

Technology

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Digital means change: a digital mindset for a digital transformation

The digital transformation issue is highly debated at all levels and in a vast range of contexts. And how could it be otherwise, seeing as digital devices are literally revolutionising not only how we work but also our life styles and how we communicate. The revolution triggered by these devices is so overwhelming and radical that it has created a gap between the “analogue natives” and the “digital natives”, that is, those who were born before or after the advent of



digital technologies, with a fundamental watershed in the 1980s.

Digital is not just a matter of means

It is easy to say that the gap between “analogue natives” and “digital natives” is solely due to familiarity: people born and raised in a world without computers, sat nav, smartphones, pay-tv and so on find it harder to use these devices because they did not come into contact with them in the years most conducive to learning (childhood and youth). Starting with those born in the 1980s and increasingly so for those born in the subsequent decades, contact with technology has happened earlier, with small children handling devices from a very young age.

Exposure to digital devices from a young age is undoubtedly an advantage in terms of familiarity but it is not enough. What is important is to develop a digital mindset, a frame

of mind that goes much further.

Having access to digital devices and growing up in a digital-centred society where digitalisation often underpins our daily lives are indubitably facilitators: the younger generations swiftly grasp how a device that they are familiar with works. **But the question remains: is this enough? And does it mean that the older generations are hopelessly cut off from the digital transformation?**

Openness to change: the Digital Mindset

While familiarity with technology is undoubtedly essential to keep up in today's modern world, two other attitudes are even more important: **the ability to understand – maybe even before using – the concepts underlying the technologies themselves and, especially, a predilection for change.** And this is where the issue is no longer solely a question of which generation you belong to but how you approach the various aspects of daily life: a digital mindset.

A digital mindset is not just an individual's or a company's ability to use digital technologies: it is an approach not just to work but to life itself, an approach based on change.

Today's world changes in the blink of an eye: if we measure time using the hands of a clock, social and technological change happened with the slowness of the hand that marks the hour in the centuries or millenniums gone by. After the industrial revolution, technological evolution sped up and that which was true and accepted for one generation might not be the same for the next generation or the generation after that. Change had began to move at the speed of the minute hand. Today, this process is tumultuous, innovation cycles are getting shorter and it feels like it moves at the speed of the second hand.

Only those companies who can constantly adapt to today's very quickly changing landscape will be able to stay competitive and play a part in the great game of change rather than just looking on from the side lines.

The psychology of success

Both companies entering the market and established companies that want to keep their finger on the pulse and keep up with the changing times are operating on completely new ground: a mindset based on success today means **putting yourself out there every single day without however losing track of yourself**, taking on change by embracing it, promoting it and adopting an approach to work – and to life – based on **learning, flexibility**, the willingness to **listen and delegate**, the willingness to **embrace ideas from afar and make them your own**

This is why the digital mindset is not and cannot be limited solely to the professional sphere: such an eager inclination to change, fluidity and metamorphism can only exist if these abilities are applied and cultivated every day. Digital transformation and the resulting digital mindset is not solely a change – profound though it may be – in the organisation of society or investments to acquire technological devices, **it is a social-cultural transformation that touches every**

aspect of our lives, our relationship with digital devices and our approach to reality.

It does not, therefore, come as a surprise, that companies are now looking for both expertise in technological areas but also and perhaps more so a number of soft skills or non-cognitive skills, essential to their success. We have already seen how digital transformation places people and what makes them unique at the heart of innovation [LINK TO THE ARTICLE] and what are these characteristics if not the ability to look ahead, to adapt and change every day and to see the world differently from everyone else?

Adopting a digital mindset means expressing the real, true essence of an individual: the ability to look at the world afresh, to see the hidden treasures and to create benefits for the general good.