

Executive summary

BREAKTHROUGH

Breaking through barriers to digital transformation
at the intersection of people and technology



IT teams have performed tremendous feats through the tumultuous last couple of years. They've been the great unifiers, connectors and engines of progress, making necessity the mother of not just invention, but innovation, too. Businesses are more digitally resilient as a result. And they've set companies up for success in a do-anything-from-anywhere world, where work is an outcome rather than a place or time.

Eighty percent of 10,500 respondents polled by Dell Technologies across the world believe this shift will create a more inclusive work environment. People will have time to work, achieve financial independence and still care for loved ones or pursue other interests.

That's the goal, but many haven't quite landed there yet. According to our research, 58% of all respondents are not yet experiencing a better life work balance and 41% believe staff are wrestling with burnout and/or poor mental health that's affecting their ability to deliver on their work.

64% of respondents report the failure of their digital transformation programs is often due to their people



56%

of respondents say they don't always have the motivation/energy to act on digital transformation in the workplace



If you think of recent, expedited digital transformations as a construction project—many businesses went from an empty plot or just a foundation to wood-framed buildings. The build was quick, the property may not be particularly sound-proof and the premises may need shoring up. Our Breakthrough study shows that now is the time to make repairs, specifically on the human side of transformation, to build back better for the future.

Why is this so important? It's increasingly acknowledged that companies are only as extraordinary as their people. Indeed, 85% of business leaders believe their people are their "greatest asset". But there is also a general consensus that people are not delivering on their potential.

PEOPLE-RELATED TRANSFORMATION CHALLENGES

Lack of digital skills and aptitude

69% of respondents worry they don't have the necessary skills for digital transformation

Lack of an innovative culture

60% of respondents say their organizational culture is restricting employees' ability to innovate

Lack of vision and a people-first strategy

53% of respondents worry their business will be shut-out of the evolving digital world due to a lack of people with the right authority/vision

Measuring readiness for transformation:

We measured respondents' readiness for technological change and placed them in the following benchmark groups:



Respondents in the Sprint and Steady groups tend to be more confident that they or their organization will advance in areas of technology adoption, while respondents in the Slow and Still groups are more likely to see the potential risks involved and retreat.

51% of respondents in the Still group believe their people won't be able to keep up with technological change



around 5x more than Sprinters

Almost a third (31%) of respondents in the Still group worry they will be overlooked/forgotten in a remote working world



over 10x more than Sprinters

47% of respondents in the Still group fear people will be overwhelmed by the velocity, volume and variety of data



over 2x more than Sprinters

Building breakthroughs

With myriad 'human' barriers to digital transformation and just 10% of respondents trailblazing innovation, many businesses are worried they'll be left behind in a hyper-digital world. To overcome these hurdles and secure their future, they need to build their breakthrough at the intersection of people and technology—where three clear routes converge.

1. BREAK THROUGH WITH **CONNECTIVITY**

Recognize that work is an outcome. With that, provide employees with consistent and secure experiences, to thrive wherever they work. Put up guard rails to protect their leisure time and wellbeing, that consider different needs, interests and care responsibilities.

44% of employees want their leaders to empower them to choose their preferred working pattern and provide the necessary tools and/or infrastructure

58% of respondents in the Still and Slow groups are finding it difficult to collaborate remotely and connect relationally

2. BREAK THROUGH WITH **PRODUCTIVITY**

Boldly delegate to technology to reduce complexity and free people to focus on what they do best. By augmenting human capabilities through consumption-based IT, you can scale your productivity to new heights, put your people's talents to good use and increase employee satisfaction.

69% look forward to learning new skills and technologies and/or elevating their role by automating more

37% (a minority) say they are currently experiencing mentally stimulating, non-repetitive work

3. BREAK THROUGH WITH **EMPATHY**

Build a culture that treats your people as your greatest source of innovation and apply empathy to everything, from responsive and trusted technology designs that put the end-user experience first, to thoughtful transformational change programs that drive excitement and purpose.

83% of respondents say their leaders overlook different perspectives and viewpoints

34% of employees say their leaders treat staff as dispensable

RELEASE THE INNOVATORS

Digital transformation requires ongoing effort. Businesses can't afford to lose momentum—which they might, if they overlook their people's appetite and propensity for change and push forward with an IT strategy that doesn't put the end-user experience first. Presently, 67% believe their organization underestimates the people requirements when planning transformation programs, which would indicate that many are tripping over at the point of implementation.

To succeed in a do-anything-from-anywhere-economy, first focus on your peoples' needs and preferred ways of working and learning. They might be out-of-sight, but they shouldn't be out-of-mind. Now is the time to broker more thoughtful partnerships with technology and release scores of innovators across your workforce.

For more on this study and additional resources to build your breakthrough visit:
www.dell.com/breakthrough.