

## **5 common pitfalls** to avoid during any digital transformation

### **1. A top-down approach is used**

Digital transformation is often done from the top down, but ultimately people in the workplace must realize and apply it. The transformation is often the wish of the board of directors with the aim of saving costs and/or generating more revenue. It is important for the various layers within the organization to understand this importance before they can engage in the process.

It is important that the process takes place in an open structure that involves the various layers within an organization so that it is truly a joint mission.

What you want to avoid at any cost is an 'us against them' mentality. We need to create a culture in which the various layers within the organization feel that they are doing this together instead of just following orders from the board.

### **2. The responsibility for the digital transformation lies with one department**

What we often see is that the responsibility for digital transformation lies with one department. This causes silo forming and in its turn leads to unnecessary friction and resistance from other departments involved that should be engaged.

The best way to go is to set up a task force consisting of a program manager and key players from various disciplines. They will work together when they are aware of clear agreements for interdepartmental/interdisciplinary collaboration and responsibilities.

### **3. A poor assessment of the situation is made before starting the transformation**

Companies often start digital transformation because of the market pressure from the competition/stakeholders or the desire of the management to save costs and/or realize more turnover. As a result of this, we often see that managers are hurrying and panicking, instead of properly analyzing the current situation and making a realistic step-by-step future-proof plan.

In some cases, organizations do make estimations in advance. However, when they do they are almost always focussing on the technical side of the process and ignoring essential elements such as (company) culture, the psychological effects of change and other intangible barriers.

#### **4. Change management is underestimated**

More often than not, digital transformation is seen as a change that will be experienced predominantly by the company's customers. Managers see the biggest advantages and challenges will be in the external world. However, the biggest change and hurdle is experienced by the employees within the organization. Poor preparation, communication and the lack of change management cause serious issues and potential damage to the company. The inability of employees to adopt the change effectively is by far the greatest risk factor in the transformation.

In order for digital transformation to be successful, the employees must be guided to become engaged and embrace the change with a positive mindset. This can only be done if enough time and resources for this adoption process are made available from start to finish.

#### **5. Skipping essential parts and hurrying**

Digital transformation is an extensive process and must be seen and treated as a corporate marathon where preparations are essential to reach the finish line successfully. What we often see is that companies regard it as a one-off event and the focus is on implementing the tools and activities. Rarely do they focus on the change process and the internal impact that is essential for efficiency and overall effectivity.

In addition to the necessary preparations and implementation before starting the digital transformation process,, there must also be a focus on continuous innovation and optimization afterward. After all, digital transformation is an ongoing process and not so much an event.

**Need help with your digital transformation process?** We can coach you or provide consultancy to help you succeed. Feel free to contact us by calling: +31 (0)20-2146091 or sending us an e-mail: [info@synerflow.nl](mailto:info@synerflow.nl).