

# THE PEOPLE ACTIVATION PLAYBOOK

for Digital Transformation

**TiER1**  
PERFORMANCE

# WELCOME

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Often when the term “digital transformation” comes up, our minds go straight to the technologies that are our hopes (and maybe some of our fears) of the world to come.

Machine learning, automation, robotics—it often sounds like the stuff of science fiction. Underneath these technology-centered questions, however, are human-centered concerns: How will evolutions in technology change our jobs, our organizations, and our lives?

This playbook was created to help you unpack and start to address those human-centered possibilities. By breaking down complex concepts and sharing real-world case studies, we hope you'll begin to see the exciting new frontiers that digital transformation can create for your people and your organization. Scroll forward to embark on the journey of taking a people-first approach, so that technology becomes not a threat, but an incredibly powerful tool for increased productivity, connection, and more.

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# WHAT IS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digital transformation is a radical rethinking of how people, process, and technology evolve to drive growth in new and existing markets.

Yet, the term is so widely used as a concept that its meaning has become nebulous over time. Rather than getting drawn into the hype, when we partner to activate strategy through people with our clients, we believe you should claim what words mean to your organization. This is the most important first step when undertaking large-scale change.

Leaders in the C-suite may use the term “digital transformation” to refer to a variety of activities, including:

- Automating business processes
- Better leveraging existing systems and data
- Gathering customer insights through digital interactions
- Inserting smart components in products
- Migrating to the cloud
- Modernizing legacy systems
- Monetizing data

All of these and more could be part of your digital transformation. While the specific focus can vary, we have identified four key components that come up in every digital transformation.

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## Which of these is true about the changes happening in your organization?

True    False

**Scale of Change:** Changes are occurring **organization-wide and/or globally**, and will have significant impacts on culture, organizational structures, roles, relationships, and processes.

**Mindset Shift:** Changes require a **fundamental shift in widely held beliefs** about why the work happens and the way work gets done.

**Investing & Integrating Digital:** Changes require **aligning, investing in, and/or integrating technology and digital skills** across all regions to create differentiated ways of doing business.

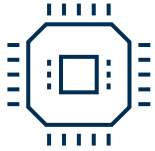
**A Response to the Market:** Changes are part of **an organizational response to digital opportunities or threats** in the marketplace.

*NOTE: Let these questions be guidelines behind your “why?” of digital transformation. If you answered “FALSE” to any of the questions, think about exploring if the purpose or the scale of the change should be further considered.*

# WHAT MAKES UP A DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digital transformation is achieved by evolving a new way of thinking about how your people, processes, and technology work together to deliver new types of value to customers, employees, and the supply chain.

When you think about the areas where your digital transformation is most needed, check off the components that best apply to your organization.



## TECHNOLOGY

APPLICATIONS

CLOUD TRANSFORMATION

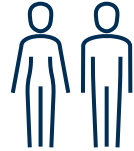
DATA + ANALYSIS

DIGITAL NETWORKS

ENTERPRISE ARCHITECTURE

INFRASTRUCTURE

SECURITY



## PEOPLE

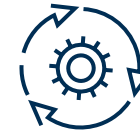
HUMAN NETWORKS

LEADERSHIP

STORY

TALENT

WAYS OF WORKING



## PROCESSES

AGILE + QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT

AUTOMATED RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

FINANCE + INVESTMENT

GOVERNANCE

INNOVATION PIPELINE  
MANAGEMENT

STANDARDIZATION

TEAM CONNECTIVITY

# SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION FOCUSES ON PEOPLE

The meaning of digital transformation can and should shift as organizations begin to make the term their own. That's why when we talk about digital transformation at TiER1, we hesitate to claim expertise. We prefer to think of ourselves as students with experience.

One thing we've learned along the way is that the conversation always comes back to people. Innovations like artificial intelligence and robotic automation have loomed large for decades. For many workers, the surge of digital transformation has only amplified the concern, "Will my job still be here tomorrow?"

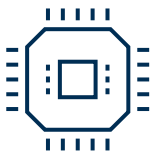
Our perspective is that pursuing "digital" without the human side of the "transformation" is the biggest mistake you can make. Rather than technology as threat (think Terminator and HAL 9000) we partner with clients who think of technology as a partner (think C-3PO and R2-D2). We believe when our clients embark on a digital transformation journey, it should be about extending the potential of the frontline, leaders, and their teams—not replacing them.

This guide is designed specifically to help you tap into that potential.

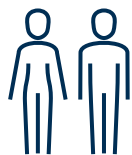


## How TiER1 Defines Digital Transformation

- **Maximizing** the intersection of humans and technology to extend potential
- **Applying** a digital mindset and culture
- **Developing** new organizational habits and individual behaviors



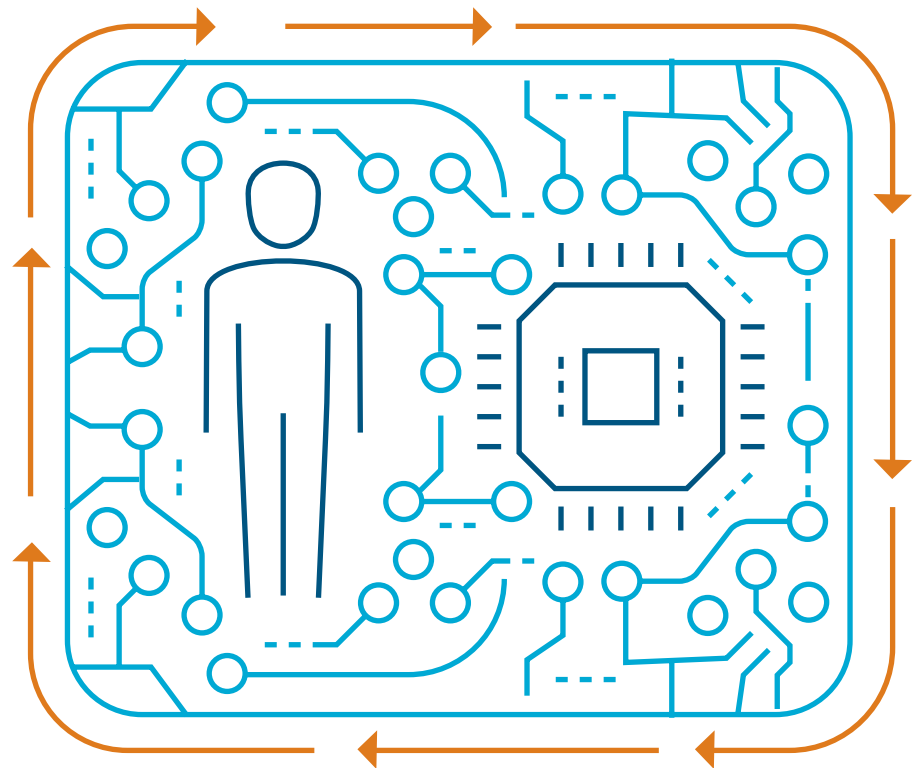
**TECHNOLOGY**



**PEOPLE**



**PROCESSES**



## GETTING ORIENTED

While the conversation about digital transformation starts with technology, it often comes back to very human questions. How are we enabling people to be part of the digital transformation? What's getting in our people's way, when it comes to catching the waves of the future? And, if we are blocking the potential of our organization, what can we do about it?

Leadership, mindsets, decision-making, collaboration, habits—these end up becoming our focus. And for good reason; these questions are important to ask during any major transformation.

In this guide, we've identified five people lenses that will help you set the record straight when it comes to making digital transformation a reality through people.



# 5 PEOPLE LENSES FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

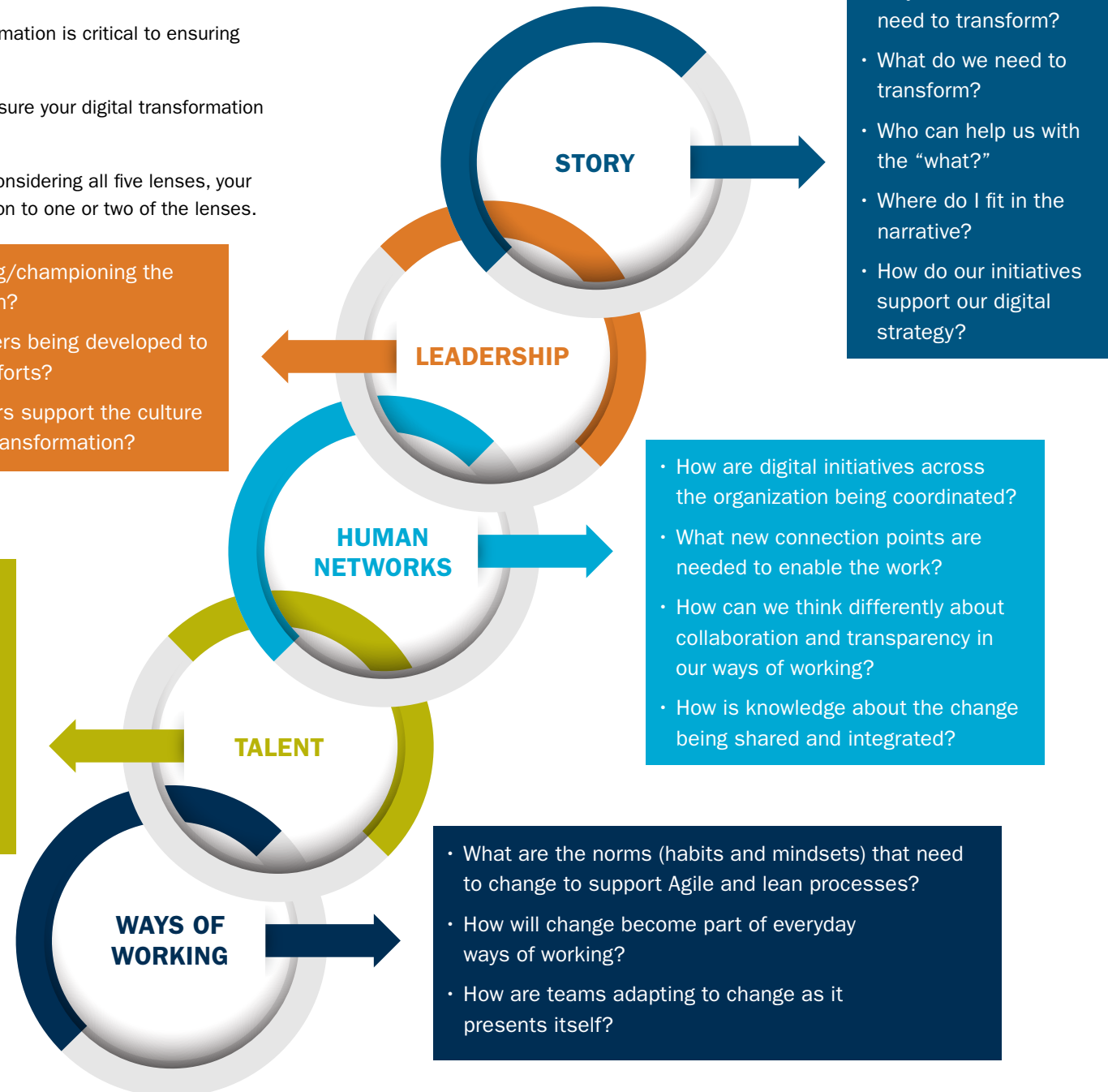
Putting people at the center of your digital transformation is critical to ensuring the success of your organization's digital future.

Each of these lenses offers a different angle to ensure your digital transformation is happening **with** your people and not to them.

While we recommend balancing any approach by considering all five lenses, your particular circumstance might require extra attention to one or two of the lenses.

- Who is leading/championing the transformation?
- How are leaders being developed to lead digital efforts?
- How do leaders support the culture shift for the transformation?

- How will existing talent learn new digital skills?
- How will we acquire the new talent needed to accelerate our digital strategy?
- How are necessary skills being embedded into strategic areas?
- How will your approach to learning need to evolve?



- Why do we want or need to transform?
- What do we need to transform?
- Who can help us with the “what?”
- Where do I fit in the narrative?
- How do our initiatives support our digital strategy?

- How are digital initiatives across the organization being coordinated?
- What new connection points are needed to enable the work?
- How can we think differently about collaboration and transparency in our ways of working?
- How is knowledge about the change being shared and integrated?

- What are the norms (habits and mindsets) that need to change to support Agile and lean processes?
- How will change become part of everyday ways of working?
- How are teams adapting to change as it presents itself?

## START WITH THE BIG PICTURE VIEW

Each organizational transformation (digital or not) is often characterized by a portfolio of initiatives. Your vantage point might be across all of these initiatives, or you might be spearheading one initiative among many. Either way, transformations are measured by the total success of the initiatives that make them up.

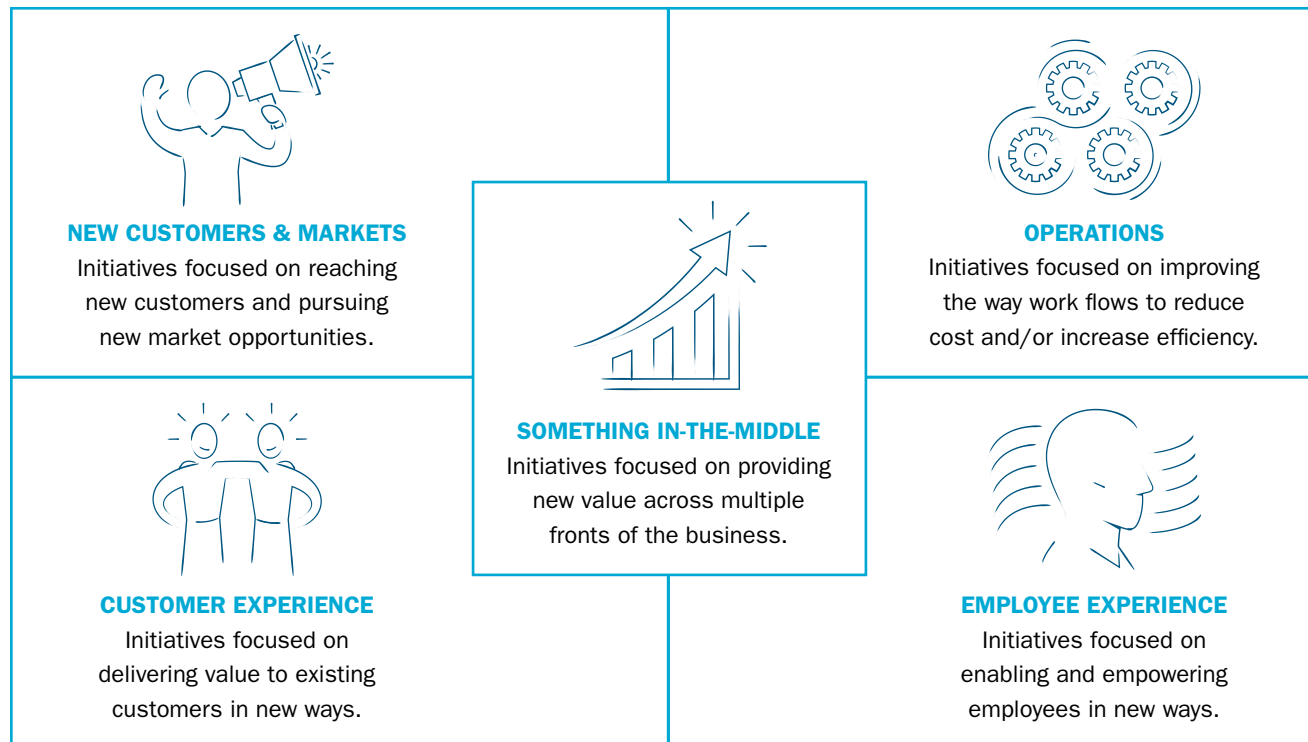
Knowing what your initiatives are trying to accomplish is critical to telling the overall transformation story. Even if you don't have insight

into other ongoing initiatives, knowing how your work fits into the big picture will help you tell your story.

When initiatives succeed, they make way for leadership to support the next phase of the change. Initiatives that stagnate can become distractions and political landmines. Having the discipline to choose when to resource initiatives (and when not to) is essential to building and maintaining momentum for your transformation.

### What are your digital initiatives trying to accomplish?

Consider the goals of your individual initiatives as well as how they relate to your organization's overarching strategic goals.



# CAN YOU TELL YOUR STORY?

## Describe the digital transformation.

Use the following questions to guide your thinking as you craft your organization's digital transformation story.

### WHY do we want or need to transform?

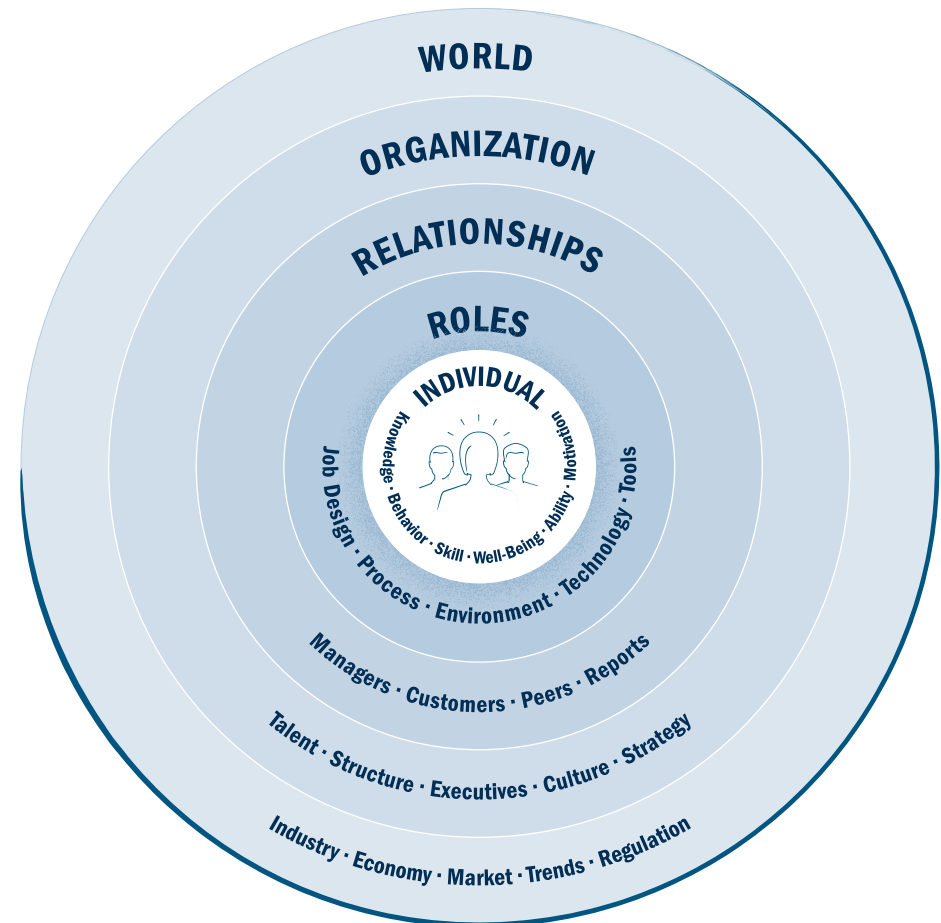
- Why did we see a need to transform?
- Where do we want to end up (e.g., capabilities, mindsets, know-how)?
- How will we know we've arrived?

### WHAT do we need to transform?

- What functions, regions, and businesses are impacted?
- What relationships, roles, and responsibilities might change?
- What systems, processes, or technologies might change?
- What will we do better than anyone else?

### WHO can help us with the “what”?

- Who needs to be involved?
- How might the customer/users be involved?
- Who can help with building blocks and barriers?



## Now make your pitch...

Once you have a digital transformation story down on paper, you'll need to communicate the vision to the rest of the organization. Use these prompts to create clear, concise messaging that inspires employee buy-in for the journey.

**Today, we are embarking on this journey and we have taken our first steps with...**

**In the near-term, we will be focusing on...**

**What we know about where we are headed is...**

**What we still need to figure out and will be asking for your help with is...**

**When we do all this, and learn together along the way, our better tomorrow could look like...**

*When planning an organization-wide change, it's helpful to think about the entire performance ecosystem. We use Performance Factors to determine how the change will impact the individual employee or employee groups and ensure alignment with broader organizational factors. It might be a helpful tool to consider as you craft your digital transformation story.*

# A DEEPER DIVE INTO THE PEOPLE LENSES

Maybe you recognized some of your own questions about digital transformation in one of the people lenses—or maybe you're still unsure about where your organization should start. That's OK! We've been inspired by the many leaders and organizations we've partnered with to navigate the ambiguity. Here are stories of how these leaders have led with one of the five people lenses. We hope they motivate new thinking and spark ideas.

## STORY

An inspiring narrative can coordinate the hearts, minds, and hands of an entire workforce. Create a transformation story that is consistent across your organization to cut down on confusion and disconnection.

### Case Study

**The Challenge:** One organization was about to embark on a multi-year initiative spanning people, process, and technology to shift their organization toward a streamlined, digitally-enabled global shared services model. Rather than focus on the process and new technology alone, the team's first priority was to build employee engagement. This included upfront communication about enlisting employees' skills, gathering their ideas, and drumming up energy.

**The Result:** A story lens allowed the team to brand and develop a people-focused communication strategy for the transformation. The approach worked to proactively acknowledge and address potential employee questions and highlight a framework to support development over time. It also allowed employees to immediately contribute ideas for what the next chapter could look like, giving them the power to help shape the narrative. Tactics to ensure consistency included a launch video, an idea-sharing platform, and cascaded messaging via leadership.

## LEADERSHIP

Finding and developing the right leaders to steward your digital transformation will depend on how comfortable your organization is currently with digital technology. Regardless, it is critical to find and retain leaders who can carry out your technical vision and inspire your teams to action.

### Case Study

**The Challenge:** A pharmaceutical leader had a multi-year transformation strategy to accelerate promising candidates in its R&D pipeline to improve patient outcomes, meet unmet medical needs, and ultimately deliver more value to patients. This involved transforming the pharmaceutical life cycle. Leaders representing the value chain spectrum were aligned on a multifunctional effort to break down silos and build a cross-functional, collaborative way of working, find a healthier balance of risk-taking, and accelerate promising patient-oriented platforms, all while filtering out interesting but inapplicable innovations. In the middle of the strategy activation, the strong in-person culture was required to continue in a new and uncomfortable virtual environment due to the impact of a global pandemic.

**The Result:** Equipping leaders with the mindsets and behaviors to quickly shift from face-to-face working sessions to virtual experiences. By identifying established quarterly working sessions and facilitating new ways to gather, explore, collaborate, and plan, we equipped leaders to pivot away from traditional, in-person, loosely structured discussions to dynamic, virtual, and technology-enabled collaboration. This resulted in the organization establishing new ways of working without missing a beat.

## HUMAN NETWORKS

We're not talking about networks that connect to the internet and perform advanced computing—we're talking about people networks. An emphasis on networks helps employees from different initiatives collaborate better and back up their work with data-driven decision-making.

### Case Study

**The Challenge:** With 120+ unique “snowflake” instances of warehouse management software across 42 locations, a logistics client planned to roll out a single software solution with a solid core and flexible edges. While the work was focused on implementing new technology, it also implied an entirely new approach to the organization's business model—instead of having almost 20 contact points for a client to navigate, this transformation narrowed it down to three.

**The Result:** A Transformation Management Office that provided a human networks lens, as well as the necessary governance across the range of initiatives that were needed to activate this shift. The solution included aligning a portfolio of technology, process, and people initiatives to reduce client touchpoints to three specialized individuals (commercial, logistics, and engineering) to provide an improved and more efficient client experience.

## TALENT

The future of digital talent is a culture of exponential digital growth. Many teams are aggressively hiring candidates who are proficient in the technologies of today and open to learning the technologies of tomorrow. Forward-thinking organizations are also launching enterprise-wide reskilling initiatives to increase learning agility and build a future-ready workforce.

### Case Study

**The Challenge:** A telecommunications client wanted to create a learning culture that supported capability development, allowing employees to innovate, perform, and grow in areas aligned with their personal interests. Curriculum would focus on building “skills of the future,” a mix of human and technical proficiencies. The capability academies would also align to business-critical strategies to elevate how employees think and act on the job, support employee growth, and keep the organization competitive. Overall, the new learning culture would support the organization's digital transformation evolution and employee preparedness for the digital world.

**The Result:** A custom, role-based learning architecture that enabled multiple learning tracks that upskilled employees for the transformation. For example, some employees needed to have only a basic awareness of data science, whereas others needed expert level proficiency—the design allowed for both tracks. With a digital transformation talent lens in mind, we collaborated with the team to create an experience that complimented the organization's existing learning ecosystem while also creating new opportunities for employees to build digital preparedness and learning agility.

## WAYS OF WORKING

The ways we work are the patterns of team behavior that make up the course of our days. Whether it's adjusting to the new normal of distributed teams, or finding ways to transition Agile ceremonies to virtual environments, new ways of working is the behavioral solution that can help your team fully adopt the digital transformation into their everyday work.

### Case Study

**The Challenge:** An insurance client wanted to take a new approach to change—rather than top-down communications, the vision was to enable the workforce to own transformation from the frontline and become more adaptable by redefining everyday behaviors.

**The Result:** A series of immersions that put the tools of change and behavior redesign into the hands of the frontline. Together we identified the ways of work that would most enable the adaptable workforce. A series of cultural interventions were prioritized to redesign how daily huddles, new team formation, and collaboration in the hybrid office could look.

## CONCLUSION

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We hope you found these lenses and case studies helpful for thinking about your organization's digital transformation and how you can tap into the potential of your people to bring it to life and realize the business results you're striving to reach. If you'd like to explore how TIER1 Performance might partner with you on your journey, here are some ways in which we can help.

### TIER1 BRINGS A UNIQUE EMPHASIS ON...

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- A people-lens to activating digital transformation
- The leader, employee, and customer experience
- Integrating mindsets and patterns of behavior with digital solutions to create a holistic experience
- Transforming culture through frontline approaches

# HOW TO PARTNER WITH TIER1 TO ACTIVATE YOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

## Where TIER1 helps you accelerate...

- Transformation roadmaps
- Articulated vision for digital transformation
- Digital solution and experience design + execution
- Digital talent and leadership development
- Change management

## Where other partners help you accelerate...

- IT strategy consulting
- Technology operations design
- Innovation labs
- Market/competitive benchmarking
- Academic partnerships
- VC and startup partnerships

## GETTING STARTED

We believe the most successful digital transformations are rooted in the lenses of people. We meet our clients where they are to bring people to the center of the work. Depending on where you are in your journey, here are a few ways to get started.

### Explore: A Discussion

If you're just getting started or want to hear more, let's start with a chat to discuss your main areas of interest, need, or opportunity.

### Immerse: An Acceleration Workshop

In a team setting, learn about the range of technologies and trends involved in digital transformation and start building your high-level priorities for activating your digital transformation.

### Activate: A D3 Process (Discover, Define, Design)

A D3 allows us to immerse ourselves in your challenge, quickly discovering your current state, and defining how you envision your future state. Then we collaborate, brainstorm, and strategize to ultimately design an experience that will get your organization from here to there. Every D3 has a deliverable—an actionable “blueprint” showing you how to build your desired future state. It's a visual depiction of your journey that's easy to socialize for shared buy-in. It's a plan you can implement with or without TIER1's assistance.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



### Nick Pineda

#### Director of Innovation

Nick Pineda is the Director of Innovation at TiER1 Performance and is based in Kansas City. He works with clients to activate transformation at the system, leader, and team levels by designing new ways of working that address culture as part of practical, day-to-day experiences. Nick translates his passion, energy, and practical experience surfacing the unsaid and unspoken elements of group behavior into innovative solutions. He helps clients appreciate strengths and organize for growth from what's working today.



### Brandee Abel

#### Principal, Digital & IT Segment

Brandee Abel is a Principal and Strategy Activator at TiER1 Performance who is focused on collaborating with IT & Digital teams. She loves helping companies drive successful change programs and learn how to be more effective drivers of change in the process. When she's not leading change, Brandee loves running half and full marathons.

Want to learn more? Let's talk!

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**859-415-1000**

GO TEAM!

# WE ACTIVATE YOUR STRATEGIES THROUGH *people*

Strategy is only as valuable as the activation behind it: how it shows up, how work gets done, how your employees own it, and how your customers experience it.

## HOW WE *activate* STRATEGY



### Consult

Identify and align on performance factors needed for activation.

In addition to driving clarity around the desired future state, we partner to understand how the unique dynamics of your organization (culture, leadership, roles, systems, etc.) intersect and influence each other to create opportunities and overcome barriers for successful strategy activation.



### Design

Create the performance experience and everything needed to sustain it.

We deliver the plan and detail needed for your people to be empowered and aligned around your strategy: outlining key training, communication, performance support tools, technology, and associated timelines in a clearly articulated blueprint, journey map, or experience design.



### Build

Activate strategy through engaging, results-focused deliverables.

From custom technology to high-volume communication and training, our studio teams of instructional designers, software developers, designers, copywriters, and videographers create engaging deliverables that allow your people to have what they need when they need it—boom, strategy activated.

## CUSTOM SOLUTIONS THAT *activate* STRATEGY

Every organization has different strategic priorities—and therefore different needs. We custom-craft the solution that is right for you.

SYSTEMS ADOPTION · DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION · EXPERIENCE DESIGN · CHANGE STRATEGY · ONBOARDING · SALES ENABLEMENT  
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT · TALENT DEVELOPMENT · CUSTOM PORTALS · CULTURE · CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS

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