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AI And Digital Transformations: Is Your Company Prepared?

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COUNCIL POST | Membership (Fee-Based)

Jul 7, 2023, 09:15am EDT

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No technology is growing faster or getting more attention today than artificial intelligence (AI). Studies suggest that by 2025, 90% of new enterprise apps will incorporate AI. Despite this, many tech executives seem unprepared to effectively implement AI tools because companies misunderstand what digital transformations truly entail.

A digital transformation is more than just adding new software to a tech stack. It should rather be seen as a frontier for highly meaningful and game-changing innovation, an intersection between known ways of navigating technology and a new corporate realm embraced by efficiently empowered business digital transformations.

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To me, digital transformations are an art form—one that's essential in a corporate landscape. They represent collaborative processes that call for strategic planning, forecasting and a bit of risk-taking to either fully or partly redefine how our companies operate, grow and innovate.

In this article, I'll discuss various measures that company leaders can take to prepare their organizations for true digital transformations, and I'll point out common challenges to avoid en route to coveted digital accelerations.

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Where To Start With AI And Digital Transformations

1. Understand business goals and needs to strategize effectively.

The first step in preparing for digital transformation is knowing what we need to achieve. The sooner we grasp that digital change of this nature must be at the core of our business strategy, the better.

AI offers quick solutions for almost everything. From decision making, automation and data analysis to delivering better customer experiences, AI can boost many of our internal and external processes—if we let it. Yet, knowing these tools are handy is only useful once we understand our business needs and decide on a specific direction. As powerful as AI may be, it's also just an added tool for amplifying corporate efforts. Using it for the sake of implementation shouldn't ever be a main goal in itself.

Start by building a clear implementation strategy that identifies specific needs and objectives, such as process optimization or product speed to market. Doing so will ensure teams focus on solving actual problems rather than spending valuable time toying around with AI tools.

2. Practice future mapping with AI.

With clear goals and needs in place, all we need is a solid plan to reach them. This is where future mapping comes in. As a technique, it's used to evaluate past, present and future AI trends. It helps identify potential threats and challenges while allowing people a comprehensive view of the landscape.

With future mapping, organizations can:

• Assess existing tools, software and systems to identify those most likely to integrate with AI in the next six months to one year.

• Leverage existing tools that have been integrated with AI to become familiar with and prepare for future adoption.

• Determine which new AI tools will best meet organizational goals in the coming months or years.

Done well, AI-powered digital transformations can mean building not just the infrastructure for change but also prepping business leadership, staff, environment and company culture to fully support a whole new tech strategy (or parts of it) during specific periods along a set timeline. Try to see ahead as much as possible.

3. Provide education and training on AI for collaborative success.

Digital transformations often stall because of a lack of education. An astounding "70% of digital transformations fall short of their objectives." Although it's essential for our IT departments to understand the benefits of new AI tools and how to use them, it's equally crucial for founders and decision makers to be well-versed in how these tools can enhance performance, provide meaningful and key-changing insight on markets, rubrics, company and talent performance, save time, reduce costs and, generally, keep a business profitable.

Without deep education, key players across sectors may continue to be apprehensive of such integration processes, which translates into slow rolls and user adoptions. These only hurt company culture.

Invest in and provide adequate resources for ongoing education, training, consultations, mentorship and testing of AI tools to help fuel digital transformations from the core.

4. Adapt your company for change.

To effectively incorporate emerging AI technology into a business, let it evolve. Doing so includes letting a company structure be rocked into an AI focus a little bit further, even beyond common areas of comfort.

Focus on amplified job requirements and hiring processes, for example. According to Gartner analysts, "By 2027, 50% of developers will use ML-powered coding tools, up from less than 5% today." We also know that "developers using AI tools [are] able to complete their tasks 55.8% faster" now. Start zooming in on candidates who understand functionality, usability, reliability, accuracy and consistency as parts of any great tool so they can give feedback and make more informed decisions during the company's digital transformation.

When considering other candidates in all roles, hiring managers should look for people who are already versed, if not at least comfortable, with AI software. Start bringing in people all across the board who have already adapted to AI, having tested and experimented with it in the past, to get everyone thinking about AI throughout their daily duties.

5. Delegate if needed.

Too busy with current workloads and processes to truly devote your mind to this in full? Delegate AI research and development. Team meetings for comprehensive overviews can help you stay on top of specific software plans, needs, budget alignment and timelines. Also, try using gamification strategies and even offering rewards or incentives for the best AI solutions.

Ready To Enter The AI Digital Transformation Arena?

For many corporations, AI represents an exciting opportunity for growth. If you're reading this, you're likely eager to leverage the extensive benefits that AI can bring to your business dynamics. Stay ahead of the curve with a continued focus on your ultimate digital transformation. I wish you the best through it all.

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