



EBOOK

# TRANSFORMING THE DIGITAL EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE HYBRID ERA



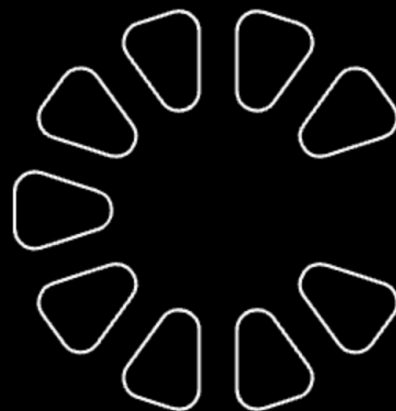
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# INTRODUCTION



In today's business landscape, providing the right digital employee experience is crucial. HR, Internal Comms and IT leaders are increasingly focused on ensuring employees feel connected to the company and each other. And this comes from receiving the information and communication they need to get their jobs done every day, regardless of location. Heavily influenced by the emergence of the hybrid working era, delivering and maintaining the right digital employee experience is at the heart of this.

In this guide, we discuss the importance of taking a digital-first approach to communications and collaboration, the drivers for change and outline our 10 steps for transforming your company's digital employee experience.





# HOW COCENTRIC DEFINES DIGITAL EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE (DEX)

There are various definitions of digital employee experience (DEX). For Cocentric, it's about making colleagues feel connected across the business through the digital world and enjoying the same experience and benefits from wherever they work.

This involves finding the right digital tools to empower employees in a hybrid working model, streamline processes and expand communication capabilities.







# WHY BUSINESSES ARE INVESTING IN DEX TRANSFORMATION

The pandemic understandably led to many businesses adopting more cloud solutions and instigating digital transformation projects. And, 2022 saw a more permanent move to hybrid working. Businesses are now ramping up their focus and investment in improving the digital employee experience and planning digital transformation projects for communications.

According to [Forrester's 2022 working trends report](#), **66% of enterprise leaders plan to pursue hybrid or fully remote workplace models**. And as companies now rely heavily on their systems to keep employees connected to their company's culture, teams and customers, in and out of the office, the importance of DEX is clear.

[Andrew Hewitt, Senior Analyst at Forrester Research](#), outlined how DEX impacts engagement and a business' ability to keep hold of its talent. He said: *"If technology gets in the way of an employee's ability to be successful at work, they will grow increasingly frustrated, burnt out, and eventually leave the company."*

A digital-first approach empowers hybrid working and it's no surprise that businesses are turning to DEX tools. [Gartner](#) predicted that, **by 2025, half of IT organisations will have established a DEX strategy, team and management tool**. While [Forrester's 2022 End-User Experience Management Report](#) revealed that 33% of global software decision-makers have implemented or are expanding implementation of EUEM software. And an additional 32% are currently implementing or will implement it over the next 12 months.



## → KEY REASONS TO IMPROVE YOUR DEX AND WHAT YOU CAN ACHIEVE

So, we've emphasised the importance of a digital-first approach, now let's look at what you can achieve by reviewing and transforming your existing digital employee experience.

Here are the main reasons for implementing solutions to improve DEX:

- **Enabling employees to execute processes effectively** - providing employees with suitable communication and collaboration solutions helps them to carry out daily tasks and responsibilities efficiently and meet their objectives.
- **Employee retention** - a good DEX keeps employees engaged, motivated and empowered, therefore less likely to go elsewhere.
- **Customer experience** - giving employees effective digital tools and streamlining processes enables them to work faster and more efficiently and, in turn, better service their customers.
- **Being able to cascade messages** - ensuring the right people get the right messages at the right time enables employees to cut through the noise.
- **Achieve effective two-way communication** - a progressive working environment embraces a culture of open feedback, and digital solutions can help businesses to achieve this.

- **Improving onboarding experience** - get new employees embedded in the right culture from the outset. You want to provide a welcoming digital environment to join, learn and engage with people rather than keeping them siloed until they get up to speed.
- **Reducing siloes** - a business with teams and tech working better together is the dream. The right digital employee experience should not feel siloed or disconnected, it should feel engaging and immersive.
- **Personalisation** - having the tools and channels that enable the right people to access and consume the right content easily without spreading messages across a wide net. Incorporating personalisation with your DEX helps provide seamless employee journeys and relevant communications.
- **Attracting talent** - candidates now strongly care about how companies communicate, their culture and what collaboration tools they use. Hiring staff, employee retention and wellbeing initiatives can all be improved with the right digital tools and approach, and attracting/retaining talent will help your business thrive and grow.









# TEN STEPS TO TRANSFORMING YOUR COMPANY'S DEX

BY ADOPTING MODERN TOOLS AND TECHNOLOGIES.

## → STEP 1: PUT YOUR EMPLOYEES FRONT AND CENTRE

We believe it is important to understand employees' needs and capture the 'moments that matter'. Each employee has a different need based on their persona, working environment, and processes they execute daily will have an impact on how they want to execute key tasks.

## → STEP 2: DEFINE YOUR BUSINESS GOALS FROM THE OUTSET

Establishing your key goals and objectives right at the beginning of the process is crucial. And your first priority is answering the following question: "What does good look like when it comes to our company's digital employee experience?" Be clear with your answers and define your business goals and vision, as this will be central to your digital transformation project.

It's important to set goals that align with strategic organisational targets and help your business to close gaps, increase engagement and remove barriers to the adoption of digital solutions.





### → STEP 3: SCOPE OUT YOUR EXISTING CHALLENGES AND KEY NEEDS

With a clear idea of what good should look like established, scope out your existing challenges in the context of DEX and what's currently holding you back from achieving your goals and objectives. This will inform you of your needs and requirements when researching and selecting the right digital solutions.

During this phase, look closely at your audience and gather feedback from various sources and channels, including employee surveys (annual, pulse, culture, etc), management meetings/reviews and other forums that have generated feedback. Explore the data and insights to understand your key challenges, the state of your company culture (and where it needs to get to) and how much change is required.

### → STEP 4: CREATE A CHANNEL MATRIX

Creating a channel matrix which maps and offers details about how your business and teams are currently using different channels will provide crucial insights. It will help you better understand your needs, processes and issues to resolve, ultimately informing your DEX transformation plan and solution selection.





## → STEP 5: PERFORM A CHANNEL AUDIT

Closely linked to the channel matrix, performing a channel audit will determine process efficiency, where there may be unnecessary duplication and which tools and channels are essential or obsolete.

A channel audit, which can be carried out by key stakeholders within your business or by a digital solution expert or consultancy partner, will help you to weigh up want vs need and what channel when for your future digital infrastructure for internal communications and collaboration.

## → STEP 6: CARRY OUT EXTENSIVE RESEARCH AND A ROBUST PROCUREMENT PROCESS

Extensive research into prospective providers is a must. Mapping your needs to the capabilities of each potential solution will help ensure you adopt suitable, user-friendly and productive tools.

Download our [guide to choosing the right communication tools for your business](#) to get our insights into the key considerations to fuel your selection process.

## → STEP 7: BUILD A BUSINESS CASE FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

For a successful digital transformation and to get the green light from the board in the first place, you need to build a clear and compelling business case for change. This includes:

- Highlighting current issues holding the business back
- Communicating the benefits of implementing new solutions and ways of working
- Demonstrating how it will work, how long it will take and the likely costs
- Providing use cases and success stories
- Forecasting/calculating potential ROI and impact

Learn more in our blog: [Building a Business Case for Digital Transformation.](#)

## → STEP 8: PUT BUILDING BLOCKS IN PLACE TO ACCOMMODATE AND MANAGE CHANGE

Effective change management is essential. If step 1 is complete (i.e. you've put your employees at the heart of the transformation project), you'll understand what users want and need. But internal process and system changes can be disruptive for employees if not managed effectively. So, once you've got the project green light and chosen the solutions, planning for change management should be a high priority.

Develop a champion network to embed new tools and help teams meet the desired objectives, get key people across the business involved and ensure senior leadership is aligned with the right messaging in post-launch communications campaigns.

[Scroll down to our section on how to best manage change.](#)





### → STEP 9: CREATE A CLEAR PRE-LAUNCH, IMPLEMENTATION AND POST-LAUNCH PLAN

Creating a clear plan for the pre-launch, implementation and post-launch phases of your DEX transformation project, with timelines, feedback and other elements, will help things go as smoothly as possible, without bad user experience and friction with solution adoption.

Post-launch, ensure you can keep up the momentum. Have an idea of what your first six months to a year will look like to ensure everyone embeds the right behaviours and processes. And ensure you have the right training and documentation in place ahead of implementation so staff can be proficient and productive with new tools and processes from day one.

### → STEP 10: ESTABLISH A SOLID COMMS STRATEGY

Work with key stakeholders and Internal Comms to devise a solid communications strategy. Create engaging content and outline details about the timelines, key benefits (for teams and wider business objectives) and why people should care. This should underpin everything, as it will get everyone on board and excited about the change.







# BARRIERS TO ADOPTION AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

Knowing you need to transform your digital employee experience and adopting the right tools and processes are two different things. There are various barriers to adoption you may encounter. We outline these below, along with tips on how to overcome these barriers.



## 01 → INTERNAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE/ADOPTION

Resistance often occurs in teams used to certain ways of working or those that don't embrace the mobile-first or digital-first approach. And this can be a big blocker. Resistance also comes from anyone who is time-poor. The prospect of new tools to learn and ways of working can bring anxiety, as it's one more thing to think about.

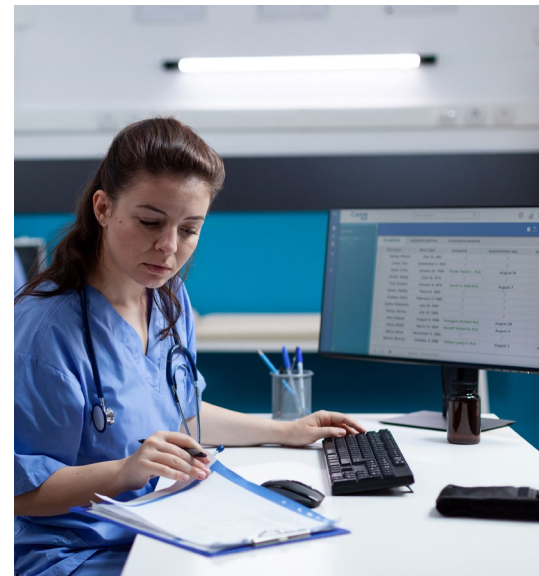
How do you counteract this? Here are two key ways to address resistance to change:

- Those driving the plan must ensure these people know how it will be implemented and benefit them.
- Leadership buy-in is key. The C-suite will require a clear picture of the value and benefits. Even though the ROI for your project might be hard to measure, DEX impacts employee productivity, satisfaction levels, wellbeing, efficiency, culture, retention, and much more, leading to staff achieving business goals. And this applies to leaders too. Happy leaders help to build a motivated workforce.



## 02 → OUT-OF-DATE TECH LANDSCAPE

Introducing new tools and integrating them with legacy and native systems and processes can be a real challenge. There may be limitations in what's possible without overhauling legacy infrastructure - this can undermine your project's vision. But fully embracing the cloud is often met with resistance, so you must ease fears over costs and disruption and prove your case for change.



## 03 → BUDGET RESTRAINTS

Getting the green light on a budget for the investment in new tools and tech (and subsequent change management) is not easy. Companies and those pushing for change will need to build a strong business case, justify the spend and prove potential ROI (which the board will demand).

At Cocentric, we often encounter companies that think that introducing new solutions means turning something else off. But if you can convince the board about the short- and long-term benefits of introducing new solutions, consolidating tools and empowering staff through digital transformation, you may get the budget you need to deliver your vision.





#### 04 → WORK-LIFE BALANCE

There are often fears when adopting a digital-first approach and new communication solutions that it will impact work-life balance. People want a clear line between work and personal space, especially those working remotely. But it's about educating people about the reasons for the change and the benefits, easing fears over things like work-life balance and wellness.

For example, Workplace from Meta has tools to help employees retain their work-life balance, even with the Workplace app on their personal phones, including the option to turn off (or filter) notifications while at home.

#### 05 → NOT SEEING THE BIG PICTURE

When teams are experiencing issues leading to process inefficiencies, especially those related to channel overload, implementing new tools may feel like just adding to the noise. So, be clear about how improving DEX can eliminate siloes, increase efficiency and remove frustrations with existing systems.

Also, some people may understand how a digital-first approach might work for them but not for the wide business. Justifying a DEX transformation project can be difficult unless everyone understands how introducing new digital solutions can help teams work better together and towards shared business goals and objectives.









# HOW BEST TO MANAGE THE CHANGE

Companies may have all the right intentions and choose the most suitable tools but still struggle to implement them to meet the desired goals and vision.

So, how can you guarantee that your implementation goes as smoothly as possible? Here are our top tips for managing digital change:

- **Appoint champions/ambassadors** for the digital transformation with a good cross-section of the business represented.
- **Empower two-way communication and encourage feedback** about what's working and what's not.
- **Be proactive** and take meaningful action based on this feedback.
- **Get senior people involved** that can action things swiftly, as this will help people to listen, provide feedback and be engaged.
- **Make it clear that DEX change is a phased approach** - there's always space for optimisation and you need a phased approach which anticipates feedback and continuous improvement.
- **Partner with a strategy digital solution provider** to help you manage change, armed with this intel.





# SUMMARY

As we progress through the hybrid working era and the future of work, it will become even more critical for companies to take a digital-first approach to communication and collaboration. We've provided you with actionable steps for transforming your digital employee experience, adopting modern software solutions and overcoming key challenges and barriers to adoption.

You might also be interested in reading our related ebook, [How to Choose the Right Internal Communication Software for Your Business.](#)



## → KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Make sure your employees and their needs are front and centre when putting together a DEX improvement plan and choosing solutions
- Be clear about your business objectives, goals and vision for success
- Build a clear and compelling business case for digital transformation
- Address potential barriers to adoption and ease fears and resistance to change
- Look to improve both the employee experience and company culture whilst removing siloes, process misalignment and disconnects
- Carry out extensive research and map your requirements to the capabilities of prospective solutions
- Find suitable solutions that can enable two-way communication, empower hybrid working and future-proof your business
- Create a comprehensive roadmap for pre-launch, implementation and post-launch phases (including a clear communication strategy)
- Understand the potential challenges and take a phased approach to optimising the use of the tools and improving the employee experience
- Put the right people and processes in place to effectively manage change
- Source a strategic solutions partner to help achieve the best possible outcomes

## → HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS SOFTWARE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

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