

POWER OF
FRAMEWORKS

INTERNAL TALENT
AND TEAMS

VISIONARY
LEADERSHIP

TECHNOLOGY AS
A CATALYST

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION

Mastering Strategy Implementation
in Transformative Times

FOREWORD

Every day, organization leaders walk a tightrope to maintain existing revenue streams, deliver seamless customer experiences, and enable efficient internal operations. Additionally, they strive to forge new pathways for their organization to succeed in an ever-changing environment.

In an increasingly complex and fast-moving global economy, organizations and individuals are more focused on delivering discrete projects instead of operating around rigid job descriptions for employees. These organizations and individuals want to remain relevant in what we call The Project Economy—an environment in which people have all the skills and capabilities they need to turn ideas into reality—no matter what kind of project they're working on.

Through the Brightline Transformation Compass, we understand that transformation at its core must be driven by people in order

to be successful. However, by working with leaders across various industries, we know that organizations driving strategic and transformative initiatives are, unfortunately, more likely to fail than succeed.

What factors allow organizations to successfully complete change initiatives and swiftly transform? How do these organizations change their way of working while, at the same time, leverage technological advances like artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning?

We all know change is hard, but what if it is for the better? Leaders need to embrace change and create cultures where change is not a one-time thing but is instead embedded in the daily agenda of the organization. If we can accomplish these two points, we have come a long way down the road. Let's make change happen!



Sunil Prashara
President and CEO,
Project Management Institute



PREFACE

Transformation risk is the new chief concern for business leaders. For organizations seeking to keep pace in a rapidly-evolving technology landscape, strategic transformation is a must. And yet a majority of organizations fail in their efforts.

To find out what organizations need to succeed, we conducted an extensive study with more than 1,000 global C-level executives. We wanted to know: What does it take for leaders to drive transformation? And what can we learn from organizations adept in strategy implementation?

The resulting executive report explores the correlation between successful strategy implementation and transformation. It provides a roadmap of best practices that organizations can use to shift their own strategic transformation journey at full speed.

This report will be especially helpful if you are a:

- C-suite executive involved in monitoring and delivering a transformation initiative
- Strategy executive or team member planning a transformation initiative
- Leader looking for resources to learn about the success factors of a transformation

At Brightline, we have made it our mission to help organizations transform the way they transform. We hope this research report will help you to drive the conversation forward and create the right conditions to master your organization's strategic transformation.



Ricardo Viana Vargas
Executive Director,
Brightline Initiative

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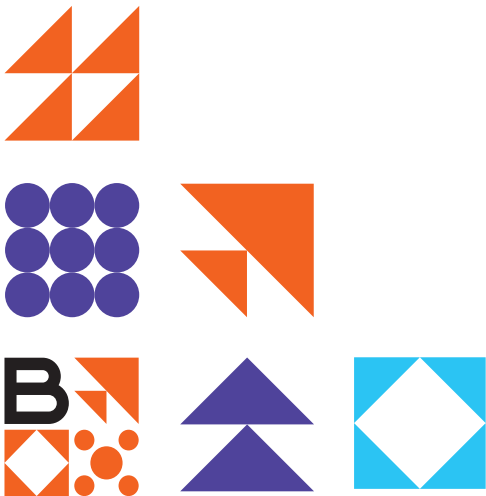
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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic initiatives help organizations realize their vision and goals—to bridge the gap between strategy design and delivery. Transformation refers to a more fundamental change—a quantum-leap cultural or operational shift that pervades the entire organization.

With this foundation in mind, organizations that want to stay relevant in an evolving business landscape must master both.

In this report, we examine the correlation between strategy implementation success and transformation effectiveness and speed. We also dig into factors such as adaptability, the adoption of formalized processes, and how frameworks are correlated with strategy and transformation success.



FIVE MAIN TAKEAWAYS EMERGED FROM OUR RESEARCH, WHICH IS BASED UPON A SURVEY OF MORE THAN 1,000 BUSINESS LEADERS AND SUPPLEMENTED WITH IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS.

1 TO SUCCEED WITH STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, ORGANIZATIONS MUST ALSO EXCEL AT TRANSFORMING.

Strategy and transformation are intrinsically intertwined; organizations that master strategic transformation are skilled at both developing and implementing strategic initiatives, as well as at transforming quickly and effectively.

2 ORGANIZATIONS THAT TRANSFORM AT A FASTER PACE EMPHASIZE DEVELOPING INTERNAL TALENT.

Prioritizing and developing the right people to lead initiatives is particularly important for strategic success. Faster-transforming organizations dedicate significant resources to developing internal talent.

3 HIGH-PERFORMING ORGANIZATIONS EMPLOY FORMALIZED AND STANDARDIZED FRAMEWORKS AND PROCESSES.

Effective frameworks designed to foster flexibility and autonomy lead to a faster transformation. Not only do processes make organizations more adaptable, they ensure the ability to course-correct and realign with the organization's North Star when overcoming strategic challenges.

4 CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGIES ARE KEY TO THE PACE OF TRANSFORMATION.

High-performing organizations list tools and tech resources like automation and AI among the top catalysts for implementing strategic initiatives. A holistic approach to integrating new tech platforms, paired with a proven framework, helps businesses deploy emerging technologies and pursue broader business goals.

5 VISIONARY LEADERSHIP THAT CAN COMMUNICATE TANGIBLE GOALS IS CRITICAL.

Leadership is a top area organizations must focus on in order to deliver strategic results and achieve successful transformation. A centralized orchestrator—such as a Chief Transformation Officer—plays a key role in driving change from concept to reality.

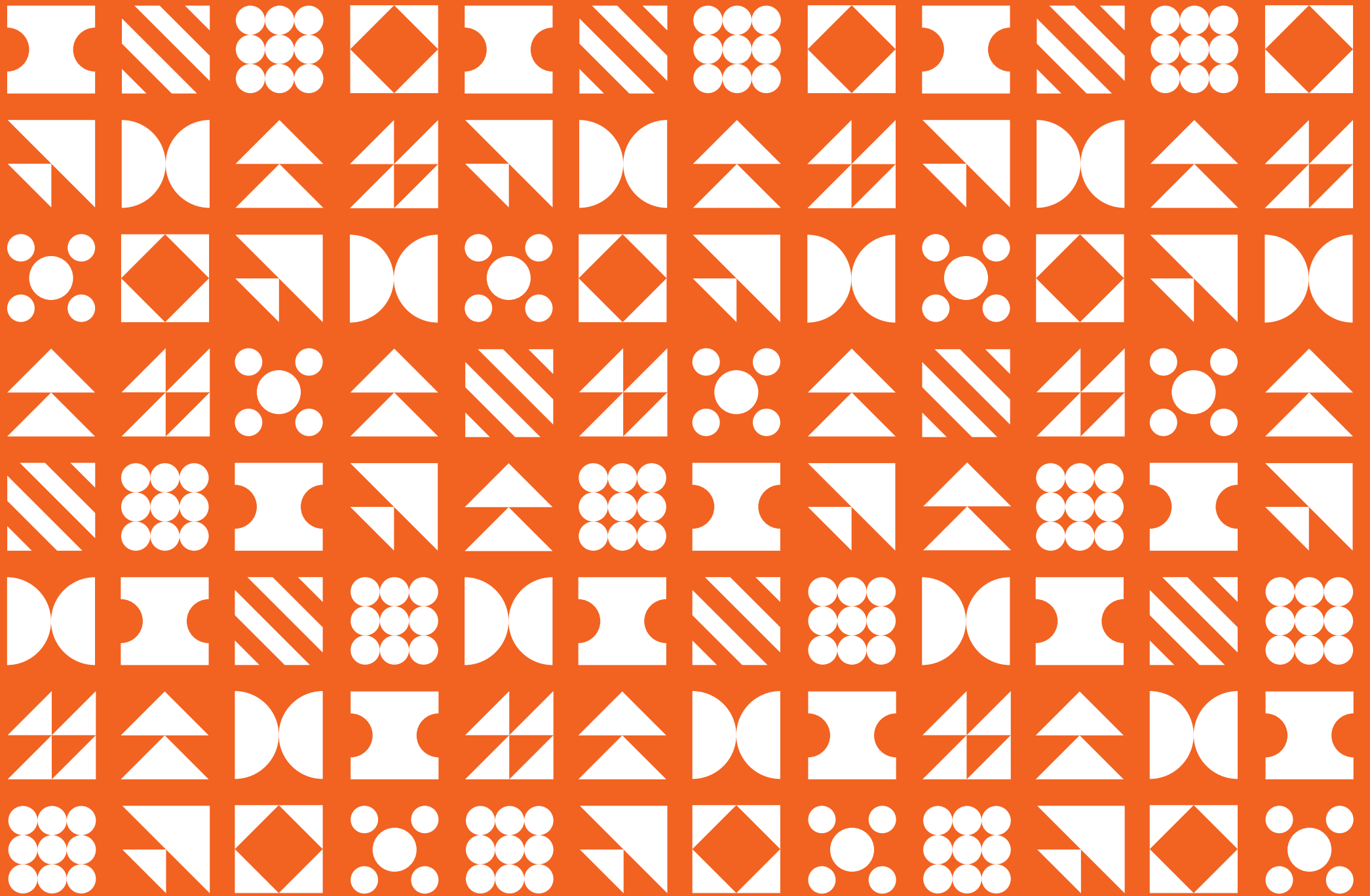
WE ALSO UNCOVERED OTHER SIGNIFICANT FINDINGS ABOUT THE KEY FACTORS THAT GIVE ORGANIZATIONS A COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE IN STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION.

1 THESE ARE THE TOP CHARACTERISTICS FOR SUCCESSFUL STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION.

- Sufficient resources
- An existing talent pool with an appropriate skill set
- Efficient processes to guide strategy
- Efficient handoffs between teams
- Executive teams that are aligned on priorities

2 WE FOUND THESE COMMON CHALLENGES TO EFFECTIVE TRANSFORMATION.

- Skills gap within internal talent
- Lack of resources
- Insufficient technology
- Lack of effective processes for guiding strategy



2

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

This report assesses both qualitative and quantitative data to determine recommendations and considerations about successful implementation of strategic initiatives and organizational transformation.



Hour-long qualitative interviews were conducted with 15 executives from different industries across the globe. These executives were asked a range of questions about their organizations, professional experience with strategy implementation and transformation initiatives, common challenges they've observed, and learnings gleaned along the way.

For the quantitative portion, a sample of 1,009 global executives were asked to complete a survey. This sample included representatives from different regions, organization sizes, and industries.

>80%

of all respondents cited experience with both designing and implementing strategy in a leadership capacity

64%

of respondents' organizations fall within the 1,000 to 9,999-employee size

Approximately **59%** of these organizations make more than

\$750 million

in annual revenue

Nearly 28%

of respondents possess a C-level title

Of those executives,

48%

hold the title of **Chief Executive Officer**

TOP RESPONDENTS BY SECTOR

Technology	18%
Finance	9%
Government/Public Sector	8%
Retail	8%
Manufacturing	7%
Healthcare/Medical Services	6%

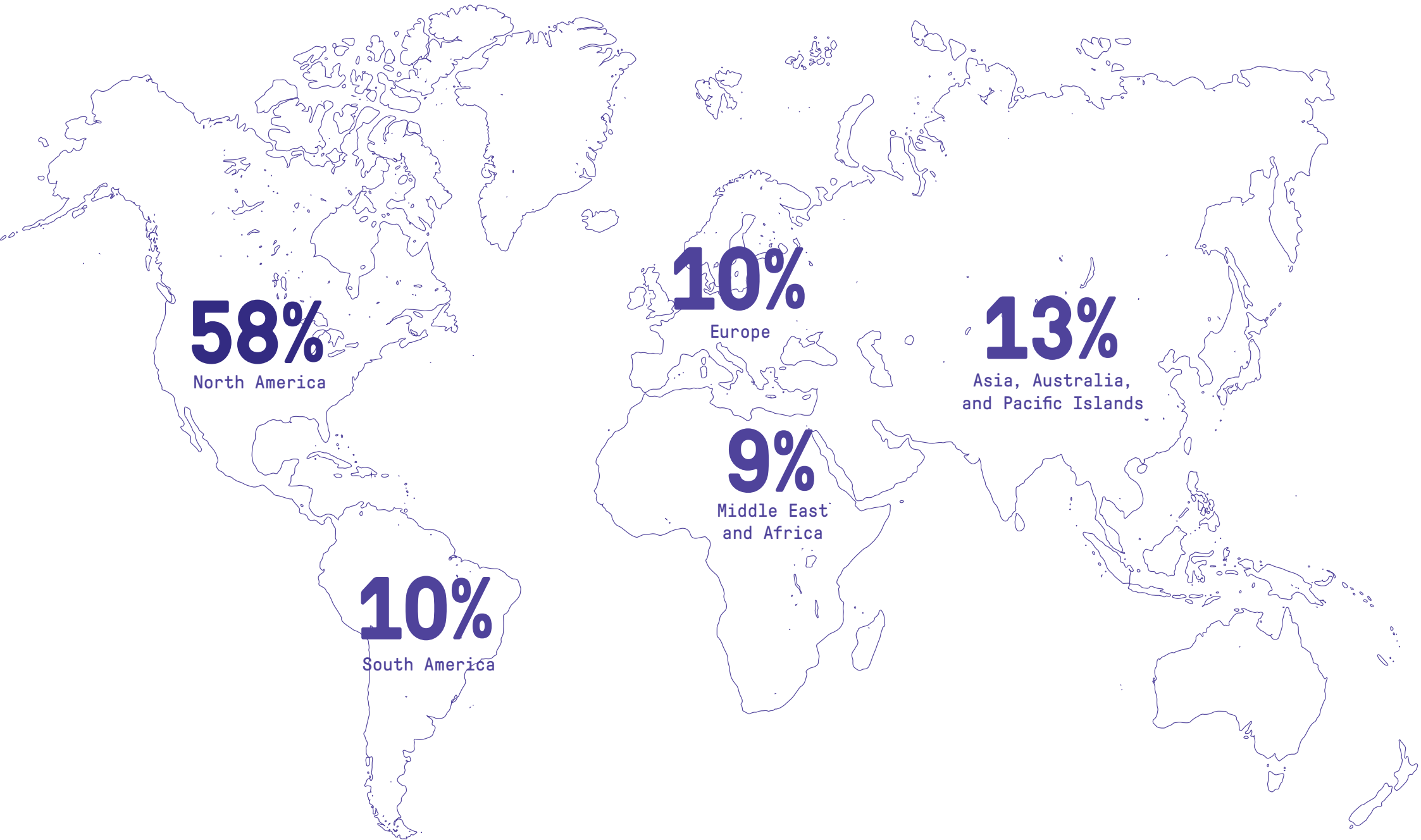
RESPONDENTS BY TITLE

C-level Executive	28%
Senior Management (e.g. VP, Managing Director)	24%
Middle Management (e.g. Director, Senior Manager)	48%

RESPONDENTS BY EXPERIENCE

Both designing and implementing strategy	81%
Implementing, but not designing strategy	15%
Designing, but not implementing strategy	4%

RESPONDENTS BY REGION



58%
North America

10%
South America

10%
Europe

9%
Middle East
and Africa

13%
Asia, Australia,
and Pacific Islands

3

LEADERS OF STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION

Our research identified clear high-performers when it comes to successfully implementing strategic initiatives while effectively transforming at the same time. The following sections explore how we determined this group, as well as how it deviates from average- and low-performing organizations. We also closely examine how performance in transformation initiatives is intertwined with strategy implementation performance.



3.1

FOLLOW THE LEADER:

Strategy implementation performance

To identify factors that contribute to successful strategy implementation, we parsed findings into three categories of respondents: high performers, average performers, and low performers. High performers reported successfully completing 80–100% of strategic initiatives. On average, just one in five survey respondents (Fig. 1) reported being able to fully realize more than 80% of their strategic initiatives.

FIGURE 1:

SUCCESS RATE OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

High performers



Average performers



Low performers



Overall, established success factors were identified among high performers, including:

1. **Sufficient resources**
2. **An existing talent pool with an appropriate skill set**
3. **Efficient processes to guide strategy implementation**
4. **Efficient handoffs between teams**
5. **Executive teams that are aligned on priorities**

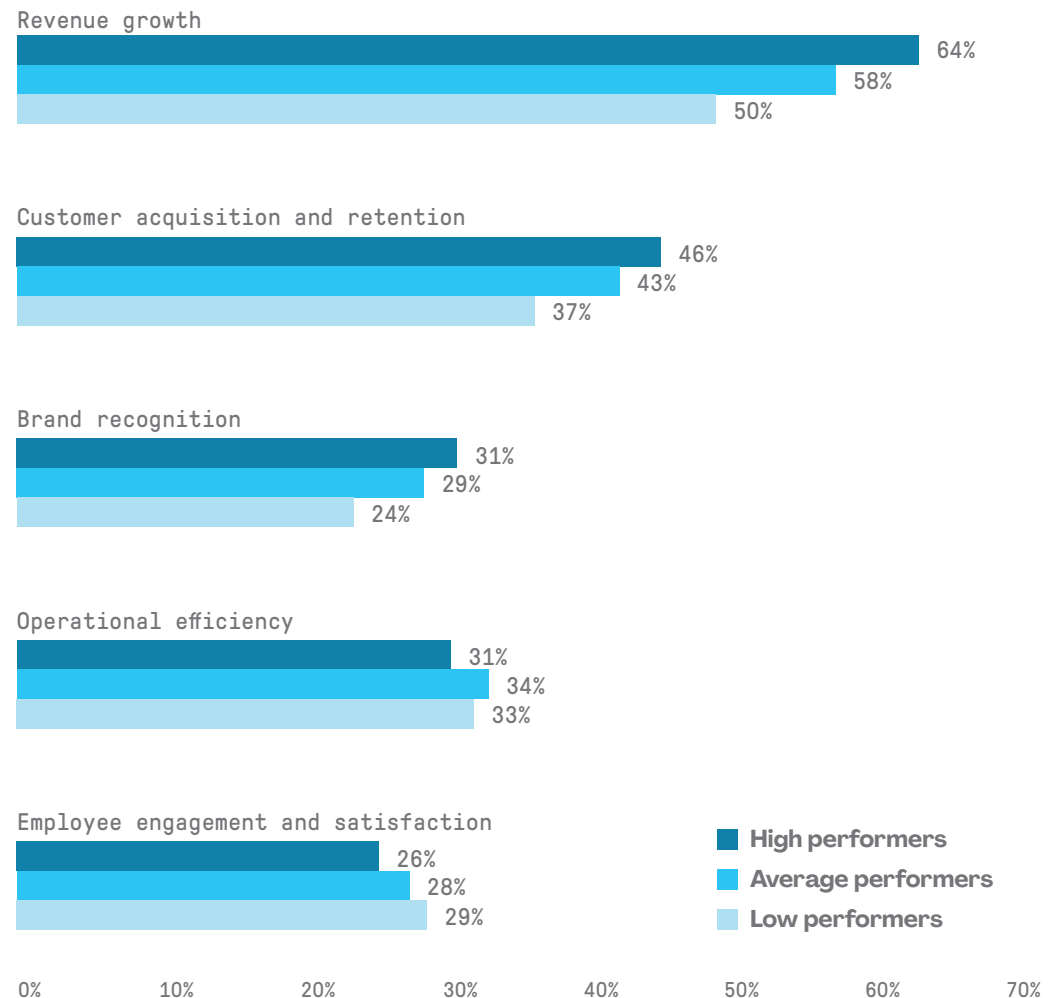
MEASURING METRICS OF SUCCESS

There were subtle yet telling differences regarding how high, average, and low performers responded to the question of critical metrics used to track strategic success. While revenue growth and customer acquisition and retention topped the charts for all three types of organizations, low performers cited greater emphasis on employee engagement, which suggests they may have more issues attracting and retaining talent than high performers (Fig. 2).

Despite these minor differences, high, average, and low-performing organizations use a similar analysis for measuring strategic success. The data does not support any one metric as the tipping point.

FIGURE 2:

METRICS USED TO MEASURE SUCCESS OF STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



3.2

HIGH IMPACT:

Effective transformation

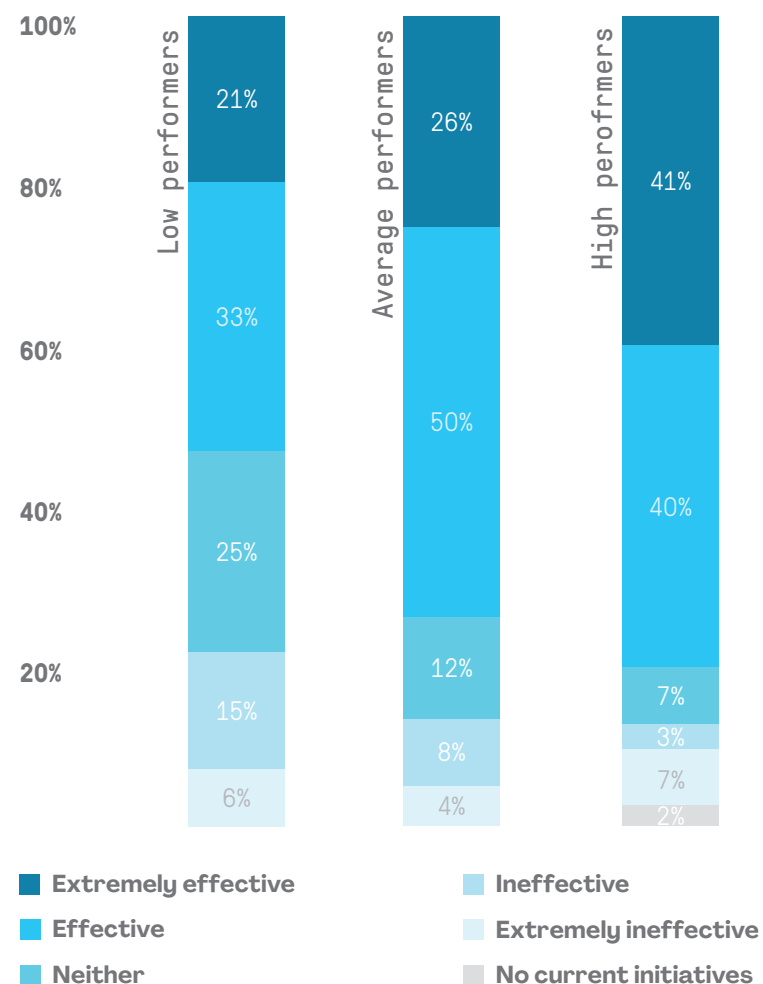
There's a direct relationship between high performers of strategy implementation and level of effectiveness of transformation initiatives. According to our data, high performers are about twice as likely as low-performing organizations to be “extremely effective” at transformation initiatives—41% to 21%, respectively. A full 81% of high performers report being either “effective” or “extremely effective” at efforts to transform, versus just 54% of low performers (Fig. 3).

It's important to note that the two capabilities—peak strategic performance and strong transformation performance—are inextricable from one another. Transformation capabilities, as the foundation for iteration and growth, are essential for implementing strategic initiatives of nearly any size or scope. In today's business landscape, they constitute a core competency.

Respondents in certain industries reported significantly higher levels of confidence in their organizations' ability to successfully transform, including the technology sector (50% reported being “extremely effective” at transformation), automotive (46%), telecommunications (45%), and manufacturing (45%).

FIGURE 3:

EFFECTIVENESS OF AN ORGANIZATION'S TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES



4

TRANSFORMATION 101: THE SYLLABUS FOR SUCCESS

Organizations don't become skilled at both strategic implementation and transformation by accident. Our data found specific factors that contribute to the success of high performers' initiatives. The following sections examine some of the foundational elements that impact and facilitate smooth and effective transformation.



4.1

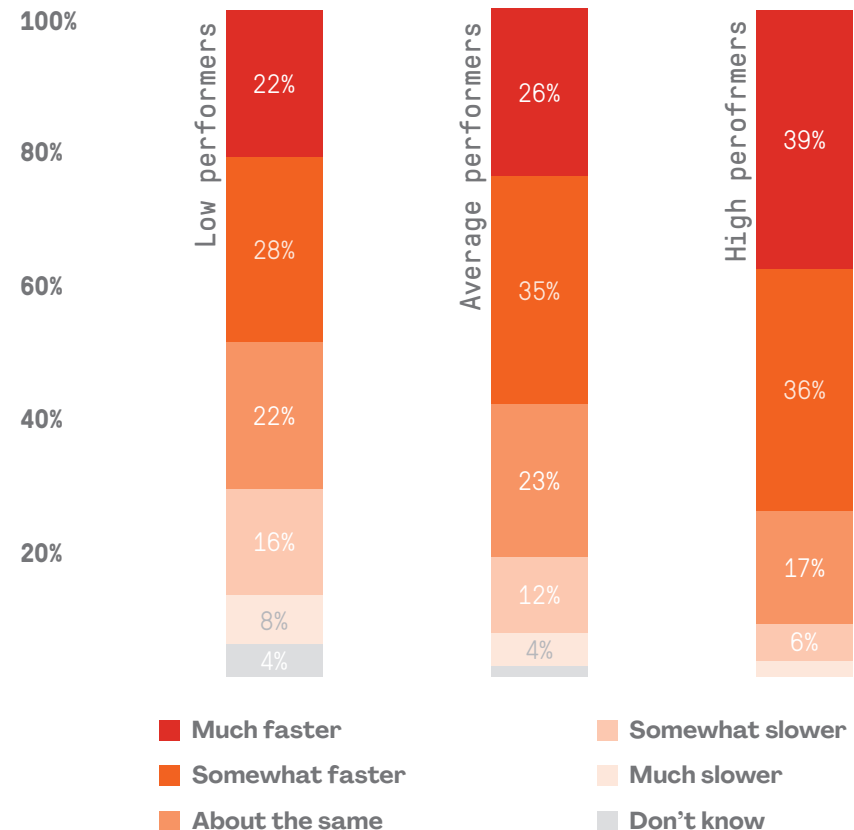
READY, SET, CHANGE:

Transformation at speed

Not only are strategically proficient organizations more effective at transforming—they also transform at a faster pace. High performers report significantly higher instances of transforming “much faster” than average and low-performing organizations (39% versus 26% and 22%, respectively) (Fig. 4).

FIGURE 4:

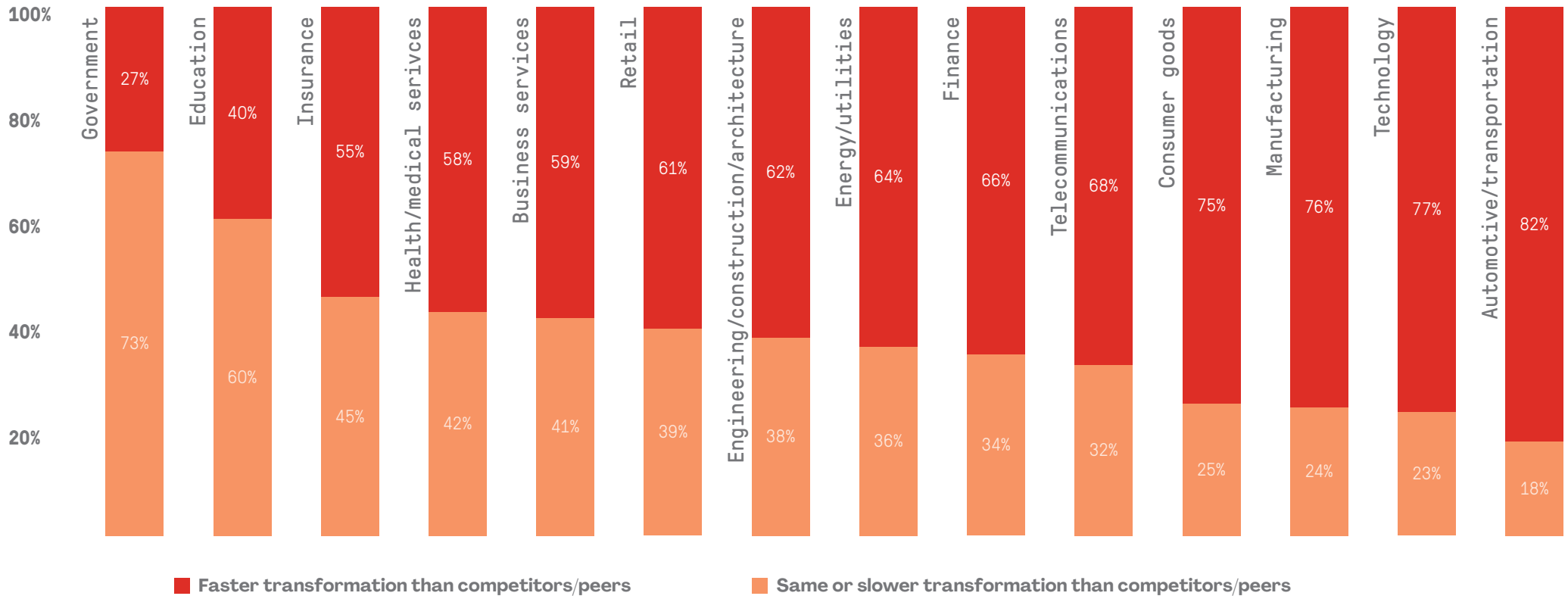
STRATEGIC HIGH PERFORMERS ARE ALSO FASTER AT EXECUTING TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES THAN THEIR COMPETITION.



The pace of transformation related to that of competitors differs significantly by industry. The automotive, technology, manufacturing, and consumer goods sectors emerged at the top of the list of quickly transforming industries (Fig. 5).

FIGURE 5:

TRANSFORMATION RATES BY INDUSTRY



4.2

POWER OF THE PEOPLE:

Talent and teams

Hiring and retaining top-notch talent facilitates a smoother journey for transformation. Across all respondents, reported success factors for implementing strategy included “sufficient resources” and “existing talent with the right skillset” as the top two ingredients. While “resources” can refer to many different things—capital, technology, equipment, time—it certainly includes people, teams, and sufficient talent.

Across all respondents, 28% noted that their organization focuses more on developing internal talent; 50% stated they invest in both hiring and developing existing talent, but place a higher priority on the latter; 16% said they focus on both hiring and developing talent, but place more emphasis on recruitment; and just 6% noted they are more heavily focused on attracting external talent.

When examined from the perspective of faster- versus slower-transformation organizations, there is a considerable difference in response to this question. Faster-transforming organizations were nearly twice as likely as slower-transforming respondents (34% vs. 19%) to report a greater focus on developing internal talent (Fig. 6). This data highlights the importance of improving internal learning and development programs, while still continuing to invest in recruitment efforts.



If you can't take your people with the strategy so that they really start living your strategy, understanding it, [integrating it] into their day-to-day behavior, and really making decisions [according to] their responsibilities, then your strategy won't be what you expect it to be.

Kay Nemoto, Chief Strategy & HR Officer,
Avon Worldwide

In addition, we examined organizational attributes that contribute to successful implementation of strategic initiatives from the perspective of teamwork and collaboration. In this arena, we did not find any significant difference between high and low performers. Overall, respondents said that increased communication, clearly defined roles and responsibilities, and alignment of goals are the top three most important attributes (Fig. 7).

For organizations categorized as being faster at transformation, there were some minor differences in the key contributing factors for success. Two of these included an ability to make quick decisions and team members with compatible personalities. On the other hand, another key attribute—desire and ability to communicate—was identified as more important to organizations that are slower at transformation (Fig. 7). This might indicate issues with siloed behaviors and ways of working, including a lack of cross-business collaboration and challenges to building effective multidisciplinary teams.

FIGURE 6:

TRANSFORMATION SPEED VS. METHOD OF DEVELOPING TALENT OR HIRING

Same or slower transformation than competitors



Faster transformation than competitors



0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

More focused on hiring external talent

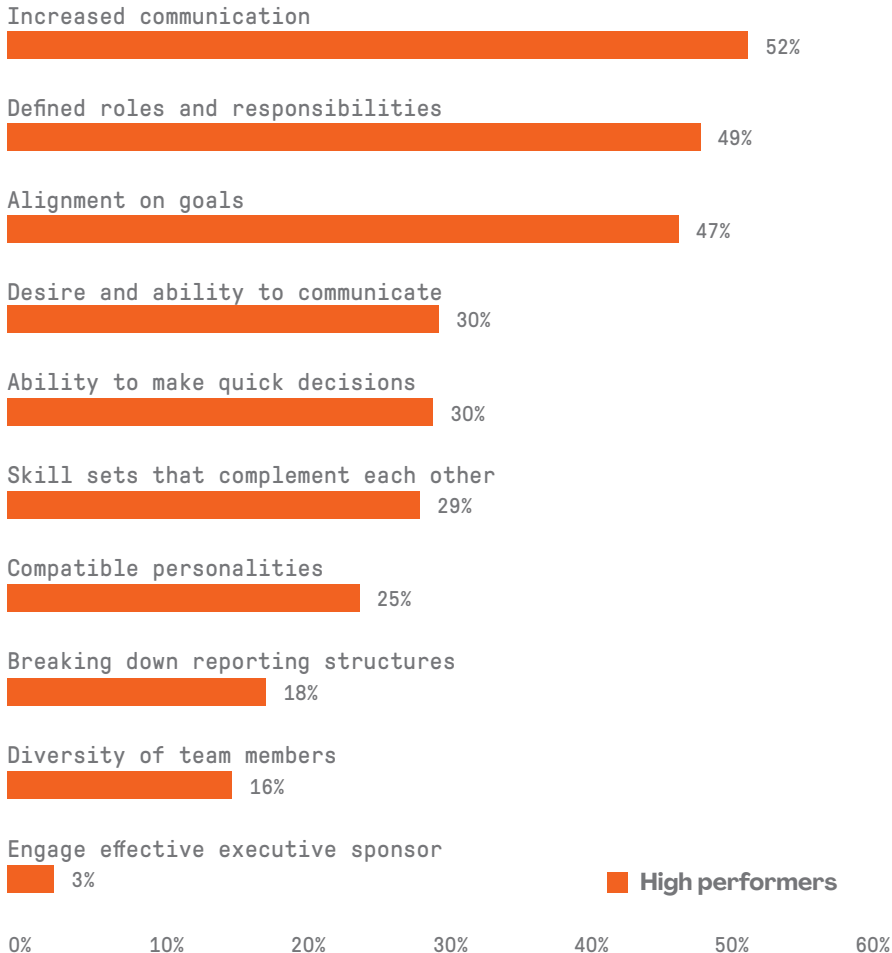
Both—but hiring external talent is higher priority

Both—but developing internal talent is higher priority

More focused on developing internal talent

FIGURE 7:

CHARACTERISTICS AND ATTRIBUTES MOST NECESSARY TO IMPLEMENT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Having the right team in place is paramount, as is having the right structure. When asked how organizational structure impacts results, we found that high, average, and low performers presented a similar structural breakdown, the most common being multidivisional. Significantly more low-performing organizations have a centralized structure (Fig. 8). This indicates that a centralized organizational structure may be less ideal for smooth implementation of strategic initiatives.



The view I take is that you shouldn't be more than two steps away from being able to address the CEO of the company. That doesn't mean it's a free-for-all—but if there are genuine pain points, a team member can communicate directly with the CEO or Chief Strategy Officer to say, 'This is not working.'

Dirk van Doorn, Associated Partner, Last Mile Experts

Several executives we interviewed described the importance of designing teams in a way that facilitates collaboration. This might mean designating specific teams to be cross-functional, rather than focused on a single area of expertise. One executive explained the process they would ideally implement given the opportunity:

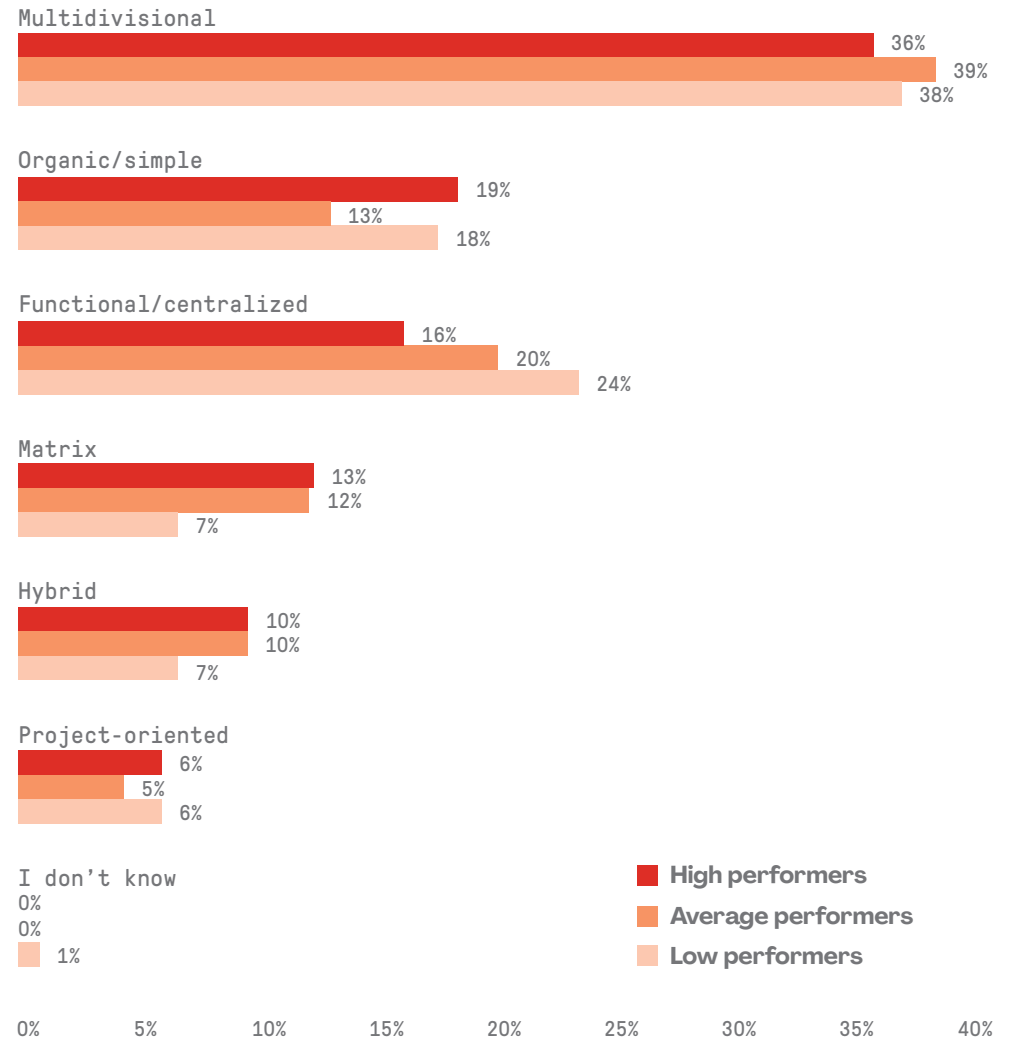


I would try to get explicit, cross-functional roles in all of the groups. You could be in operations performance management, but 25% of your time is going to be spent working with the asset, performance people to figure out where the tie-ins are... I think the more engineering-focused you get, the more there's this desire for boundaries, and it's just more concrete thinking. But people get a lot out of having to put the other guy's hat on every now and then.

Peter Kirk, VP Business Operations, GE

FIGURE 8:

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TYPES



4.3

ENABLING CHANGE:

The power of frameworks

High-performing organizations agree that frameworks and tools help them meet strategic goals—more specifically, clearly defined frameworks and tools are integral to the strategic transformation process. We found that 93% of leading organizations have well-formalized processes in place, versus 72% of low performers (Fig. 9). In other words, high performers are more likely than low-performing organizations to rely upon formalized or standardized processes to implement strategic initiatives.

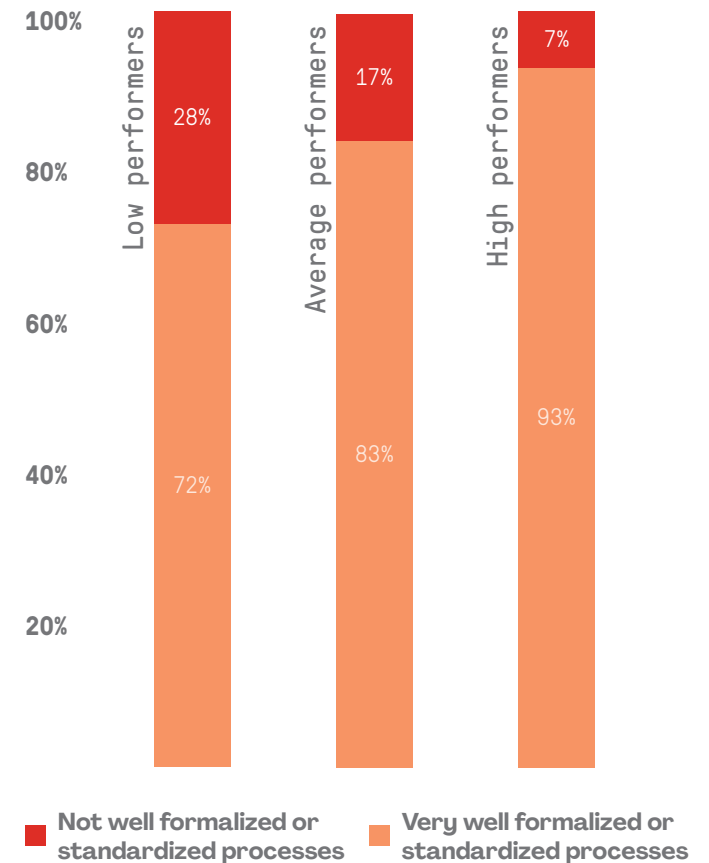


I think frameworks and methodologies help harness the creative potential of the company... one that's been most successful lately is opening up the company to innovation from the outside and figuring out how to merge the two. The approaches range from open innovation to corporate venture capital. There are also very structured ways to tap into the creative power of one's own employees, perhaps the best source of innovation a company can access.

Paola Bonomo, Non-Executive Director

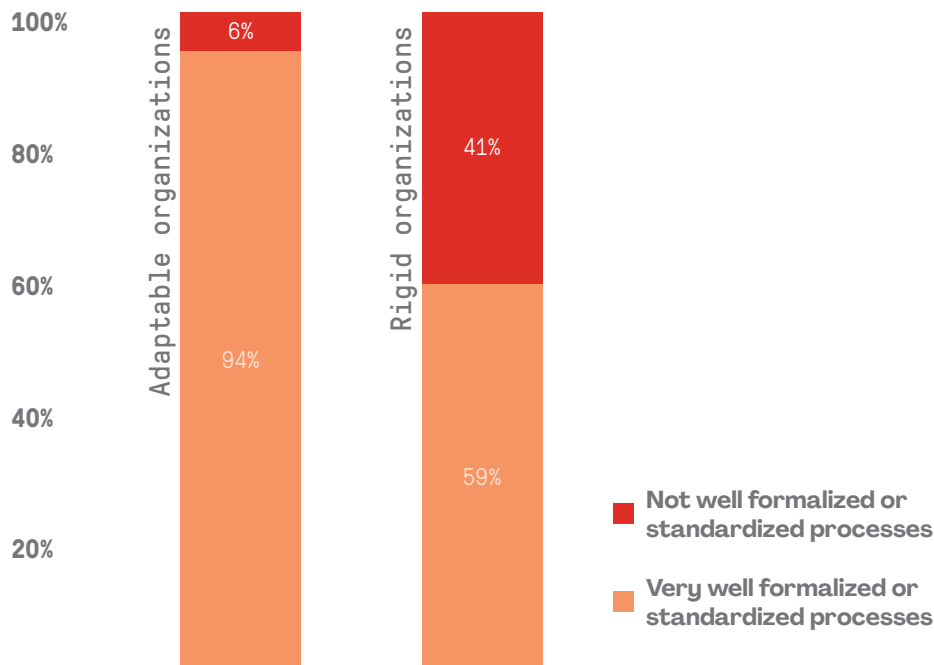
FIGURE 9:

MOST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE CLEARLY DEFINED FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS.



One of the most significant findings of the report is how frameworks impact organizations' ability to adapt to change. Organizations with very well-formalized processes also report being "often or consistently adaptable" in the face of unforeseen strategic challenges. A full 94% of adaptable organizations have formalized processes in place, compared to just 59% of rigid organizations (Fig. 10).

FIGURE 10:
USE OF FRAMEWORKS BY ADAPTABLE AND RIGID ORGANIZATIONS



Adaptability allows organizations to react quickly, adjust with agility, and drive successful implementation of strategic initiatives. Established processes may ultimately serve as reference points, guiding organizations when it becomes necessary to course correct and realign with their North Star. Furthermore, the discipline of frameworks not only provides the rigor necessary to be adaptable, but also creates clear avenues for organizations to be able to take advantage of technologies and tools at their disposal.

We examined the specific frameworks used within high-performing, adaptable organizations. The most common approaches used by high performers included: program management, agile, iterative or incremental project management frameworks, internally developed frameworks, Objectives and Key Results (OKRs), and portfolio management. Low performers, in comparison, reported the following top five frameworks: program management; waterfall, linear, or segmental project management; Balanced Scorecard; internally developed frameworks; and OKRs (Fig. 11).

Although the nature of these approaches and techniques differ, high performers reported greater effectiveness in the use of their frameworks. This may mean they are more adept at using the right framework for the task at hand. While just 25% of low-performing organizations labeled their existing frameworks as "very effective," 41% of high performers reported the same. Conversely, 16% of low performers called their existing frameworks "ineffective," while just 2% of high performers responded similarly (Fig. 12).

FIGURE 11:

FRAMEWORKS EMPLOYED BY ADAPTABLE AND RIGID ORGANIZATIONS

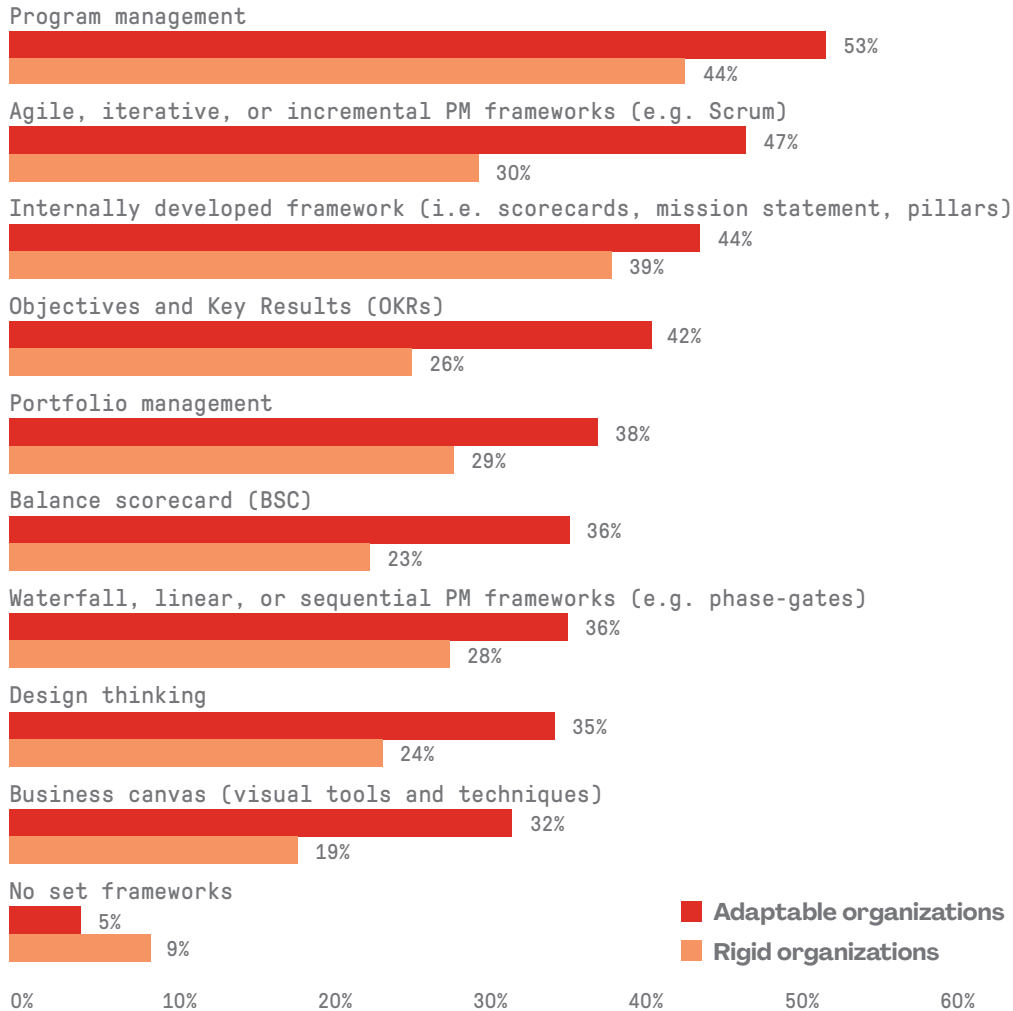
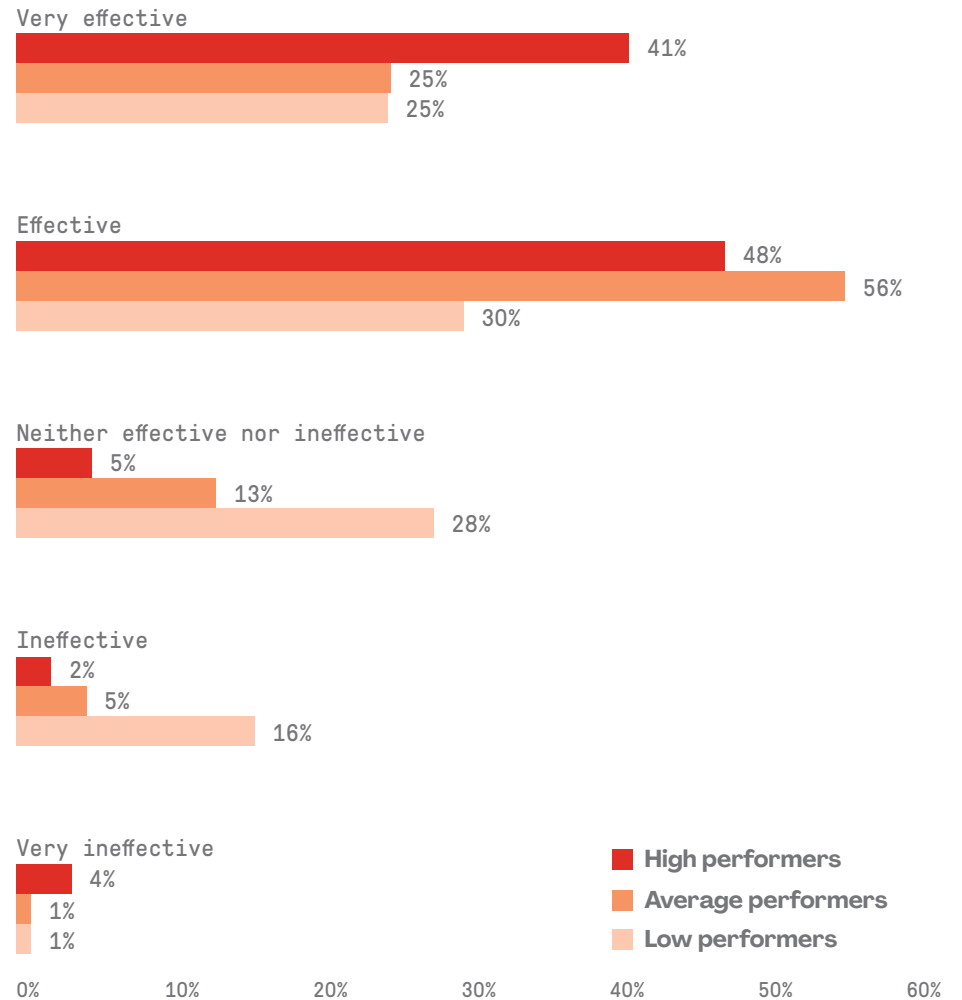


FIGURE 12:

EFFICIENCY OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORKS AND TOOLS



TOP FRAMEWORKS FOR STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

We also examined the frameworks that adaptable organizations employ versus those that rigid organizations have in place. The top five are:

- 1. Agile project management frameworks**
- 2. Objectives and Key Results (OKRs)**
- 3. Balanced scorecards**
- 4. Design thinking**
- 5. Business canvas**

Among all respondents, program management was cited as the most commonly used framework for implementing strategic initiatives.



In industries that are being disrupted, it's incredibly important to make sure you're actually tracking the right things.

Allison Bailey, Senior Partner and Managing Director,
Boston Consulting Group

It's worth noting that terms like “formalized processes” are not necessarily synonymous with bureaucracy. The data shows that having formal processes—ones aligned with flexibility and autonomy—help organizations achieve outstanding strategic results.

An unaddressed factor that may explain the rankings of specific frameworks and techniques is that low-performing organizations may be transitioning to new ways of working. In particular, this may pertain to more traditional industries—such as finance or government/public sector organizations—that are in the midst of modernizing but still largely rely upon legacy frameworks.

4.4

FAIL FAST AND LEARN FAST:

Adaptability and course correction

High-performing organizations tend to be more adaptable. When asked, 86% of high-performing organizations noted their adaptability, versus 70% of average performers and fewer than half (48%) of low performers (Fig. 13).

High performers also report a better ability to course correct when strategic initiatives go off the rails—they're more than twice as likely as other organizations to be “consistently adaptable” in the face of unforeseen challenges.

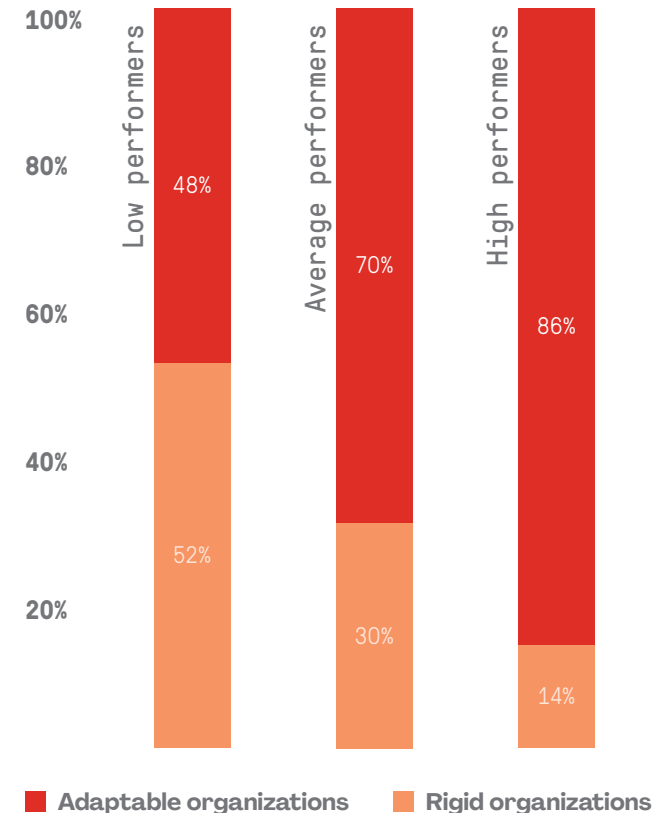


If you rigidly put in a strategy without the ability to adapt, you're not going to be able to take learnings and improve upon it. Or, if there are some other external dynamics that will impact your business... you won't give yourself the agility to change.

Kay Nemoto, Chief Strategy & HR Officer, Avon Worldwide

FIGURE 13:

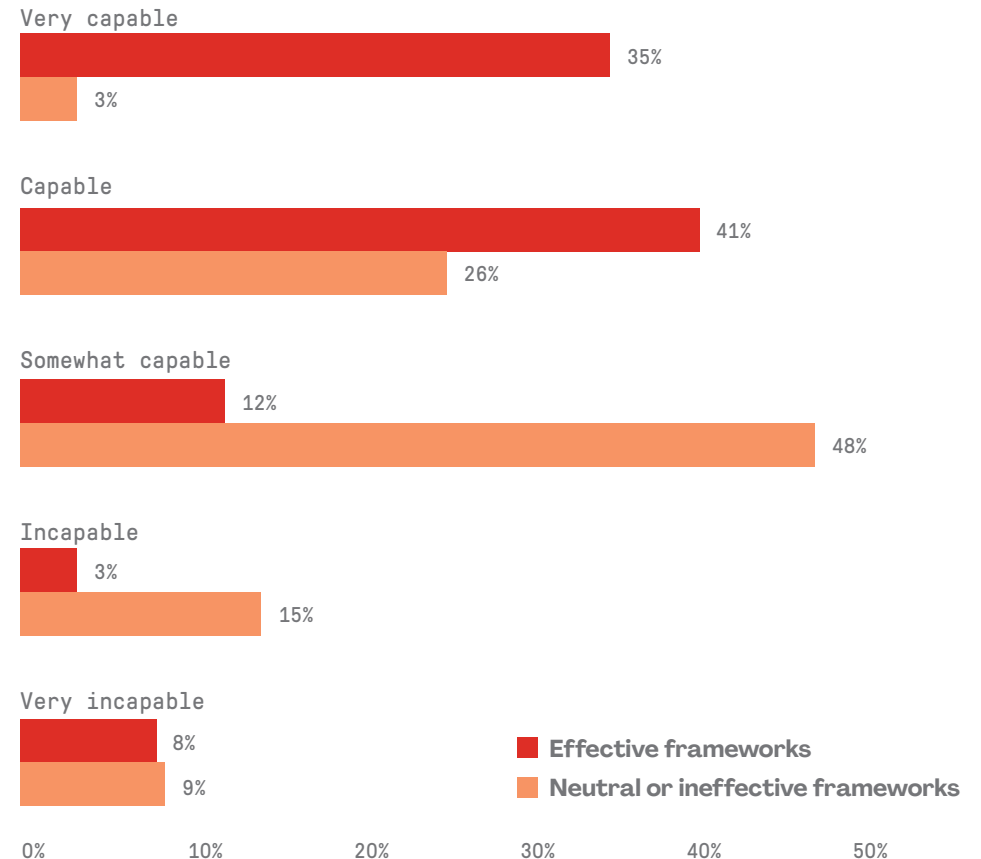
THERE'S A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADAPTABILITY AND STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE.



According to our data, high-performing organizations master the balance of maintaining existing revenue streams, seamless customer service, and efficient internal operations, even as they attempt to forge new pathways for these systems' evolution. More than three out of four (76%) high performers report being “very capable” or “capable” of balancing business operations with strategy implementation (Fig. 14).

The proper use of frameworks, as discussed in the previous section, may further bolster an organization's ability to adapt. Effective frameworks help organizations balance ongoing business initiatives with transformation, making them more ambidextrous. There is a healthy relationship between employing effective frameworks for strategy implementation, and being capable of balancing core business operations alongside transformation initiatives. More than two-thirds (77%) of faster organizations reporting effecting frameworks consider themselves “very capable” or “capable” of balancing business operations with transformation (Fig. 15).

FIGURE 14:
EFFECTIVE FRAMEWORK ORGANIZATIONS
BALANCE BUSINESS OPERATIONS WITH
STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION BETTER.

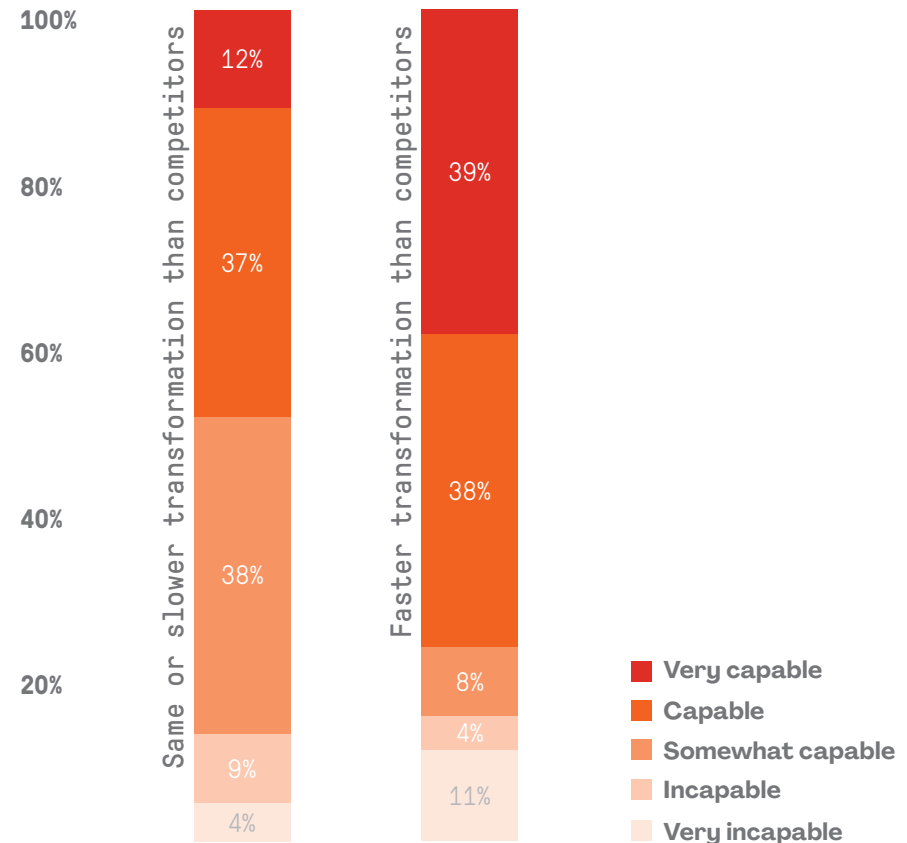


This juggling act seems easier within some industries than others. The technology sector led the pack, with nearly half (47%) of respondents reporting they are “very capable” of running the core business while implementing transformation. The manufacturing, telecommunications, and financial sectors also reported high levels of confidence.

When the responses “very capable” and “capable” are considered, the three leading sectors were manufacturing (78%), technology (77%), and retail (75%). The least capable sectors were consumer goods (35%), government/public sector (56%), and healthcare and medical services (56%).

FIGURE 15:

ORGANIZATIONS THAT TRANSFORM FASTER ARE MORE LIKELY TO BE CAPABLE OF BALANCING ONGOING BUSINESS WITH TRANSFORMATION.



When strategy and transformation initiatives are implemented inefficiently—as indicated by less adaptable organizations—course correction gets harder. The data shows that the top five methods for successfully adapting and course correcting when strategy is not implemented correctly are different for high performers than they are for average and low performers.

Overall, more adaptable organizations cite reviewing lessons from previous failures, speaking with customers or end users, and collecting actionable feedback as top priorities for course correction. They're about 10% more likely than rigid organizations to analyze talent and resourcing in the event of inefficient strategic implementation.

TOP METHODS FOR ADAPTING STRATEGY

For our top performers, these were the most effective ways to course correct:

- 1. Reviewing lessons learned from past failures**
- 2. Speaking with customers or end users**
- 3. Reevaluating milestones and timelines**
- 4. Analyzing talent and resourcing**
- 5. Simplifying and modifying delivery processes**

4.5

TOOLS FOR SUCCESS:

Technologies enabling transformation

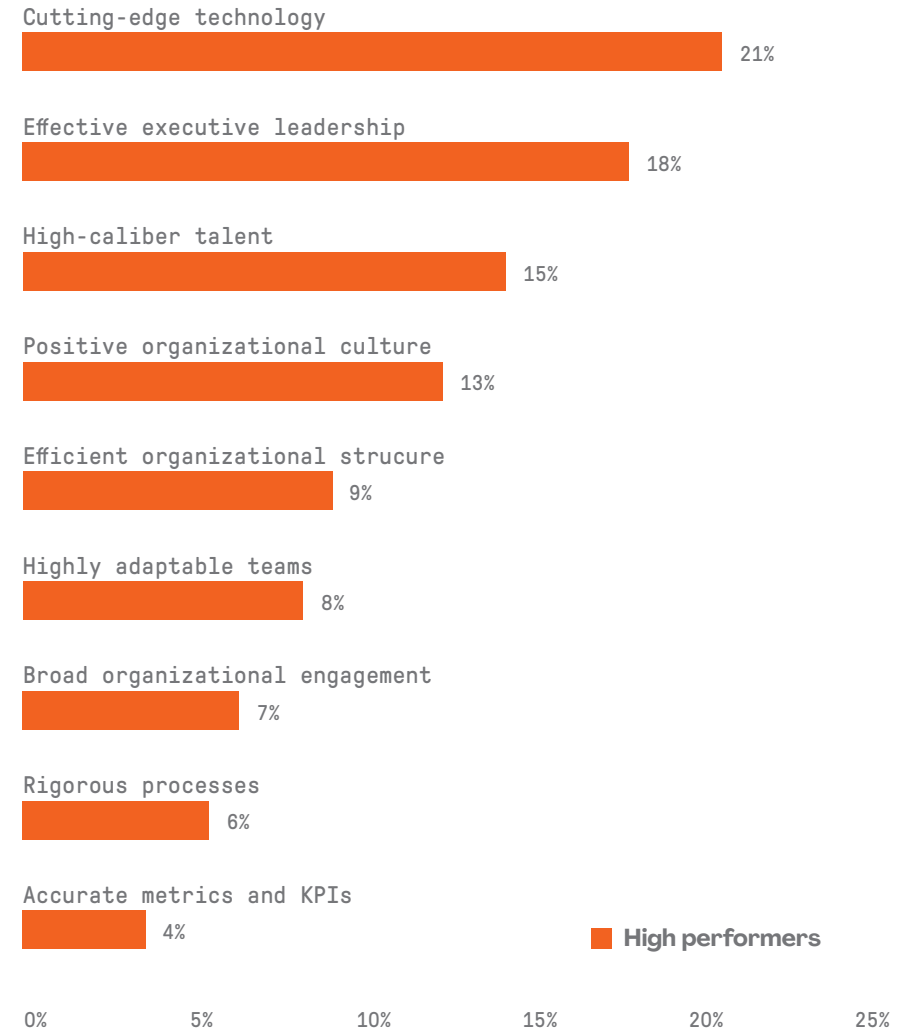
Out of the many factors enabling successful transformation, adoption of new technologies is one of the most prominent. “Cutting-edge technology” landed at the number one spot for the most significant competitive advantages high performers have in order to successfully implement strategic initiatives (Fig. 16).

Access to cutting-edge technology also proves to be a critical factor for faster transformation.

Clearly, high performers recognize the importance of cutting-edge technology as part of their strategic process. Yet, this item falls to the number three priority for low-performing organizations. One explanation for this deviation is that technology becomes considerably less of a competitive advantage in the face of ineffective leadership or toxic organizational culture.

FIGURE 16:

MOST SIGNIFICANT COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES



When it comes to emerging technologies that significantly improve organizations' ability to implement strategic initiatives, high performers reported automation, cloud computing, AI, IoT, mobile devices, and apps as the five most impactful tools (Fig. 17).

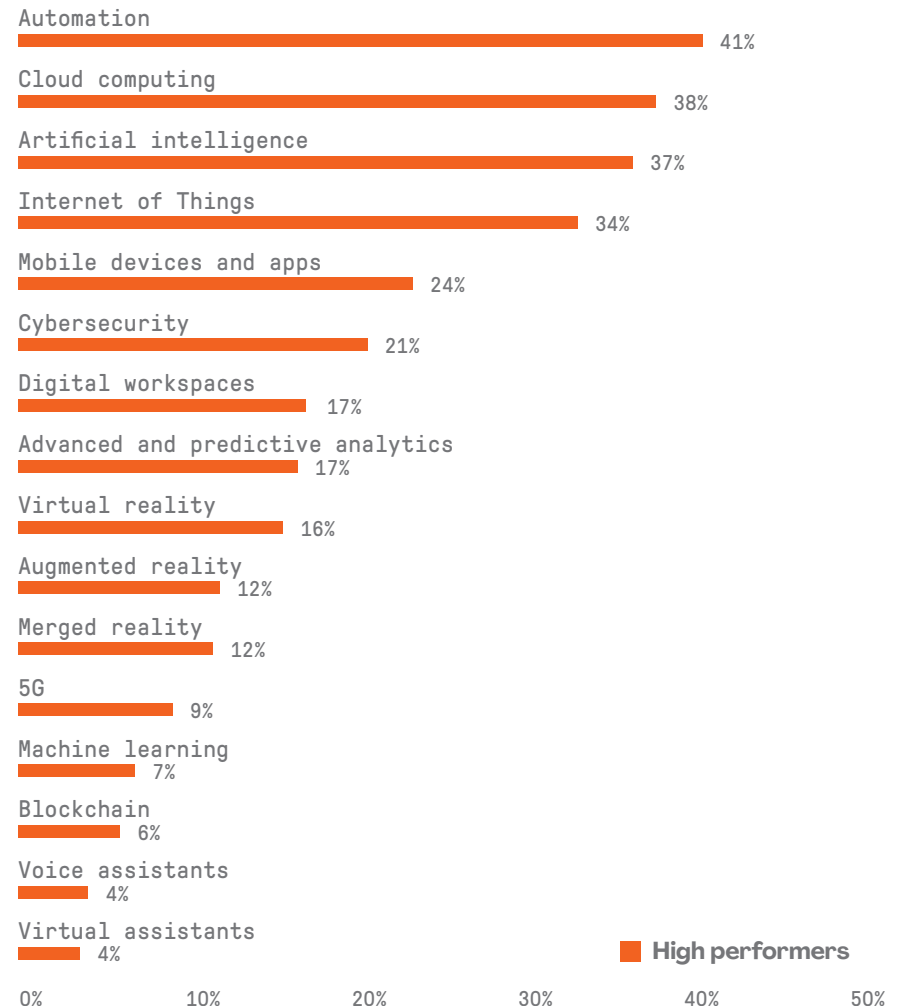


Companies are becoming more aware of the data they have. And so whether it's for designing products, whether it's for underwriting, whether it's for claims, you have a wealth of opportunities to use machine learning, deep learning, these kinds of techniques to get better outcomes for the business... If you're not interested in artificial intelligence, if you don't have a strategy for that, again, you are falling behind.

Paola Bonomo, Non-Executive Director

FIGURE 17:

TECHNOLOGY PLATFORMS THAT IMPROVE STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION



5

NAVIGATING THE TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Transformation, by definition, refers to an organization achieving a sustainable, quantum-leap improvement in performance, while changing the mindsets of employees and thus the culture of an organization.

It's about more than simply adopting the latest emerging technologies—it applies to any change that alters day-to-day operations, an organization's manner of delivering value, and the underlying business model. It might mean scaling acquisition strategies, introducing new

organizational structure, adopting more agile or flexible processes, or even reevaluating core tenets of a company's mission/vision/values.

In the following sections, we explore the transformation journey on a more granular level. What challenges stand to impede progress? What areas are the most critical to transform? And what role does leadership play in bringing the transformational journey from concept to reality?



5.1

POTENTIAL ROADBLOCKS:

Challenges to implementing strategy and successfully transforming

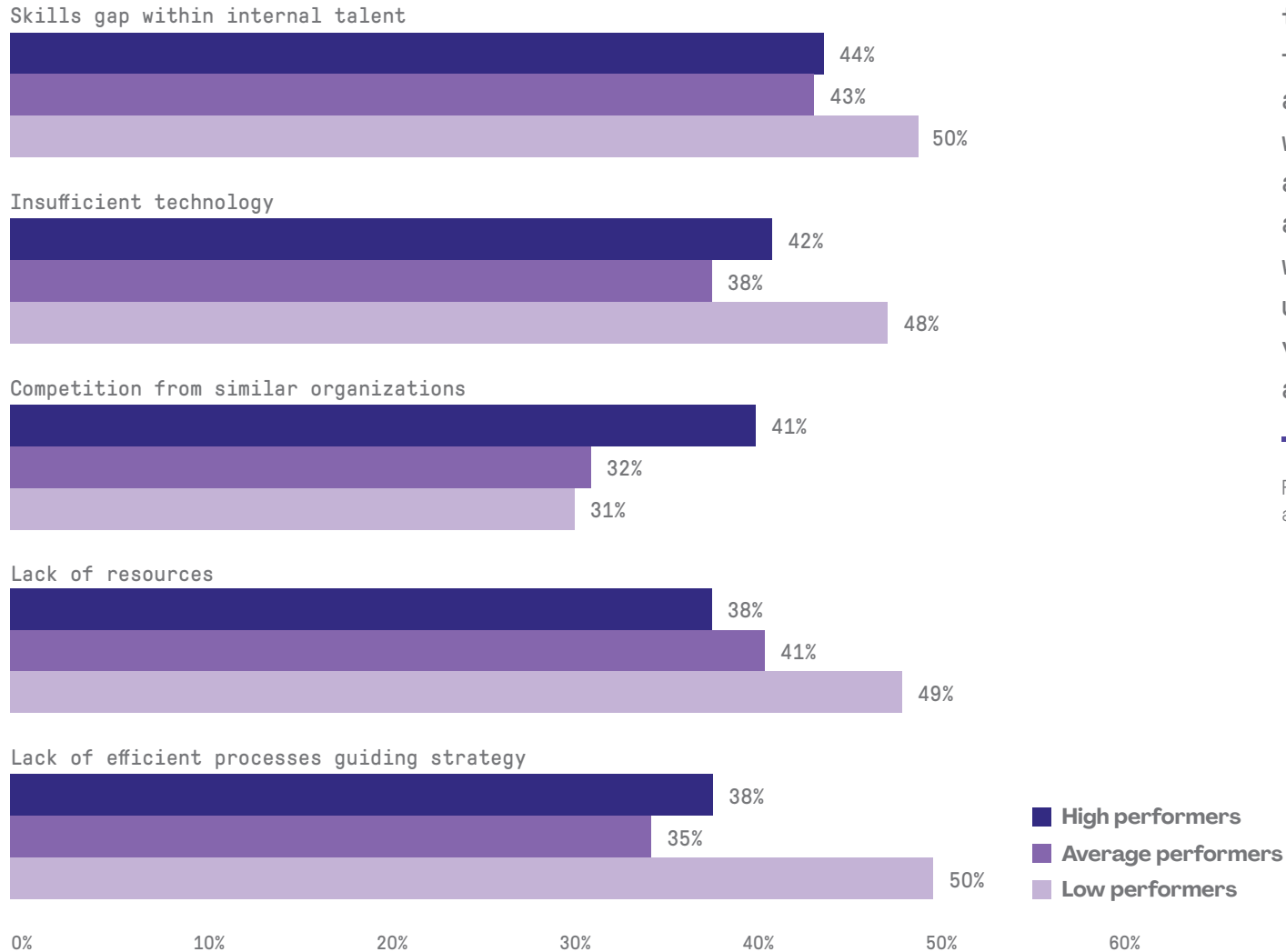
To further explore instances in which course correction may be necessary, we examined common obstacles that organizations face when implementing strategy.

A useful metaphor for examining these challenges is “Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs” of strategy implementation essentials: When foundational needs have been met, organizations have the ability to turn attention to more nuanced matters, such as executive team dynamics, talent gaps, or competitors.

To illustrate this point: While high performers express greater concern about competitors, low-performing organizations struggle with more fundamental issues, such as a lack of efficient processes to guide strategy (Fig. 18). Findings also suggest that as performance improves and processes become more defined, organizations tend to experience (or simply notice more pronouncedly) company politics, such as differing priorities among executive teams.

FIGURE 18:

MOST COMMON CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING STRATEGY



Execution requires good people, good teamwork, good resources, and a focused attention to the destination, and things can happen in the way that will thwart that... So, for example, we added steps to our process, and then a key project manager, the person who was the subject matter expert, ended up leaving. And so that created a vacuum, that created a big hiccup, and we lost traction. We lost time.

Former CIO at a global logistics and transportation company

5.2

IDENTIFYING CATALYSTS:

Areas critical to transformation

Our data identified elements both within an organization and related to its external interactions that are particularly foundational to successful transformation. Respondents identified a few of these areas in response to the question, “What are the top three areas of your organization where it is critical to transform in order to successfully implement strategic initiatives?”

Faster-transforming organizations also prioritize the adoption of new technologies and new product-development processes and operations—and they do so more frequently than slower-transforming organizations.



There can only be one strategist. If you have too many strategists, it's the old adage of too many cooks. Whoever is appointed to develop a strategy needs to be the person that's in control... you've got to have faith in that individual to actually deliver. Obviously, everybody will participate and provide their input, but at the end of the day, it's one strategist.

Dirk van Doorn, Associated Partner, Last Mile Experts

HOW RESPONDENTS RANK THE 10 FACTORS VITAL TO TRANSFORMATION:

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Adoption of new technologies
- 3 Organizational culture and behavior
- 4 New product-development processes and operations
- 5 Team structure
- 6 Ways of working
- 7 Management approach and frameworks
- 8 Decision-making process
- 9 Talent development
- 10 Organizational structure (roles and responsibilities)

5.3

THE EXECUTIVE FACTOR:

Leadership characteristics for successful transformations

Given the data, it's clear that leadership is a paramount factor when it comes to transformation and successful implementation of strategic initiatives. Without effective leadership and accountability in place, transformation efforts slow down.

Digging deeper, organizations that report a faster pace of transformation tend to share qualities such as having leaders with a clear vision and tangible goals, as well as industry experience and a deep understanding of the organization and its values. Organizations transforming quickly also tend to have leaders who set positive examples and are committed to overarching transformation goals (Fig. 19).



When I run teams, I think of myself as somebody that's removing barriers and blockades for them, and helping them gain and acquire the skills that take them to the next level so that they can feel empowered and successful.

Kit Krugman, Global Executive Director,
Women in Innovation

FIGURE 19:

CHARACTERISTICS OF LEADERS IN FASTER TRANSFORMATION

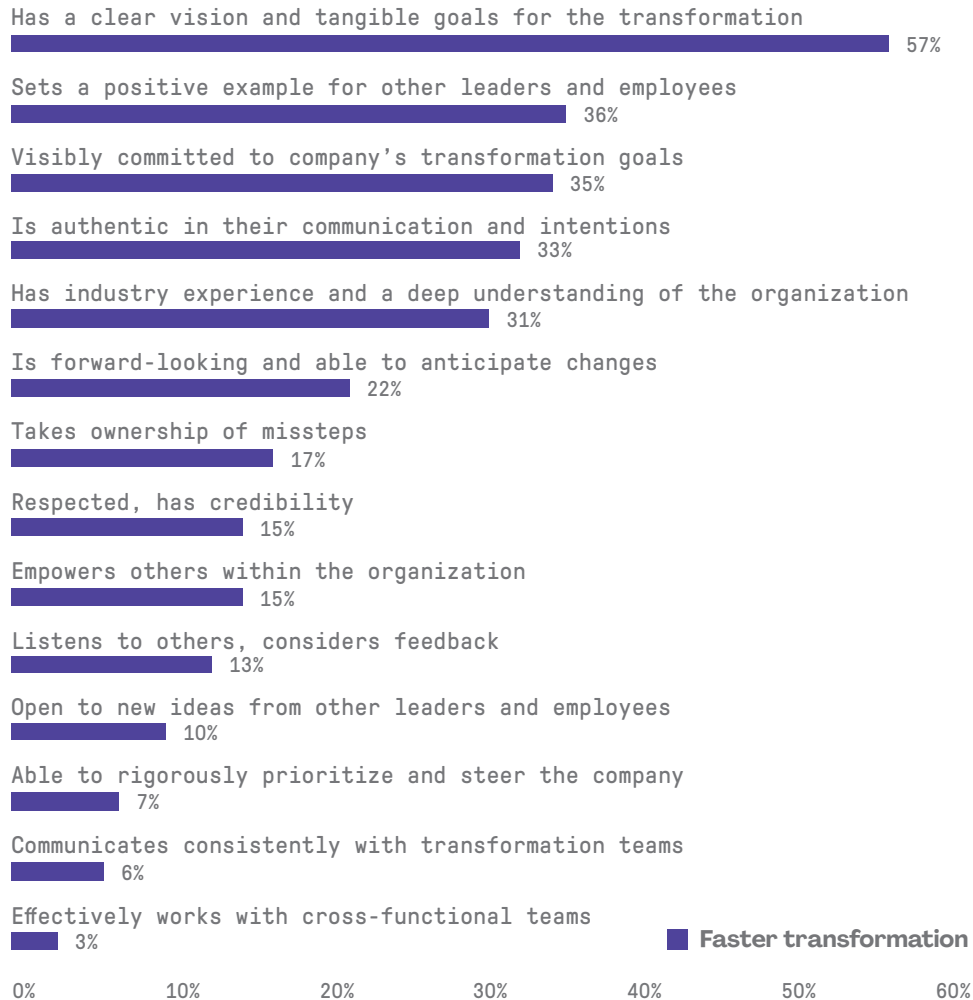
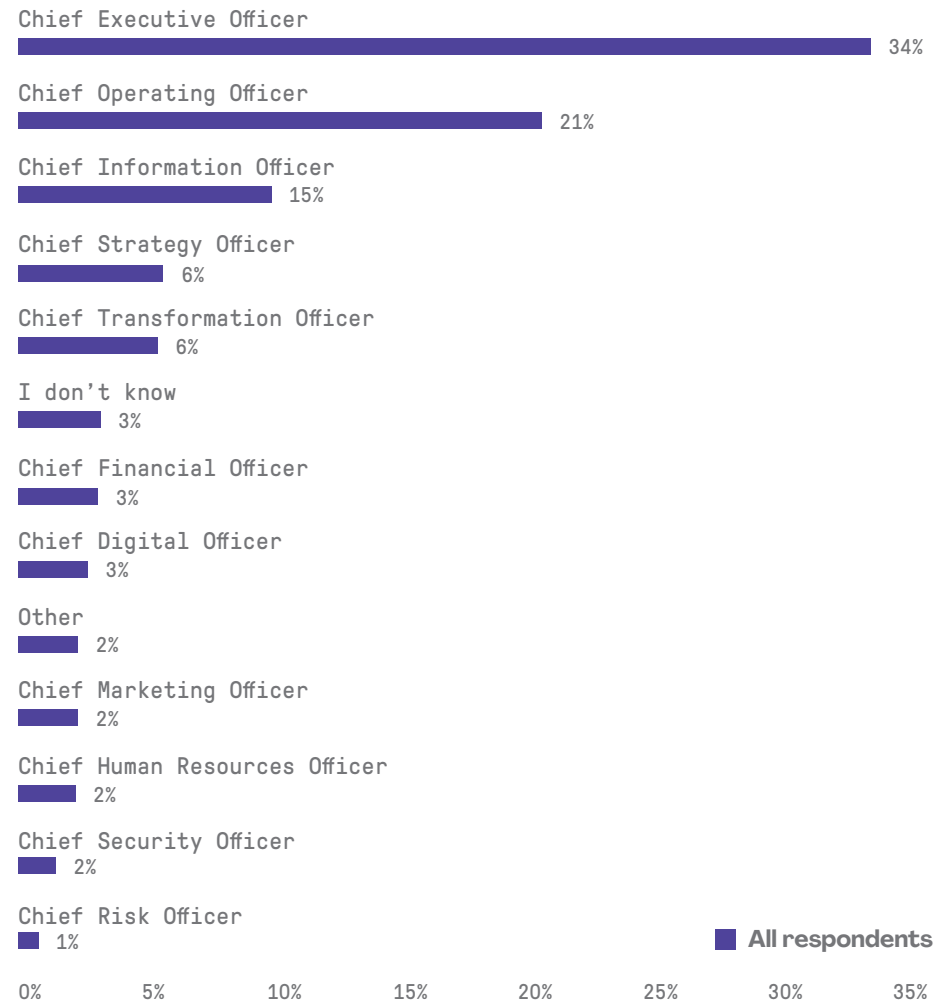


FIGURE 20:

LEADERSHIP ROLES IN TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES



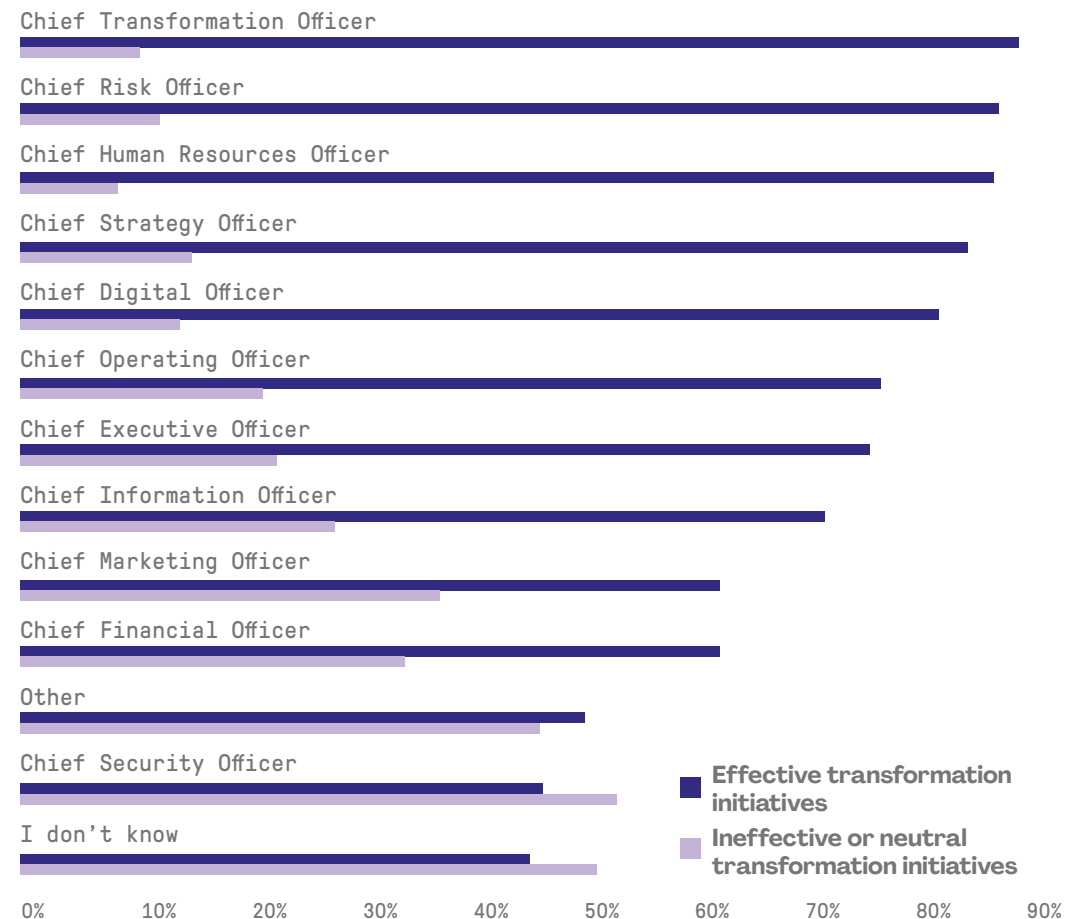
It's notable that CEOs, COOs, and CIOs usurped chief strategy officers in this capacity (Fig. 20). (This may be a result of there simply being fewer formal CTO positions across the board than CEOs, COOs, and CIOs.)

Brightline's years of experience researching in the field of strategy implementation suggests that installation of a Chief Transformation Officer to act as a steward for transformation initiatives may be a useful tactic (Fig. 21).

Putting a CTO in place may serve as a catalyst to formalize processes, ensure efficient handoffs among teams, and ultimately lead to faster transformation processes. Creating a CTO position is one way to create organization-wide accountability. It ensures that there is someone putting concerted effort into making transformation initiatives a priority, and it effectively closes the leadership gap for organizations.

FIGURE 21:

CTOS HELP ENSURE TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES ARE EFFECTIVE.



6

CONCLUSION

Successful implementation of strategy and the ability to transform quickly and effectively go hand in hand. Organizations that are more adept at completing strategic initiatives are also high performers when it comes to transformation. There is no single, magical formula that enables strategic transformation proficiency—it is an iterative process with many moving parts that must work in tandem.



THERE ARE A FEW KEY VARIABLES THAT LEAD TO HIGHER SUCCESS RATES FOR STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION.

1 HAVING ACCESS TO THE RIGHT RESOURCES AND INSTALLING EFFECTIVE HIRING AND TALENT-DEVELOPMENT SYSTEMS IS PARAMOUNT.

High-performing organizations invest and develop internal talent, are using cutting-edge technology, and have effective executive leadership—competitive advantages that help facilitate successful strategic transformation. Organizations must rigorously and continuously assess and support the development of their talent to ensure long-term competitive success.

2 FORMALIZED PROCESSES ARE CRITICAL FOR ORGANIZATIONS WHO WISH TO BECOME MORE ADAPTIVE.

They're also a key part of the equation for fast and effective transformation. New technologies alone are not the flotation device that will keep an organization from sinking. Leaders need to provide a foundation for optimal use of these tools by installing and adhering to standardized processes. This type of discipline affords an organization a greater degree of adaptability and lets it take full advantage of the technology and frameworks at its disposal.

3 STRONG LEADERSHIP IS STILL ONE OF THE KEY DETERMINING FACTORS AS TO WHETHER TRANSFORMATION INITIATIVES WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.

Leaders should have a clear vision, concrete goals, and the ability to disseminate an action plan for reaching these goals to the necessary tendrils of the organization. A Chief Transformation Officer may serve as a centralized orchestrator for devising and delivering upon strategic transformation objectives.

6.1

Acknowledgements

We gratefully acknowledge the support and contribution from Coalition Members and Brightline Initiative team in the development of this research, data analysis, and insights presented in this executive report.

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6.2

About Brightline Initiative

Brightline™ is a Project Management Institute (PMI) initiative together with leading global organizations dedicated to helping executives bridge the expensive and unproductive gap between strategy design and delivery. It delivers insights and solutions that empower leaders to successfully transform their organization's vision into reality through strategic initiative management.

Learn more at www.brightline.org

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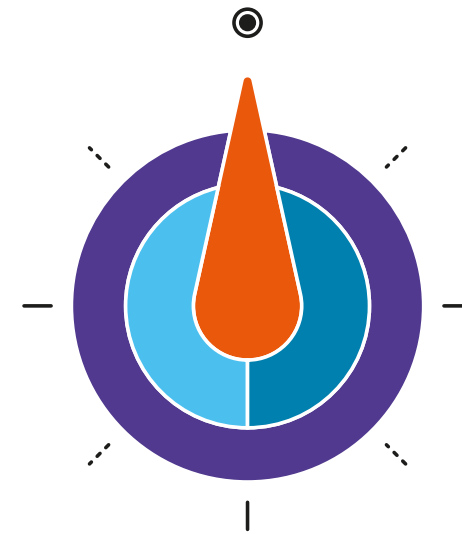
**We need to
transform
the way we
transform...**



**By putting people
at the center of
transformation.**



**And building a
movement that
aligns inside-out
and outside-in
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