How to become a manufacturing leader in digital technology.

How can you maximise the capabilities of digital technologies, and ensure that all stakeholders are on board too?
It all comes down to your leadership style. You need to truly champion the tools.

1 Learn from others

2 Visit others on a journey

3 Apply effective techniques

4 Test the techniques

5 Look for expert help

STRONGER.

Step 1: Learn from others

You can't underestimate the value of other people – especially if they share the same vision as your business. They can offer you a different perspective on your situation, sharing their ideas and ways in which you can tackle any problems. Plus, they will have faced, and be faced with, their own obstacles when it comes to digitalisation. So you'll learn not only how they dealt with difficulties, but how they seized opportunities and uncovered best practices along the way.

On top of this, you can take comfort in the knowledge that you're not alone in your efforts to digitalise your processes. It's a common misconception that there are so many others that are further along in their digital journey, and this sense of isolation is often a barrier to joining in. However, there are leaders just like you who are at the very beginning of their journey and will meet similar challenges and struggles. maximise value and minimise waste.

> " The most significant attribute that I am finding is how powerful it is to have a group of other manufacturers all at the start of their journeys, working through this together. It has been very inspiring. "
>
> - Alan Ryan, MD at Technoprint

Step 2: Visit businesses on the digital journey

On a similar note, going to the sites of enterprises which are already set on their journey will be equally valuable.

This will give you the opportunity to see the technology in action, and how it's having a positive impact on the processes of these SMEs. Plus, you can talk to the business leader themselves, discovering the specific procedures they chose to focus on and asking any questions you may have. You might even have the chance to discuss individual functions of the business, such as operations and production, and understand the practicalities from their perspective.

Depending on the site you visit, you may also be able to see how they feed digital tools into their sustainability strategy.
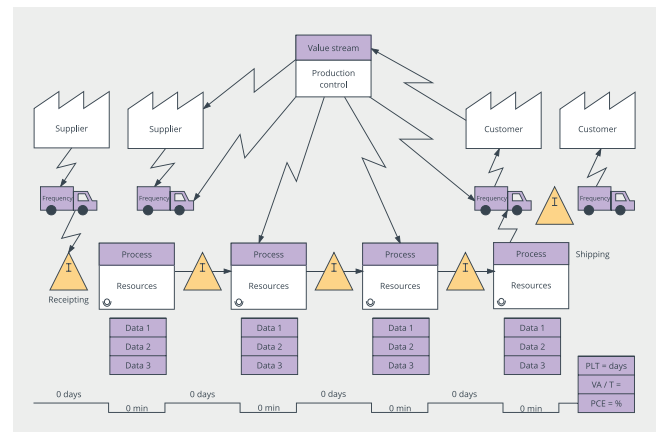
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Apply & Implement

SMARTER.

Step 3: Apply effective techniques

There are various leadership techniques which are grounded in experience and results. These will ultimately help you create a practical pathway to going digital.

One example is adopting a holistic view of your business. By considering your enterprise in its entirety, you'll be able to pinpoint and prioritise specific actions. 'Value Stream Mapping' can empower you to reassess your current sources of values and consider new streams to effectively determine which processes to take digital. With this technique, you'll be able to maximise value and minimise waste.

Source: www.lucidchart.com

Value Stream Mapping Framework

You could also use a 'House Model' framework, which will help you to build a digital strategy that considers all the broader factors. This ensures that nothing is missed – from engaging employees to managing stakeholders.

Putting a Performance Measurement Tool in place can be incredibly beneficial as well, guaranteeing that you're measuring all the relevant aspects of your digitalisation for future analysis and optimisation.

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BETTER.

Step 4: Test the techniques

With these techniques, you'll want to use the 'test and learn' approach. Rather than going full steam ahead, take the time to conduct ideas testing and review the results in a safe environment through sprint projects.

This also enables you to bring a group of your employees on board to realise the benefits this could bring to the business.

This step will allow you to correctly identify the best processes to digitalise in the first instance, overcome the initial hurdle to actually implementing technology, and then evaluate how specific stages have gone. You can then look beyond financial gain when assessing performance, and clearly see how much further along you are on your digital journey.

MADE SMARTER

FASTER.

Step 5: Look for expert help

Getting access to the expertise and advice of like-minded leaders doesn't have to be difficult. Instead of conducting your own research, the Made Smarter Leadership Development Programme ensures you speak to the right connections and receive thorough and accurate information.

Delivered in partnership with Lancaster University Management School (LUMS), you'll have access to academics who have expertise in the management disciplines which will enable you to realise digitalisation.

The programme includes:

Peer network and peer learning
You won't have to seek out other businesses in your situation; our programme brings you together for group and pair discussions. Graduates from our previous cohort have formed close bonds and even chosen to visit each other's premises to learn from one another.

Engagement with academics
Hosted by LUMS academics, these workshops take a holistic view of your business and help you identify and prioritise any suggested actions. They cover all the tools and techniques you need to effectively operationalise the adoption of smart technologies and build them into a framework.

Site visits to SMEs or larger businesses
The programme will give you access to enterprises, both small and large, that are on the path to successfully embracing digital tools. You can then see technologies in practice, such as 3D printing, data integration, robots and automated picking systems.

Sprints
Sprints help to break down the obstacle of taking that very first step towards integrating technology – the feeling that it's too big and difficult. Through these, previous delegates have been able to establish which projects to embark on to tackle adoption.

Learning forums
Our programme also provides a dedicated space to allow leaders to discuss their challenges in a small group, empowering them to think of their own solution. It's had substantial success – ultimately leading to sustainable change.

This is just a snapshot of the learning and practical opportunities provided by the Made Smarter Leadership Development Programme. At the end of the programme, you'll have the confidence and the clear strategy you need to work through any barriers to digitalisation.

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