Achieving Long-Lasting Digital Change in Higher Education

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Digital transformation

- Digital transformation is a complex process combining elements both inside and outside the organization.
Typical issues with digital transformation

• Treating digital transformation as a one-time exercise
  • Failing to address cultural change results in a short-lived impact

• Managing digital tools with traditional IT governance
  • Efficiency based model often neglects business growth, differentiation and innovation

• Expecting the IT organisation to be digital by nature
  • The DNA of IT is often technical and not business-change oriented
  • IT projects are not particularly good at change management

• Bypassing the customer viewpoint
  • It is easier to focus on delivery efficiency if the customers are conservative and focus on the short term
New approach – Areas to be addressed

- Full reengineering of some of the processes may be needed
- Five elements to be addressed:
Area 1 - Strategy

• Digital transformation needs to be part of the main strategy of the organization

• Typical elements to include in HE
  • Key principles, such as “digital first”
  • Value of data and fact-based decision making
  • Agility & fail fast
  • Focus on the customer
Area 2 – Value creation

• Use the customer first principle to improve business performance
• Push improvements in business processes even if people are affected
• Continuous innovation for value creation - goal oriented and iterative
Area 3 – Role of IT

• IT staff will need to get closer to the business and build a bridge between technology and processes

• Three areas to address in HE
  • Make IT and technology more visible to end users
  • Enable IT organisation to support end users to increase their personal productivity and innovativeness
  • Ensure the IT organisation has the required skills to work with the core business
Area 4 - Structure

• (IT) managers will need to change from scorekeepers to leaders
• Expect organisation to change from hierarchical to flat
• From project mindset to product mindset
• Existing IT services will need to be remoulded
Area 5 – Culture and skills

• Typical cultural elements to consider
  • Focus on the customer – this will keep the focus on the end goal
  • Digital first – this will ensure a future-proof renewal of the organisation
  • Calculated risk taking – this will lead to faster development
  • Agility – this will ensure competitiveness in the rapidly changing world
  • Open innovation – this will allow the organisation to keep renewing itself
  • Breaking silos – this will smoothen cultural clashes and increase process efficiency
  • Data at the core – this will improve decision making

• Different groups with different agenda
  • Infrastructure and traditional IT
  • IT people facing business
  • Businesspeople facing IT
  • End users and customers
Conclusions

• Long-lasting digital transformation needs
  • Full understanding of the nature of the transformation
  • Significant changes in at least five areas:
Q & A