Lift-and-shift or cloud-native? Which apps do you move first?

If it's data analytics, what do you want to start discovering? Are you collecting all the data you need? What unknowns are you trying to clear up?

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**"The biggest challenge today isn't aspiration – it's action."**

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We asked Greg Verdino, Fortune 500 Digital Transformation Advisor & Co-Creator of [AdaptManifesto.org](https://AdaptManifesto.org), for his advice to companies in this position:

"The biggest challenge today isn't aspiration – it's action. Every successful transformation journey I know of began with a single step.

Identify a pathfinder project that is important in terms of potential impact but constrained by what's possible in terms of time, resources and risk. Be sure this project is clearly defined, has tangible outcomes, involves multiple stakeholder groups across the organization, and – when it succeeds – helps prove the validity of your digital vision.

Beyond that, be prepared to prove success incrementally, then replicate and scale what works. Ultimately, transformation is a process of revolution through evolution that moves your organization toward a state of always-on adaptability – not merely a one-shot change."



# Next Steps

## Further Reading

We're big fans of the ongoing, insightful COVID coverage being offered free at the below sources:

[Harvard Business Review](#)

[McKinsey](#)

[Forrester](#)

[Gartner](#)

We also suggest checking out the excellent [2020 Tech Trends Report](#) put out by the [Future Today Institute](#). It's a thorough and exciting look at digital trend lines across industries and sectors, with recommendations on timelines and priorities.

## We're Here to Help

What questions do you have about your own specific situation? Give us a call, no charge, for targeted advice.

No sales pitch, just our opinion on your smartest path forward.

We want to do our part to bring other companies through this crisis, and this is one simple way we can help.

[Get Our Advice](#)

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