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## OCTOBER 2018

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### **The Three Human Barriers To Digital Transformation**

Today, many of our clients are focused on educating their customers on connected, intelligent (IoT) offerings. We're often asked for guidance on best practices to support their internal employee's adoption curve and address barriers to transformation. Digital transformation is an imperative in today's business market. With the rapid pace of technological change, no industry will remain untouched. It is in this context, that companies across the world are launching and driving digital transformation programs. But what we are learning is that, while the digital part of this process may be hard to do, it is the transformation part that is most difficult.

Implementing changes in the technologies in our organization is key to success. However, the innovation benefits of these technologies will only be successfully leveraged if the transformation also succeeds in changing people and their mindsets. This human side of change

is most difficult because it speaks to people's deep seated needs for stability and an almost instinctive resistance to change.

As leaders, we need to recognize that human life is a constant tension between progress and inertia. For most people, changes within their company can feel like chaos being introduced into their once predictable workplace. On the other hand, people also recognize that change is inevitable. For large companies to compete in the future they will have to be as innovative as startups.

Digital transformation can be most difficult in organizations with a history of success and low employee turnover. It can be a blessing and a curse to have employees that love working at a company and strongly identify with it. It is a blessing because these employees understand the true DNA of the company and this can serve as a true north during any transformation program.

However, this employee commitment can become a challenge when people start to confuse their daily rituals and ways of working as reflecting of the true DNA of their company. When a digital transformation is taking place, it forces people to answer a key question - what are the truly essential elements that are core to the DNA of our company? And what are the ways of working and technologies that can and must be changed?

So, while leaders will often address with their teams plans for transformation and discuss road maps for technology implementation, the human barriers to transformation remain largely unaddressed. Here are three key human barriers to transformation that have to be addressed before digital transformation programs can succeed.

1. Inertia: This is the tendency for people to do nothing or remain unchanged. Inertia is particularly strong when things are going well. Unless there is a crisis, most people will question why change is necessary at all. The company is doing is well, things are working and we are making profits. So why do we need to change? Most people cannot sense their business environment changing before it's too late. However, if companies wait until there is a crisis to change it might be too late to transform effectively. Inertia is something that must be addressed directly. It has to be communicated to employees that current success is not a guarantee of future success. Leaders must provide clearly articulated reasons for the transformation that paint an aspirational view of the future.

2. Doubt: In every organization, there are people who understand the need for change. Their biggest barrier is doubt. They doubt that such change can ever happen in a company such as theirs. Many would have experienced a number of failed change programs. So they will take a point of view that the current digital transformation is just another one of those. I have been in meetings with people who remember how their company tried and failed to transform several times. They don't believe that their leadership are capable of enacting such changes. So, they choose to hunker down and get on with their work - this change program will soon blow by. Ironically, this is a self-fulfilling prophecy. Transformation can fail to happen because the very people that are supposed to drive it, don't believe that change can happen.

3. Cynicism: This is the human barrier that can be most frustrating for leaders. This is the schadenfreude that some people feel when the digital transformation program runs into problems or has to change direction. Since they already doubt the leadership, these people will use any failure or change of plan as a talking point to illustrate how they always knew that their company's leadership was incompetent. This is frustrating because there is no transformation program that ever runs without problems or challenges. Indeed, the willingness for leaders to change and adapt their plans is a good sign that they are listening and testing their ideas. Cynics can be like rotten apples in a transformation program and must be addressed directly.

In a recent article on digital transformation trends, Forbes.com Contributor Daniel Newman noted that company culture is still the biggest barrier to digital transformation. Beyond planning the road map and implementing the technology, leaders need to think seriously about the human side of transformation. A change management program focused on tackling the human barriers to change needs to be run in parallel to any digital transformation program. Companies that are able to change both their technology stack and their employees mindsets will benefit the most from the digital transformation.

\*Source: Tendayi Viki, Forbes.com

### Recent Placements and Current Engagements

Corporate Security Director- US Based Multinational

VP Global Engineering- Access/Video/Intrusion Solutions

Branch Sales Leader- Systems Integration: HVAC/Security/Life Safety- Chicago

Regional Sales- Connected/Intelligent Software Solutions- Dallas

Regional Service Sales- Building Automation- SaaS Solutions: Chi, LA, Seattle, SF

Sales Leader- Connected/IoT offerings- Systems Integration- Northeast

Regional Sales Manager- Access & Video Solutions- Carolinas

Business Development Consultant- Building Systems- Atlanta

Director of Architect, Engineer & Consultant Programs- Enterprise Software- **COMPLETED**

Regional Sales Manager- Enterprise Capture- Network Video Software- Northeast

VP, Strategic Alliances- Enterprise Software- **COMPLETED**

Business Development Manager- Transit/Transportation Vertical- Network Video Solutions

Regional Business Consultant- IoT/Connected Building Solutions- Southern California Region

Regional Sales Manager- Network Video, Eastern Canada- **COMPLETED**

Metro NY Regional Sales- Access Control

Regional Sales Manager- Access/Video/Intrusion- Texas Region- **COMPLETED**

Regional Sales- EM Access Control Southern CA, Central FL and Chicago Territories-

Service Sales Executive-Named Accounts- HVAC/Controls/Fire/Life Safety- Chicago

Area Vice President- Enterprise Software- **COMPLETED**

Regional Sales Manager- Enterprise Software- New England Region

Regional Sales- Managed Access Control/Video- Denver

Regional Sales Manager- Network Video Solutions- Northern California

Regional Sales, Critical Infrastructure- Enterprise Software- NY Region

National Account Manager- Network Video Solutions- Midwest- **COMPLETED**

Regional Sales Manager- Enterprise Software/Surveillance- Pacific Northwest

Field Applications Engineer- Enterprise Access Control Software- Pacific Northwest-  
**COMPLETED**

Major Projects Capture- Integrated/Connected Building Solutions -Chicago Region-

Product Manager- Fire & Life Safety

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