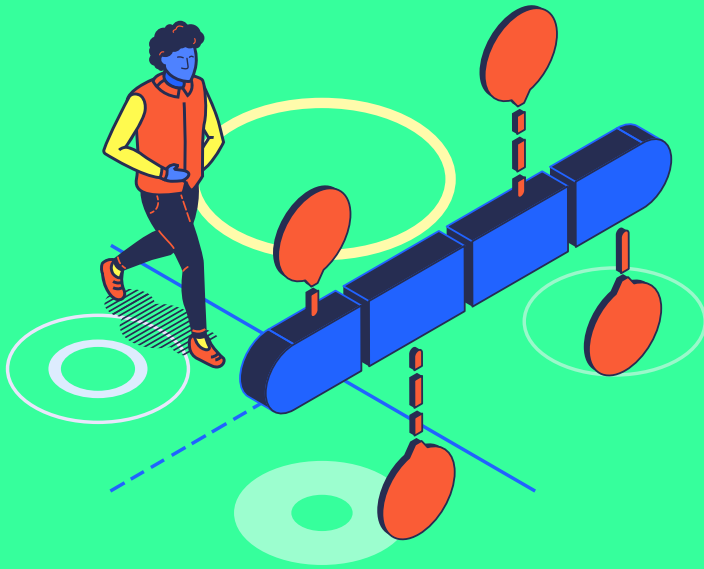


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# Top Tips for Driving Change within Data-Driven Transformation



# Foreword

At a time when many companies across a broad spectrum of industries are examining underneath the bonnet to see how healthy the engine looks, one of the considerations must be how the organisation can run with increased agility and efficiency in order to emerge from this situation fitter and stronger. 'Digital transformation' is a term that may make eyes roll upwards, but 'data-driven' transformation has to be the way forward for many organisations to ensure that all business decisions are just that, driven by data.

So when teams within organisations are created with the shiny new title of 'digital transformation team', do we really understand where their focus lies? Is it on the infrastructure – digitising legacy processes – on improving client experience, or are they looking at how to get data flowing better through the entire organisation?

These are important processes, as it's the latter that underpins the whole business of transformation, because, unless data is captured, utilised and shared, any technology upgrade will be in vain. And done correctly, data-driven transformation will fundamentally change how an organisation operates and delivers value to its customers, by putting data – and data analytics – at the heart of decision making across all areas of its business.

The huge elephant in the room for businesses is that according to IDC, 40% of all technology spending will go toward digital transformation, with enterprises spending in excess of \$2 trillion through 2019. And yet despite this huge level of investment, 70% of all digital transformations fail to deliver. This huge rate of failure is happening because technology is over-prioritised, whilst everything that makes technology actually work – people, processes, culture and mindset – is undervalued.

In short, too many organisations fail to understand that successful data-driven transformation is about instigating a cultural change that requires organisations to truly redefine how their people operate internally and what their processes need to be to support transformation. So, if a change is essential for success, where does an organisation start? This whitepaper will go through our six top tips for driving change in data-driven digital transformation.

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# Make a case for change

As a rule, humans and organisations don't like change. Instead, they find reasons not to make changes happen.

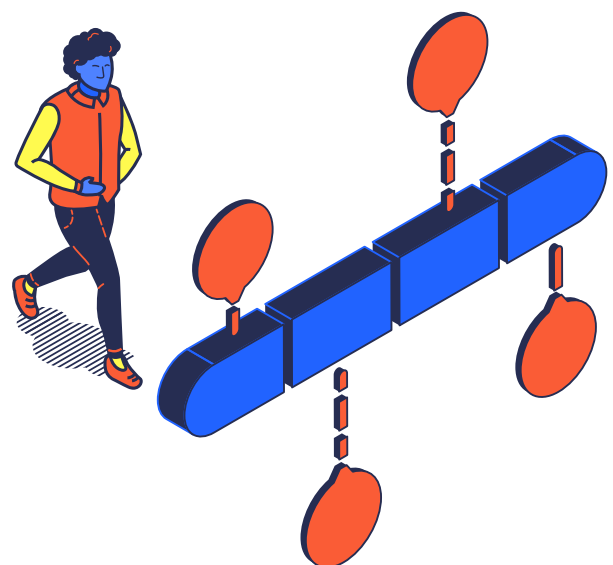
This is why, whatever the reason why change may be deemed necessary (perhaps it's in reaction to a threat or a movement towards an opportunity, either internally or externally), the reason for the change must be articulated in a way that helps others understand why change is necessary, and crucially, why they should be motivated to support data-driven transformation. Furthermore, as obvious as it may seem to the CEO, COO or IT director as to why the change needs to happen, it must be translated so your people (that is, those individuals who are usually most removed from the decision-making process BUT most impacted by the change), can relate to it. This links to the next tip.



## Shared vision

The leadership team must act as the evangelists for change; connecting people with the 'change' story and the vision and purpose for the transformation.

A designated 'chief storyteller' must describe the future in a way that creates a positive picture of what the change will look like; people need to understand what they will be doing differently when the change is realised in order to truly get behind the process. This means creating meaning to what they will do and how they will do it so they can find their compelling reason to feel inspired, energised, and motivated to deliver their best work. The creation of a firm destination is particularly important at a time when hyped terms, such as AI or ML, can distract from the vision. The result of this approach? Alignment within the business which will drive people to rally around delivering change.



## Be prepared to be flexible

We all love agile working, and the process of change management should be no different.

Agile, loosely defined, is the “ability to move and think quickly and easily.” So, recognise, accept, and even embrace that you can’t plan for everything, and also understand that, as you learn, your plan will evolve. Although in business we’re all very destination-focused, on a data-drive journey, sometimes even your end goal could change, and that’s OK as long as you’ve created a culture of agility. Try to focus on eliminating wasted activity, amplify learnings as you go, be prepared to make decisions late in cycles, and then always strive for fast delivery. You’ll crack this by encouraging a culture of flexibility, iteration and ownership in work across all levels of the change process.

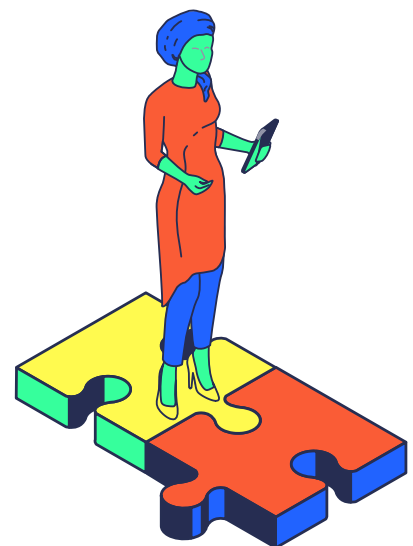


# Change transition

Driving successful change requires not only understanding where one starts from and where one wants to get to, but just as importantly, recognising what the transitional checkpoints in-between are.

Let me use an analogy to explain. You're on the London underground at South Ken (your current state reality), and you want to get to Kings Cross (your desired end state). You have several routes and options to get you to Kings Cross, so your first decision is, which is the best route for me? Factors at play here could include time and speed of arrival, convenience (number of changes), preferred route, and opinions of others. You decide to take the Piccadilly line, a direct line with eight stops to Kings Cross. While on the tube, you continually check each stop as you come into the station and listen to the driver as they announce the next station. These check-ins reassure you that you are on the right train to Kings Cross, and happily, with no surprises, you arrive at your destination.

Now, the process of transformation is fundamentally more challenging than getting the tube across London, but the point is the same: know your beginning, know your end, know and map out your route, and create your checks and measures to check your progress along the way, all the time managing emotions and expectations as you drive the process of change.



## Build momentum & provide support

It's not enough when embarking on the change required to drive transformation to create a cheerleader moment at the start, and then assume everybody is then on board for the whole process.

Instead, the leaders in the business have to reinforce the business case continually, staying committed to the compelling shared vision, and communicating the why, the what and the how on an incredibly frequent basis. Make the process repeatable, not just an occasional spark of genius. Turn the wheel and add value. When people are back at their desks doing their day job, how do they utilise what they have learned to add value? They need continued support from the business to achieve the value required.

And don't just focus on the transformation project alone; instead also think about the bigger picture: how do you want your people to act after the transformation has occurred and we are back into the humdrum world of Business As Usual (BAU)?



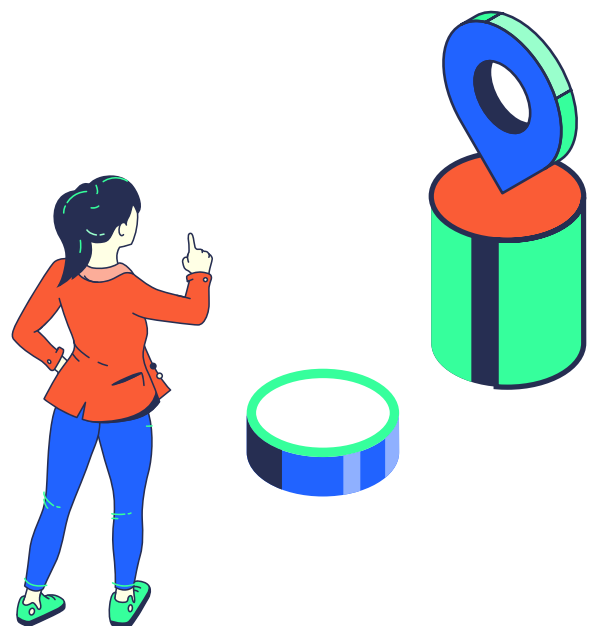


## Re-enforce the vision

Here's the thing though; in today's world, there is actually no such thing as BAU.

To remain competitive and relevant, it isn't enough for businesses to implement change, and they believe their work is done. Instead, the challenge is to keep driving forward, to shift old mindsets and behaviours in favour of new, to replace old ways of working with new and improved ones, and to keep a vision (and motivation) for (constant) change alive. Everyone is a decision-maker to some degree, and data is the enabler for everyone to do business in an optimal manner, so a shared vision of what a data-driven business looks like is key.

If we accept that data-driven transformation is a given rather than a 'nice to have', then ensuring they're in the 30% of successful digital transformation projects rather than the unsuccessful 70% must be the priority for any organisation's leadership team. Experience tells us that if you can manage the change management required and have everyone rally around the vision, you'll be on the path to success.



## The Author

Equantiis hopes you have found this top tips for driving change within data-driven transformation guide useful. If you would like our help in facilitating or formulating your Data Strategy, please get in touch.

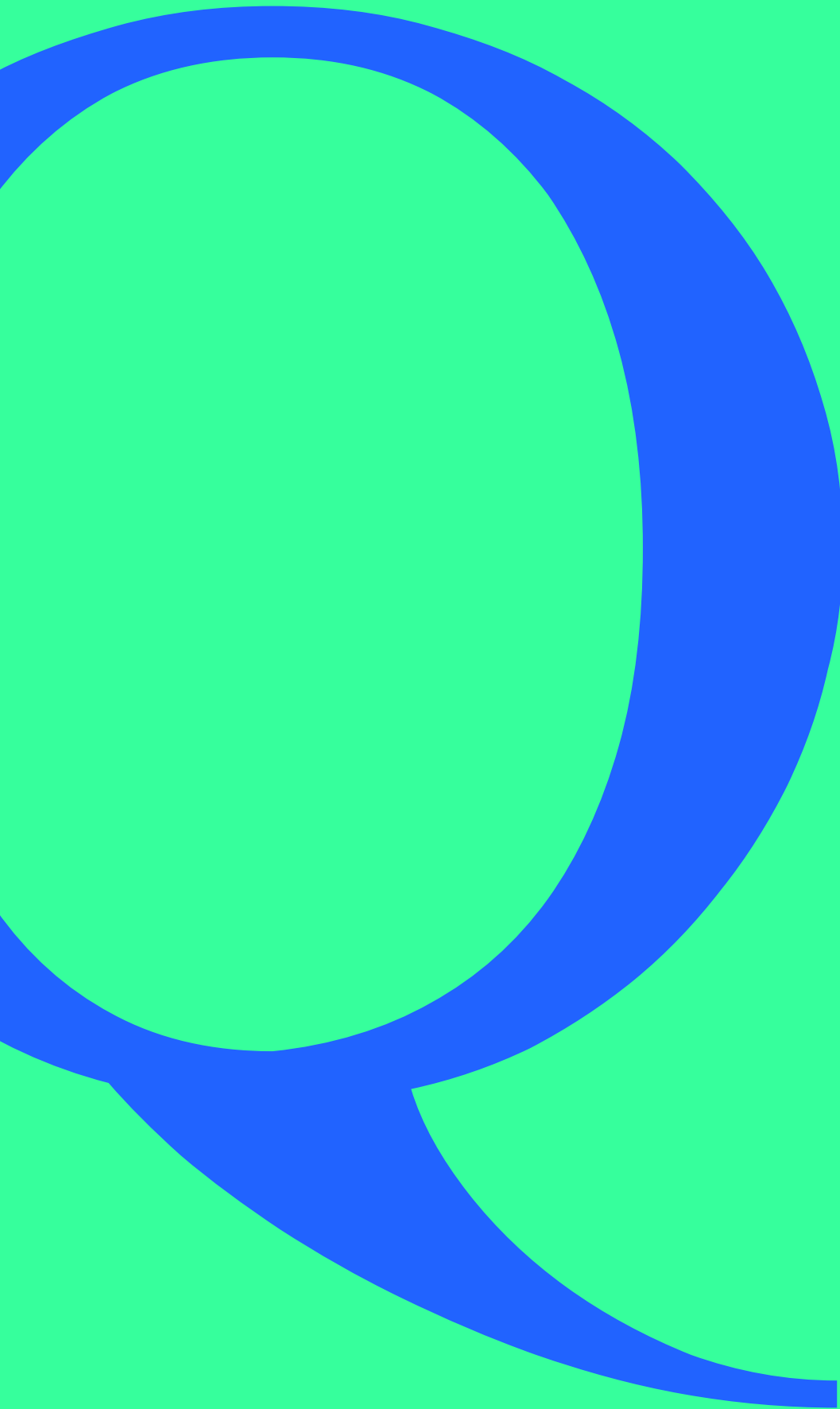


### Simon Adams, Equantiis

Simon is a highly capable and driven Management Consultant with 15+ years of experience in delivering complex technology-enabled business change. Simon has provided CTO (Chief Technology Officer / IT Director) as a Service across multiple clients across a range of sectors including Not-for-profit, Retail, Education and Finance. He brings consultancy experience in leading the prioritisation and management of large change portfolios that span across IT, business and third-party suppliers. Simon is an excellent communicator, often involved in working with the executive teams, but is equally comfortable driving engagement at all levels.

Simon's passion at work is in driving change and the adoption of digital culture, tools, and ways of working. Having advised and led pre-sales due diligence and post-M&A integration he brings first-hand experience of how the successfully create a culture of high performance and engagement, that is progressive in the adopted ways of working.

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