FOUR STEPS TO OVERCOMING DIGITAL PARALYSIS.

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Many organisations are confronting the daunting challenges of competitive crowded markets, narrowing profit margins and global economic volatility. On top of this there is the nagging fear that their competitors are forging ahead through smarter engagement in the digital revolution. An inertia often sets in, a kind of digital paralysis. It's difficult to know where to start and this often leads to no action, or an over simplistic approach - hire or designate an individual to lead, pay a software vendor to advise, buy a load of technology and run a training programme. This seldom works or at best only reaps partial rewards and massively overlooks the role of culture and people in the process.

Our experience has taught us to take a step back and ask why you want to make the change. This can often unlock potential in your people and your business, beyond simply using digital tools to do stuff faster and cheaper. It is often difficult for organisations to get the objectivity they need at the outset of this process and the involvement of those who have experienced successful business transformation through going digital can be the right catalyst. Lessons from other industries, far removed from the company's business sector gives a refreshing reassurance that the journey is worth making.

Following these steps will make a positive difference:

1) Identify the biggest business risks and opportunities

Take a long hard look at which areas present the biggest risks and opportunities for your business and prioritise them. Where are the pain points and where do you think you could do much better? Are there tedious and repetitive tasks and processes which not only take excessive time, burn profit but are also demotivating to your people. Imagine how liberating this can be for your team. When I was leading a team in Ryder Architecture around ten years ago, our decision to adopt BIM software led to a boost in morale by making repetitive tasks easier, leaving more quality time to deliver a better output, improved profit margins and happier clients!

2) Culture is critical

When considering the cultural aspects of business change, it is easy to oversimplify and identify stereotypes in the demographic of an organisation and many digital transformation stories make reference to these – the naïve but enthusiastic technology geeks, the experienced but cynical technophobes who know how to get results with the tools they have and won't move out of their comfort zone, the business leader who gets the big picture and the business value but leaves too much of the detail to others. Every organisation is different and deeply understanding and working with the organisation's greatest asset, its people, is absolutely vital.

3) Plan for success

Define interventions that truly add value to your business and people. Be clear about filtering out the things you could do but won't as they don't address your key needs. Don't necessarily dismiss them but set your priorities and order them accordingly. Once you've identified the solutions and begun your programme of implementation, use the time to liberate

the creativity of your team to go after bigger prizes, new sectors, different angles to existing markets.

4) Track progress

Make sure you track your success and measure the value of the changes you have made – both quantitative (sales, costs, time) and qualitative (customer satisfaction, repeat work, people retention). Spend some time understanding and recording your current performance so you have benchmarks to measure your improvements against. Learn from others who have done it before. They may be from different sectors and the digital solutions may be different but the themes are the same.

Start liberating the digital potential of your people to fuel growth by getting in touch with us at Evolve8.