

Digital Dexterity



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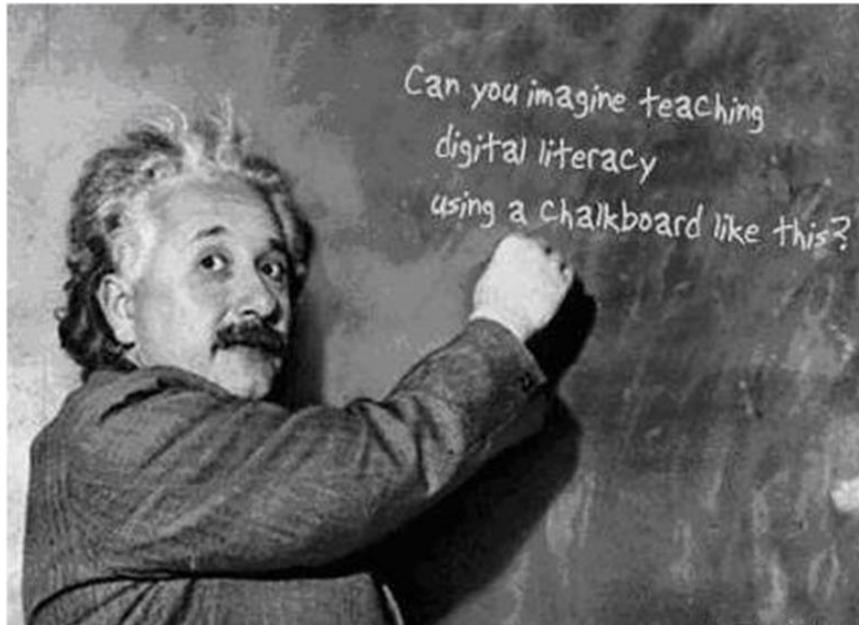
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Digital Dexterity

“The ability to identify and use technology confidently, creatively and critically to meet the demands and challenges of living, learning and working in a digital society”

Associate Professor Jo Coldwell-Neilson
Deakin University



Source: WordPress – Digital Literacy and Digital Divide

According to Gartner’s Executive Guidance on “Digital Dexterity at Work”, as many as 90% of corporate leaders’ top priorities can only be achieved with the help of technology, and almost 60% of CEOs globally expect their companies to undergo business model transformation in the next few years (Gartner 2018).

In the business context, Digital Dexterity is the secret ingredient we need in order to build a flexible work environment, instrumental to the success of any Digital Transformation project or initiative. Acquiring digital literacy is only one step in a long and challenging journey to attain Digital Dexterity. Digital Dexterity relies on the ability of employees to adopt emerging technologies and approaches to produce better results. But Digital Dexterity is not just about the evolution of your technical skills. It is also about aligning your talent and business strategy to improve business outcomes.

It is about the organisation’s ability to uncover emerging trends, rapidly adapt to change, in order to ‘thrive and survive’ in this fast-changing world. It is about the ability to respond to disruptions more efficiently.

Whenever an organisation implements a new or digitally transformed business process, supported by a contemporary technology, it is the Digital Dexterity that will determine if the organisation is equipped to achieve desired outcomes through the effective use of digital resources and if their people are ready to take advantage of new capabilities.

Many organisations have been sailing through their Digital Transformation endeavours for some time. Having Digitally Dexterous employees can absolutely ensure that this gigantic change in thinking, working and efficiently delivering business outcomes comes faster and with reduced risks.

“Today’s Henry Fords – the digital masters – are harnessing digital technologies to redesign their operations and create truly digital organizations”

CapGemini Consulting

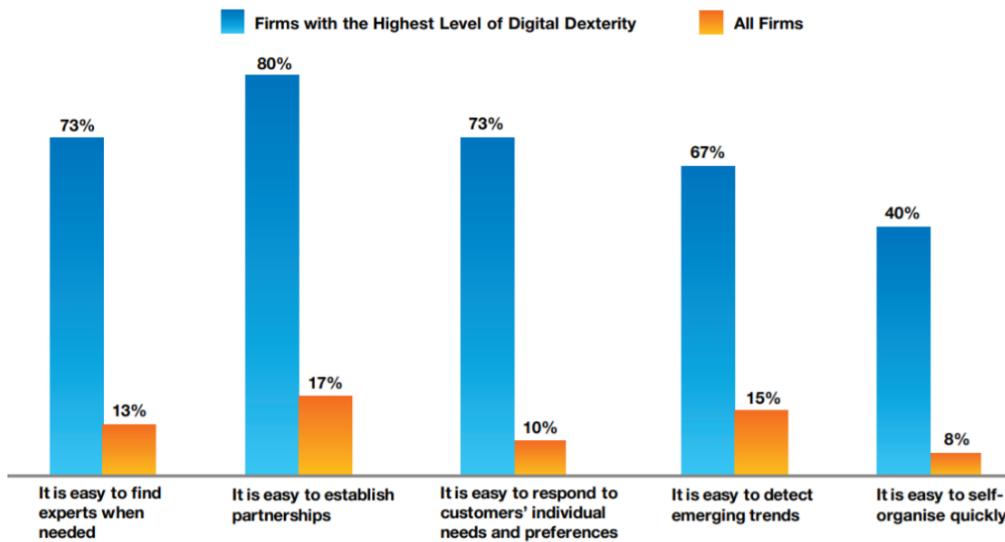


Figure 1: Advantages of organisations with higher level of Digital Dexterity

Source: CapGemini Consulting: Organizing for Digital - Why Digital Dexterity Matters

Gartner defines **Digital Business** as an organisation whose products, services and business model are only made possible by the appropriate use of information and digital technology (Gartner 2018).

Digital Dexterity encompasses a range of organisational capabilities, including Digital Capability, Data Literacy and Information Literacy.

Digital Capability enables organisations to achieve specific tactical objectives, using digital technology to improve processes, operations, collaboration and cooperation. It requires from organisations to self-organise and deliver value from digital technologies and approaches, experiment and innovate with intelligence and employ new ways of thinking and working.

Data Literacy is the ability to discover, read, understand data and relationships between data elements, in order to be able to transform data into useful and actionable information.

We define **Information Literacy** as a collection of skills and abilities expecting individuals to recognise what information is needed, when and why this information is relevant. It also includes having the ability to access and effectively use the Right Information to understand the given situation, guide the reasoning, measure success, assess risks, make or justify decisions and evaluate their impact.



Figure 2: Information Literacy Lifecycle

Source: The Knowledge Network

Right Information

By **Right Information** we refer to the information of quality that meets or exceeds expected quality standards, that is delivered at the right time, presented consistently and accurately to all authorised users via appropriate channels.

The key barriers of having the **Right Information** delivered to the **Right** people at the **Right** time in the **Right** format in a business setting include:

Access to Information – ability of the organisation to provide appropriate access to information that allows personnel to find the information they need to perform their duties. Users need to confidently access and analyse trusted information from the appropriate sources in accordance with their access rights, via a variety of interfaces, regardless of their location, organisational unit or technical skills.

Quality of Information – assurance that the delivered information is of adequate quality (in terms of accuracy, completeness, timeliness, reliability and relevance) in order to meet the purpose for which it was planned, designed and created.

The business users need to understand the quality attributes of information to determine its usefulness, assess its suitability, ensure appropriate use and consider its reusability.

Information quality is directly affected by the quality of input/raw data and the quality of the data preparation and processing. Creation of quality information is an iterative and continuous effort.

Efficient Use of Information – ability of the information environment to support efficient sharing and consumption of information resources, contributing to the defined business outcomes. The business users need to understand what data was used to create Information assets, access data lineage (“line-of-sight”) describing performed data integration, transformation, enrichment and processing.

Information supporting business evolution – organisation’s ability to ensure that information assets are planned, designed and constructed to support existing or anticipated business processes, formulated on an information architecture that is flexible to meet current and future business needs.

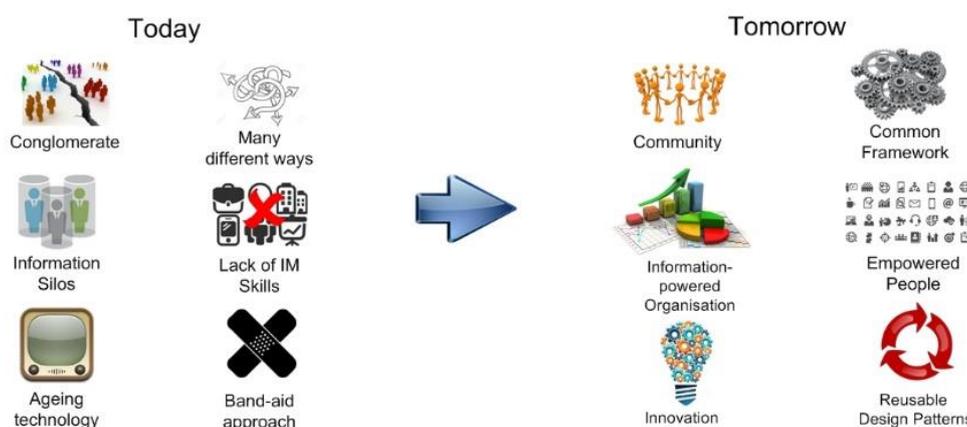


Figure 3: The transformation journey organisations must undertake in order to become *information-powered*

*An **information-powered** organisation is equipped with timely insights and knowledge that allow them to continuously optimise the way they:*

- *conduct their business*
- *streamline their operations*
- *deliver services and/or products*
- *derive answers, decisions and actions*
- *assess and manage their risks*
- *adapt to new realities.*

Attributes of Digital Dexterity

	Working Digitally	Building Digital Businesses
Ambition	<p>Ambition to work digitally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Believes in technology's ability to augment personal tasks and activities • Willing to take on new roles to support digitalization plans • Views data and technology proficiency as critical to career advancement 	<p>Ambition to build digital businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers digitalization to be critical to company effectiveness • Innovates and takes risks in pursuit of digital opportunities
Ability	<p>Ability to work digitally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts to work on initiatives with unclear and changing requirements • Works iteratively to improve outcomes • Can work from anywhere with the right technologies 	<p>Ability to build digital businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborates across seniority levels to set company digitalization direction • Surfaces digitalization opportunities to improve department/function operations • Obtains technologies independently to succeed on the job

Figure 4: Attributes of Digital Dexterity – blend of beliefs, mindsets and behaviours that accelerate digital business transformation

Source: Gartner - Executive Guidance: Digital Dexterity at Work

Organisations with a mature Digital Dexterity are equipped with data that is sourced from various sources, integrated and exploited to its optimum effect to deliver Information products that establish clarity, enable situational awareness, increase efficiency and provide better intelligence.

Organisations with a higher level of Digital Dexterity have an average of a 5.4 fold increase in their ability to easily respond to internal and external business needs (Figure 1, Capgemini Consulting analysis).

The information environment in a digitally mature organisation empowers their business users with appropriate skills, tools, governance structures and techniques, allowing them to confidently access and analyse trusted Information from the appropriate sources, in accordance with their role and access rights, via a variety of interfaces, regardless of their location, organisational unit or technical skills.

In order to drive Digital Dexterity in an organisation, the most important activities can be grouped into the following categories:

Governance: communication about the importance and priorities of Digital Dexterity and related initiatives, coming from the top leaders, providing models of the behaviours and attributes that constitute Digital Dexterity.

Information Environment: establishment of the frameworks, standards, policies, information architecture and associated processes that promote collaboration, create a culture of information and knowledge sharing, encourage iterative lifecycle of capability development through experimentation and innovation and guide implementation of emerging techniques, technologies and approaches.

Empowerment of People: build and grow skills and competencies required by a Digitally Dexterous employee, such as critical thinking, business acumen, innovation with data, adaptability, ability to find and evaluate information, being safe and responsible online, making informed decisions, as well as using digital devices and high-tech tools to achieve business outcomes.

Becoming a digital, information powered organisation requires:

- digital-first culture
- digital-ready business practices
- perseverance



Figure 5: Essential Dimensions of a Digital Organisation

Source: CapGemini Consulting - Organizing for Digital: Why Digital Dexterity Matters

How to Achieve Digital Dexterity?

According to the study performed by Quixy, only 7-18% of organisations possess the Digital Dexterity to adopt new ways of thinking and working. The key steps to achieve Digital Dexterity in your organisation include:

- Understand your current level of Digital Dexterity and the need for improvement
- Clearly define your objectives and vision related to becoming an information-powered organisation
- Maintain Digital Dexterity at the forefront of your business agenda
- Foster digital skills, competencies and mindsets through communities of practice and competency centres
- Ensure that your leaders are the role models of digital behaviour and mindset
- Continuously develop digital skills and competencies
- Support experimentation and innovation
- Recognise, share and celebrate success stories
- Embed the essential digital-first principles into organisation’s culture, structure and practices
- Continuously assess and optimise your approach to Digital Dexterity



Figure 6: Nine points to encourage Digital Dexterity in your organisation

Source: Quixy - Breaking down the basics of Digital Dexterity: What it means for you!

Benefits

Some of the commonly cited benefits of achieving Digital Dexterity include:

- Improved efficiency in delivering outcomes and achieving targets
- Self-sufficiency of employees and reduced dependency on specialised skills
- Enhanced ability to take advantage of digital technologies and digitised processes
- Better cooperation between business units
- Expanded and more effective exploitation and use of information assets
- Improved awareness of the business context and utilisation of common business language
- Lifted capacity to understand relationships between business processes, technology and information environment

Where to Start

It is never too late to start the Digital Dexterity journey, but it is important to do it right from the square one, to model the right behaviours in your organisation. Some of the key initial steps (inspired by Gartner's Executive Guidance, Gartner 2018) include:

- Promote Digital Dexterity through mindset, behaviours and activities by the organisation's leaders
- Develop a digital business narrative that highlights the importance of Digital Dexterity
- Model your own digitally dexterous behaviours in line with your expectations from others
- Ensure that processes, incentives, budgets and policies foster Digital Dexterity

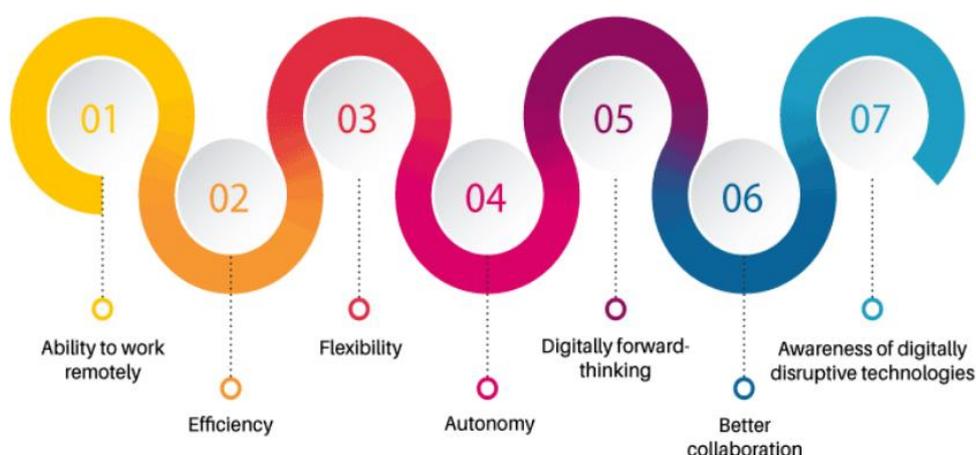


Figure 7: Key benefits of Digital Dexterity

Source: Quixy - *Breaking down the basics of Digital Dexterity: What it means for you!*

Your Digital Dexterity

So, where are you on the Digital Dexterity journey? What is your organisation doing to achieve Digital Dexterity? Do you know how to get there? If you want to know more, need some assistance or have experiences/lessons-learned that you would like to share, send an email to the Institute for Information Management, your partner on your digital journey.

Our digital doors are always open to you:

[E: iim@iim.org.au](mailto:iim@iim.org.au)

References

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