

## FUTURE-READY LEADERSHIP SERIES

# LEADING CONTINUOUS CHANGE: THREE BEST PRACTICES

The key to digital transformation is re-imagining how your company operates and actively leading the journey. Senior executives need to inspire their teams to embrace technological innovations, meet evolving customer expectations, and harness cultural and demographic forces that are redesigning the way businesses operate. According to a recent Forbes article, research indicates that the vast majority of companies today have launched some type of digital transformation initiative.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the best C-suite leaders are not sitting on the sidelines; they are entering the fray and leading the charge toward this new way of working.



### THE MOST IMPORTANT RATIONALE

While digital transformation invites a great deal of focus on technologies like artificial intelligence, machine learning and business process automation, the most important rationale for these technologies is to create a top quality experience for both customers and employees. The situation for customers is relatively straightforward; provide an experience that is digitally enhanced, engaging, intuitive and distinctive, and you win.

The scenario for employees is based on technological, demographic and social trends that

are affecting not only the systems and processes that drive business day-to-day, but the workforce that uses them. In the workplace, the leaders must adapt to a generation of employees with much different attitudes toward work. Younger generations raised in the digital age have different expectations of companies and the digitally-enabled tools available to them. Most prefer to work for digitally-enabled organizations and businesses that fall behind will face increased challenges to retain employees and attract top talent. Leaders ignoring the expectations of these digital natives, employing autocratic approaches or focusing excessively on financial results will risk losing the support of their Generation Z employees.

Employee engagement, regardless of generation, will be a key factor in the future workplace and successful business leaders will be the ones who adjust effectively to new expectations of satisfaction and fulfillment from work-life rather than simply focusing on career status and income. This has a direct influence on the bottom line. According to CMO, companies with great employee experience outperform the S&P 500 by 122%.<sup>2</sup> As a result, a keen focus on employee experience will be key for the future of work. Employees are accustomed to sharing their lives on social media and this increases the convergence between employees' private and working lives. Work-from-home, virtual collaboration and data mobility will be baseline expectations, as will working within an organization that has a highly flexible and collaborative work environment rather than an autocratic one.

### THREE BEST PRACTICES

It is vital that leaders assess current business processes and design strategies to streamline operations. What are some effective next steps? Below are three best practices to consider as

you evaluate your end-to-end processes and business workflows. A true digital transformation looks at the entire customer experience. There are tactical operations that are worth reviewing today to move the needle and get started. The first two are focused on digital transformation and workflow automation; the third centers on creating and maintaining a future-ready workspace.

**Streamline the flow of incoming data.** One way to do this is to consider how information enters your enterprise and implement a digital intake center. This solution incorporates a hybrid mailroom and scanning service that uses specialized mail-scanning technology and workflow techniques to convert physical mail into digital information immediately upon receipt. That information is then delivered to employees or into your business workflow electronically—anywhere at any time—allowing your employees to receive information quicker and enabling your business to move faster and smarter.

What is driving this approach? The time it takes to convert thousands of inbound paper documents into digital information matters, and organizations with sound digitization strategies are in the best position to improve customer service, reduce operational costs and mitigate risk. That is why more businesses are leveraging digital intake centers.

One of the key benefits is the ability to save money and increase cost efficiency. With a digital intake center, you can drastically reduce the manual labor and processing costs associated with mail delivery and the flow of business information. By digitizing and distributing mail electronically, you can virtually eliminate fine mail sorting and distribution costs. This can also help you significantly reduce the volume of nonessential and personal mail, freeing your mail center personnel to focus on other value-added activities. In addition to these immediate cost-savings, a digital intake center helps you reduce paper-to-digital processing times, in turn enabling you to realize a variety of other cost-saving benefits (for example, vendor discounts for faster paper invoice processing).

**Automate business process workflows.** As business leaders look to identify functional areas in need of improvement and visibility, industry experts point out that improving supply chain processes — including source-to-pay (S2P) systems — is critical. Digitally transforming your organization's source-to-pay process requires developing a comprehensive strategy that is not solely focused on technology. The strategy must address all of the stakeholders involved, fix or eliminate processes that are inefficient or not working and apply technology as an enabler. In other words, a successful S2P transformation initiative requires three important components. These include the right people (attracting talented individuals with the necessary skills); leveraging the right process (instituting the most efficient approach to process design and implementation); and implementing the right technology (adding complementary or new tools to improve your existing system).

What are some advantages of advancing your S2P system? Enterprises have achieved such benefits as gaining new discounts in addressable spend; improving supply-chain health; reducing processing costs and increasing spend under management. Additionally, some enterprises tap the expertise of an experienced managed services provider to create a scalable infrastructure for growth that includes: designing new workflow processes; enabling a greater level of visibility into spend; instituting a governance model; providing flexible teams that can be located onsite, offsite and/or offshore; managing the S2P workforce; and implementing state-of-the-art, best-in-class technology.

**Create a future-ready workspace.** Forward-thinking companies are transitioning to a more agile workspace, in which seating and desk space are often unassigned, provided as need when employees are in the office.<sup>3</sup> The goal is to attract the best talent, encourage collaboration, provide



an engaging work environment and improve efficiency. One way to drive this strategic initiative is by leveraging what can be referred to as “the intelligent office.” This concept comprises a suite of integrated services, potentially managed on an outsourced basis, which can enable your organization to advance such vital office activities such as hoteling, conference room reservations, catering, mail and print center support, reception, concierge services and more.

One example is hoteling, typically a reservation-based system of office management in which employees schedule their use of workspaces (desks, cubicles, equipment, mobile file cabinets and meeting rooms) before they arrive at the office. Services can include a daily refresh and maintenance of employee desk space and technology as well as meeting rooms ranging from chat rooms to team rooms and conference rooms. Ideally, support is provided to employees who have questions about the company or need help with computers, audio/visual equipment and videoconferencing systems, which are critical to maintaining personal connections in an agile work environment.



The key benefit of the intelligent office approach — and it is a critical one — is providing a superior experience for employees and clients. This includes the ability to create a more collaborative workplace; attract a new generation of talent; devote more time and resources to the company's core business; and improve client service. However, achieving these advantages in an agile workplace requires providing employees with higher-level office services compared to a traditional office setting. For this reason, partnering with a managed services provider that has the right expertise to deliver the wide range of integrated solutions that comprise the “intelligent office” is a key consideration.

## VISION AND VALUES

Fostering change and implementing best practices such as those illustrated in this article will only reap the richest rewards if they are part of an organization's unwavering vision and values.<sup>4</sup> Leaders have the vital task of communicating clear, solid values in a way that inspires the support of every employee. When the company's people, process and technology fit into those values, virtually anything is possible. Transforming your organization comes not only from having a sound strategy and enabling technology, but by engaging your employees to deliver a unique customer experience.

## CANON CAN HELP

Canon helps clients enable business agility and digital transformation, as well as lead an increasingly evolving workforce. We achieve these goals by leveraging our experienced team backed by Six Sigma expertise and best-in-class technology. By partnering with you to implement leading-edge solutions such as robotic process automation and digital intake center services, we can help your business meet challenges and continue to prosper in the days ahead.

Contact Canon Business Process Services today at 888-623-2668 and [cbps.canon.com](http://cbps.canon.com).

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<sup>1</sup>Newman, Daniel. 2018. “Four Ways The Right Leadership Drives Digital Transformation.” *Forbes*, July

<sup>2</sup>Ambramovich, Giselle. 2018. “15 Mind-Blowing Stats About The Future Of Work.” *CMO*, June 6.

<sup>3</sup>Key Facility Management Trends in 2018, Canon Business Process Services

<sup>4</sup>Newman, “Four Ways The Right Leadership Drives Digital Transformation.”