



LOADING 100%

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Western University

ASSESSING ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

— Developing a readiness checklist for municipalities —



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ABSTRACT

Municipal governments are under increasing pressure to digitize services and general operations. Many municipalities do not have the capacity or capability to reform current service delivery practices or to increase employee digital literacy in order to address digital transformation. Due to the lack of available research on Canadian municipal digital transformation, private sector and practitioner-based research provide a framework for developing a readiness checklist for municipalities to assess the viability and necessity of organization-wide digital transformation.

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During his time at Middlesex County as the Director of ITS, Morgan has expanded his portfolio to include Intergovernmental Relations, Strategic Planning and Management, Community Transportation, and is actively leading and encouraging municipal modernization and business transformation efforts across Middlesex County and its local municipalities. As the Acting CAO in Adelaide Metcalfe, Morgan is also focused on implementing the strategic priorities of Council, while guiding Council and staff through thoughtful and significant change initiatives.

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2. INTRODUCTION

In an environment driven by constant change, local governments are struggling to maintain pace. Digital transformation is one of many emerging concepts local governments must navigate while struggling with pressures to deliver the current analog form of services to their ratepayers. With the rise of new digital technologies, local governments are conducting multiple initiatives to explore the benefits of “going-digital” (Matt, Hess, and Benlian 2015). Local governments are facing a number of pressures, including: the change in the way ratepayers wish to consume government services; pressures from other levels of government to improve the provision of services; and cost reductions overall.

Many local governments adopt forms of New Public Management (NPM) to initiate a focus on financial control, value for money, and efficiency. This focus is an effort to improve service delivery and become more accountable for the productivity of public administrators, while concentrating on customer-first methodologies during program development and implementation (OECD 2016). A colossal shift is happening from analog-based service delivery to digitally rooted service models. What was once a government-centric solution model, where governments decide what citizens require, has shifted to the public increasingly demanding services from their government (OECD 2016).

This article highlights what is required of public organizations prior to undertaking a significant digital transformation, as digital transformation has the ability to fundamentally transform processes, services and business models. Through an extensive literature review, including a comprehensive analysis of a foundational assessment of organizational

In an environment driven by constant change, local governments are struggling to maintain pace.



digital transformation from Deloitte (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019), seven key success factors were identified, analyzed and discussed. The result is a proposed conceptual organizational readiness checklist, which local governments can use to assess their capabilities prior to undertaking digital transformation.



What factors does academia identify as important to successfully undertake digital transformation?



What factors do practitioners identify as important to successfully undertake digital transformation?



How do these factors compare to Deloitte's survey of 1,200 senior executives regarding successful digital transformation?



What key success factors should organizations consider prior to undertaking digital transformation efforts?



What impact do these factors have within the context of local government and digital transformation?

Due to the general lack of capacity in the municipal public sector regarding complete organizational process transformation, these questions may be used in assessing the readiness and willingness to digitize services and administrative functions from an academic perspective. The relevance of these questions to municipal public administrators is clarified in the following research and simplified as a toolkit in the conclusion of this article.

BUSINESS

3. TRENDS REVIEW

NETWORK SEARCH

-INTERNET

-LIVE CHAT

-MEDIA

-REPUTATION

-COURT

-HEALTH

-RESEARCH

-SHOW

NEW PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

During the 1980s, a new era of public administration emerged in response to shortcomings of what was the traditional public management model (Hughes 1998). The NPM theory introduced a new set of management practices aimed at reducing the size of government and to make government more efficient through “doing more with less” (Hughes 1998). NPM represented an attempt to make the public sector act more businesslike to improve the efficiency of government by borrowing ideas and management models from the private sector. Within these management models, NPM has further emphasized the significance of citizens who are the recipient of services from the public sector.

Does digital transformation have the ability to better “fit” NPM concepts into public management? Looking at digital transformation developments in the private sector, 85% of organizations have plans to adopt a digital-first business strategy within the next two years with the aim to significantly transform their business, or risk falling too far behind their competitors (Morgan 2019). If the public sector is to follow the path of the private sector, then local governments must place emphasis on a greater adoption of digital transformation.

As the OECD (2016) states: “the emerging digital transformation of public welfare services seems to complement, leverage and extend implementation opportunities in line with fundamental NPM ideas, rather than breaking with them.” Regardless of the management labels, it is clear that by leveraging connected digital technologies, digital transformation could help drive modernization in the public sector.



DEFINING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND ITS RELEVANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN ONTARIO

Like most “tech” related trends, digital transformation seems to have become a concept that has lost its meaning in the technology industry due to its general applicability and overuse. From a practitioner perspective, it has become a term that is interchangeable with modernization (Newman 2017). From a marketing perspective, it seems to be a term used to describe a solution that meets every requirement of an organization.

Digital transformation can be defined within the context of this article as “the use of technology to radically improve organizational performance and accessibility by fundamentally transforming processes, services and business models.”

In an attempt to define digital transformation within the context of local government and placed within the theoretical framework of NPM, both Gruman’s (2016) and Westernman, Bonnet and McAfee’s (2014) definitions will be combined. Digital transformation, therefore, can be defined within the context of this article as “the use of technology to radically improve organizational performance and accessibility by fundamentally transforming processes, services and business models.”

Organizations across the globe are under increasing pressure to apply digital technologies to renew and transform their business models (Kohli and Melville 2019) in an effort to remain relevant. In particular, local governments in Ontario are under pressure to renew and transform their business models as Steve Clark, Minister of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, announced a one-time funding investment for many of Ontario’s small and rural municipalities aimed at improving local service delivery and efficiency across the province’s municipalities (Ontario Government 2019).

The benefits of digital transformation can be significant (Provost and Fawcett 2013). Deloitte found that 71% of digitally maturing companies say they are able to attract new talent based on their use of digital technologies (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019; Kane et al. 2016). As well, organizations with a greater adoption of digital transformation (i.e. greater digital maturity) are seeing significantly better financial performance than similar organizations within their industry with a smaller digital footprint (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019).

DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The majority of academic literature related to digital transformation focuses on the journey that private firms have taken in adopting digital initiatives as a way to drive a competitive advantage through technology and innovation rather than the applicability of digital transformation in the public sector. However, this literature is important as it helps to identify what factors have commanded successful digital transformation and what factors created challenges.

A number of key themes that have led to successful digital transformation within organizations are revealed in the literature. These include: support from senior management; understanding an organization’s attitude towards the use of technologies; organizational change management; skills assessment and workforce development; and the development of an organizational digital strategy.

4. PUBLIC SECTOR APPLICATION AND RELEVANCE

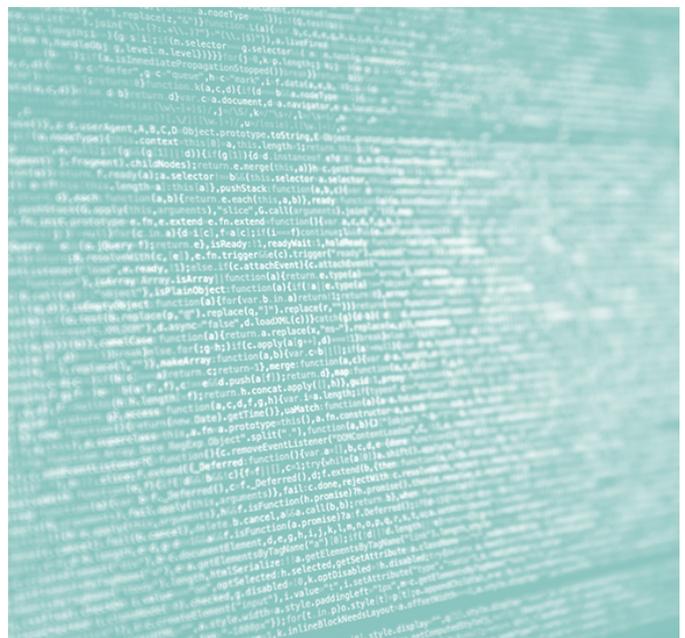
It is clear that public and private sector entities are under constant pressure to innovate their business models, reduce costs, and offer services in a way that customers wish to consume such services. This dynamic environment has made digital transformation a priority for organizations across industries (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019).

In an attempt to triangulate the factors from the academic and practitioner-based literature review on successful digital transformation, Deloitte's report (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019) was used to discuss and compare the findings. The survey was conducted in November 2018 by Deloitte, which asked 1,200 US-based executives to assess their organization's approach to digital transformation. The respondents included those who reported that they were somewhat or highly knowledgeable about their organization's digital transformation efforts and were from organizations of at least 500 people. These factors were then discussed within a local government context to understand the potential impacts these factors may have on a local government's ability to undertake digital transformation.

The first factor, "commitment and support of senior management or senior leadership," will be discussed in the following section.

Existing academic literature on public and private sector digitization recognizes that digital transformation is dependent upon the support from senior management, as digital transformation will more than likely cut across all functional areas of the organization, with a high potential to transform existing business models and administrative structures. As some functional areas may resist change, senior management's ability to prioritize digital transformation is important to the overall success of digital transformation across the organization. Digital transformation may reveal new avenues for an organization to create value for their customers, which may need the approval of senior management.

Successful digital transformation correlates with how systematically and broadly an organization executes digital transformation (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019). Deloitte's report found that organizations with greater success in



digital transformation tend to implement digital transformation twice as broadly as less successful organizations (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019). Deloitte's report also found that functional team leaders cannot drive effective digital transformation without support from the organization's leadership as 62% of respondents identified that "strong leadership" is a top-three factor to successful digital transformation.

Local Ontario governments typically have senior management teams that drive the organizational strategies, priorities, and objectives at the direction of Council (Bryson 2018). Local governments must consider the impact of senior management's support, including how well senior management is supported by municipal council. As municipal council sets the direction and priorities of the municipality, senior management must also be able to effectively garner support from municipal council.

The second factor emphasizes the assignment of a senior manager who is accountable for the operationalization of digital transformation efforts across the organization.

Practitioner-based literature proposes that assigning a senior manager with comprehensive understanding of the ever-changing technology landscape and how technology can fit within various organizational structures is important to the overall success of digital transformation. This senior manager allows an organization to leverage the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as prioritize efforts which are required to implement digital transformation broadly across an organization.

Through an analysis of Deloitte's report, organizations that have seen success in digital transformation were more likely to leverage the assignment of a senior leader to overcome organizational barriers to digital transformation (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019: 10).

62% of respondents identified that "strong leadership" is a top-three factor to successful digital transformation.
- Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019

Deloitte's report mirrors the academic and practitioner-based literature on this factor. Without the right leadership, digital transformation efforts tend not to fulfill their potential (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019). Digital transformation requires executive sponsorship and engagement to both convey the message that digital transformation is a priority and to facilitate collaboration across the organization. Through an analysis of Deloitte's report, organizations that have seen success in digital transformation were more likely to leverage the assignment of a senior leader to overcome organizational barriers to digital transformation (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019: 10).

A local government may not have the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities within its senior management team to effectively lead digital transformation efforts. This challenge might be further emphasized by local governments that have

small senior management teams. For digital transformation to be successful, local governments must look at the knowledge, skills and abilities of existing senior managers to ensure a senior manager is assigned to operationalize digital transformation across the organization. This senior manager must have a comprehensive understanding of the ever-changing technology landscape and how technology can fit within various organizational structures and services. As these skill-sets are unique and non-traditional, organizations may need to look at hiring a senior manager with the appropriate skill-sets, who is charged with the responsibility of digital transformation.

The third factor, “organizational attitude toward the adoption and use of new technologies,” attempts to gauge an organization’s adoption and use of new technologies.

Organizations that take a higher risk toward the development and adoption of technology typically see an increase in their competitive advantage over other similar organizations within their industry. Local

governments, however, may be better suited to a less risky approach through adopting technologies and technology standards that are developed and tested by the private sector. This philosophy of technology adoption seems to align with NPM, as NPM concepts call on the private sector to lead the development of new technologies and that the public sector contracts the use of such technologies.

It is not enough to simply bring technology to the organization. Digital transformation success depends on the necessary process and operations management changes required to undergo significant organizational change (Reis et al. 2018).

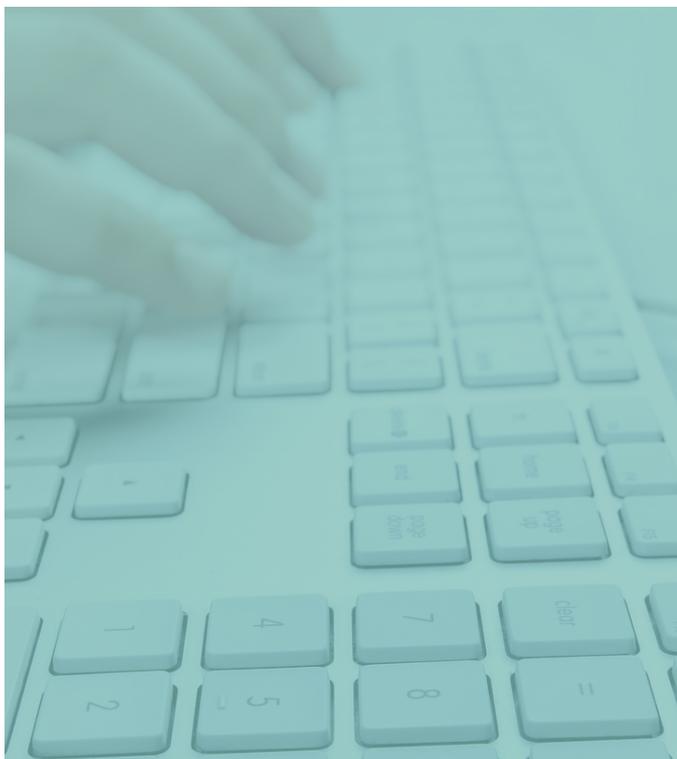
Deloitte’s report supports the importance of this factor as it identifies developing a “digital mindset” to encourage the habit of looking at old challenges and processes through a new lens. This habit provides opportunity to adopt technologies in new ways (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019: 10). According to Deloitte, organizations with greater success in digital transformation were nearly four times more likely than less successful organizations to incentivize and encourage smart risk-taking to innovate and grow (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019: 11).

The fourth factor, “to what degree is an organization ready to undertake change,” attempts to understand an organization’s ability to implement change throughout all functional areas.

It is not enough to simply bring technology to the organization. Digital transformation success depends on the necessary process and operations management changes required to undergo significant organizational change (Reis et al. 2018). To successfully accomplish such significant change, people must be trained in a change process that takes into account the unique nature of information technology and digital-savviness.

Within the practitioner literature, Boulton (2019), Henley (2019), and Rosencrance (2019) recognize that there are many reasons why people generally resist organizational change within digital transformations. These reasons range from loss of status, or job security within the organization, to a fear of the unknown, or a fear of not having the required skill-sets to leverage a new digital system. For organizations undertaking





digital transformation, practitioners suggest having a change management strategy to ingrain a positive culture that supports ongoing change.

According to Deloitte (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019), 32% of respondents listed “culture resistant to change” as a top-three challenge to digital transformation. Many public sector organizations lack a formal change management program (Al-Alawi et al. 2019). Given that local governments are consistently facing change, it is difficult to ascertain why the public sector has traditionally ignored formal change management programs. NPM’s call to reduce government could lead us to assume that local governments simply do not have the human resource capacity to engage in formal change management processes. The application of change management remains a relatively under-researched area within the public sector (Piercy, Phillips, and

Lewis 2013). However, Santhidran, Chandran, and Borromeo (2013) identify that organizational change is an issue of growing interest by researchers and practitioners in the public sector. These research efforts are timely and could better inform practitioners about their change management struggles to ensure greater success within digital transformation efforts.

The fifth factor, “skills assessment and workforce development,” requires that an organization look at what knowledge, skills and abilities are already ingrained in the organization, while emphasizing workforce development to build digital-savviness.

As digital transformations are often accompanied by changing skill-sets, the importance of training and development of existing and new staff must be addressed. Digital transformation requires new knowledge, skills, and abilities that involve the extraction and exchange of data as well as analysis and conversion of same into actionable information. Understanding the current knowledge, skills and abilities of an organization through a skills assessment is imperative for digital transformation success. This assessment allows an organization to identify existing knowledge, skills and abilities while understanding the gaps that may exist. Successful digital transformation requires that an organization develop a wide range of capabilities which will vary in importance based on the business context and the organization’s specific needs.

According to separate research completed by Deloitte and MIT Sloan Management Review, the number one operational and cultural challenge that organizations face is finding, training and retaining the right talent (Palmer 2019). Organizational training programs must be redeveloped to focus on digital competencies. Organizations that have been more successful in digital transformation are almost five times more likely to help employees develop digital skills and are more than six times more likely to leverage flexible labour sources to fill unique business requirements where skills are hard to train in a timely way (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019).

Local governments could leverage the capabilities of a consultant in this space to help drive this factor forward. According to the literature, a skills assessment and associated workforce development strategy must be an organizational-wide endeavor as digital transformation cuts across all functional areas of an organization.

The sixth factor, “strategic planning and management,” describes the importance of having a digital strategy while attempting to understand an organization’s ability to formalize strategic planning and management.

Most organizations have used digital technology in a tactical sense—to bring immediate and short-term benefit to key functional areas of the organization. Due to the far-reaching consequences of digital transformation, an organization’s willingness to undertake strategic planning is an important factor to consider, as the role of humans, organizational culture, and the need for formal strategic planning are “at the heart” of successful digital transformation (Heavin and Power 2018; Matt, Hess, and Benlian 2015).

As technology has always been a disruption to traditional models, the speed of technological change seems to be accelerating

- Henley 2019

Practitioners complement the academic perspective by recognizing and promoting the adoption of digital strategies as a key factor that champions successful digital transformation. Practitioners find that digital strategies help to streamline processes, engage appropriate resources, and increase the pace in which organizations digitally transform. A digital strategy provides a framework that an organization can use to implement and harmonize digital transformation across the organization.

As strategic planning identifies priorities to meet organizational goals, Deloitte’s report further emphasizes the importance of developing a digital strategy as 45% of respondents identified a “lack of focus/prioritization” created a major barrier to successful digital transformation. As well, 65% of organizations with successful digital transformations report that having a consistent digital vision and strategy is a top-three factor which contributes to successful digital transformation efforts.

Local government organizations, including their communities, face numerous challenges. These challenges include technology, population and demographic changes, health care, and the environment, and they require deliberate and calculated responses to ensure successful outcomes (Bryson 2018). As technology has always been a disruption to traditional models, the speed of technological change seems to be accelerating (Henley 2019).

Finally, the seventh factor, “evaluation and continuous improvement,” seeks to understand an organization’s commitment to program evaluation and ongoing improvement of digital transformation efforts.

Through the literature review, academic discourse within the field of digital transformation seems to be light on program evaluation and continuous improvement. Matt, Hess, and Benlian (2015) acknowledge that digital transformation success is found through evaluating current digital transformation efforts while recognizing that technology is in a constantly changing state. An organization must be committed to continuous improvement of existing programs and services.

The practitioner-based literature also seems to be scarce on program evaluation and continuous improvement within digital transformation discourse. This scarcity could be due in part to limited resources to evaluate digital transformation effectively, while maintaining the concept that technology and digital transformation are ever-changing.



The concepts of program evaluation and continuous improvement are derived from the theoretical framework of NPM, which places emphasis on performance management and program evaluation within the context of the public sector. As NPM is a concept that drives public sector modernization, program evaluation and continuous improvement methodologies are not unusual to local governments (McDavid 2013). Program evaluation is seen as a mechanism that informs decision-makers' actions relative to the program which is being evaluated (McDavid 2013). As digital transformation can be considered a program that reaches across an organization, it is just as important to measure the effectiveness of digital transformation within local government organizations. By understanding the digital transformation program objectives and the anticipated outcomes, digital transformation program implementers and evaluators can make evidence-based decisions as to how the program needs to be adjusted along the way. Through program evaluation and continuous improvement, digital transformation within local governments will have a greater opportunity for success.

Deloitte's report (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019) gives consideration to additional factors that were not revealed through the academic and practitioner-based literature review, which could lead to the identification of underlying assumptions by scholars and practitioners. First, Deloitte's report calls on organizations to invest in flexible and secure information technology infrastructure that balances security and privacy requirements with the ability to adjust capacity according to business demand. Without reliable information technology infrastructure, it will be difficult for digital transformation to take place. Second, upgrading legacy systems was a top-three challenge cited by respondents for digital transformation. Organizations must understand the investment they are willing to make to their information technology requirements to ensure that legacy systems are no longer a barrier to digital transformation. The third challenge that Deloitte's report identifies is information technology and digital transformation funding. Successful digital transformation correlates with better financial performance (Gurumurthy and Schatskey 2019: 14). Public sector organizations must be willing to invest in their digital journey. Without investing in the necessary information technology required to deliver digital services, including the digital transformation itself, organizations will not be able to adopt successful digital transformation.



5. SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION RELEVANCE

As digital transformation is a fairly new subject in academic settings, it was not difficult to find success factors that led to successful digital transformation, including factors which challenged digital transformation. However, assessing an organization's readiness to undertake digital transformation was a question left unanswered from the literature review. For this reason, this article proposes a conceptual organizational readiness checklist for local government.

...a conceptual
organizational
readiness
checklist for local
government.

Academics and practitioners agree that the following important factors lead an organization through successful digital transformation:

- Support from senior management
- Assignment of a senior manager to operationalize digital transformation
- Organizational attitude toward change management
- Organizational skills assessment and workforce development
- Strategic planning and the development of a digital strategy.

These factors were further validated through Deloitte's report, which also gives consideration to additional factors that may have been taken for granted within the academic and practitioner-based literature. These factors include: implementing appropriate information technology infrastructure required to deliver reliable digital services, upgrading legacy information technology systems to support new forms of digital transformation, and ensuring information technology infrastructure, and the digital transformation itself, is effectively funded.

Table 1 provides an overview of the resulting factors, including whether they were drawn from the academic or practitioner-based literature. Table 2 provides a readiness checklist for local governments.

Table 1: Success Factors of Digital Transformation

FACTORS FROM LITERATURE REVIEW	ACADEMIC	PRACTITIONER
Support from Senior Management	●	●
Senior Manager Assigned to Digital Transformation	●	●
Organizational Culture / Attitude Toward Change Management	●	●
Organizational Skills Assessment and Workforce Development	●	●
Strategic Planning and the Development of a Digital Strategy	●	●
Organizational Attitude Toward Use of Technologies	●	
Commitment to Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	●	

Table 2: Digital Transformation: An Organizational Readiness Checklist.

QUESTION (OR SUCCESS FACTOR)	ORGANIZATIONAL CONSIDERATION
1. Does the organization have commitment and support from senior management?	Yes / No
2. Is there a senior manager who has a comprehensive understanding of technology, and how it can be used within the various functional areas of an organization, who is assigned, and is responsible for the operationalization of digital transformation across the organization?	Yes / No
3. What is the organization's attitude towards new technologies, including its ability to exploit these technologies?	<i>High:</i> Development of technology standards within an organization. <i>Low:</i> Adoption of existing technology standards within an organization.
4. To what degree is the organization ready to undertake change?	<i>High:</i> Organization has developed a change culture. Formal change management processes in place. <i>Low:</i> Organization has a difficult time adopting change initiatives. No formal change management processes in place.
5. Has an organization-wide skills assessment been completed?	Yes / No
6. Is the organization capable of undertaking a strategic planning initiative in order to develop a digital transformation strategy?	Yes / No
7. What is the level of organizational commitment to ongoing assessment, evaluation and continuous improvement?	<i>High:</i> High attention is paid to evaluation and continuous improvement as major factors when developing and monitoring programs and services. <i>Low:</i> Evaluation and continuous improvement are not prioritized within the organization.



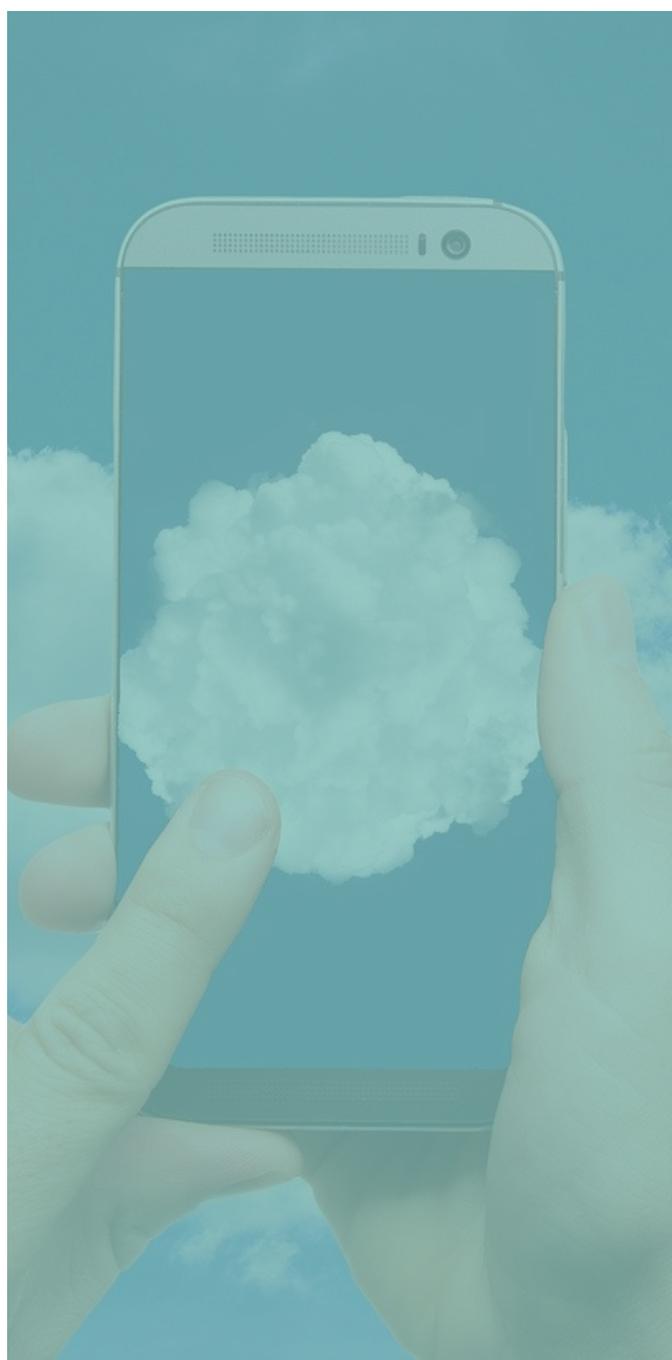
The following sections address the components of the conceptual organizational readiness checklist. The checklist is not intended to be a comprehensive organizational assessment tool. Rather, its purpose is to recognize factors that have been identified as contributors to digital transformation success and to promote organizational-wide discussion.

Question 1 in Table 2 is designed to encourage an organization to reflect on whether its senior management is committed to digital transformation. If not, then an organization must consider what strategies it needs to develop and implement, to gain that commitment. If senior management is found to be committed, then question #2 can be considered.

Question 2 recognizes the importance of having a senior manager who has a comprehensive understanding of technology, including the way in which it can be ingrained in the organization, and who is assigned the responsibility of digital transformation. Otherwise, if an organization has the required knowledge, skills and abilities within its existing senior management team, the organization can move on to question #3.

Question 3 attempts to understand the organization's attitude toward the adoption of technology by encouraging discussion and reflection. Organizations considering this question could conceptualize its discussion by placing relevant variables on a continuum. At the low end, an organization recognizes that it may not wish to take the risks associated with developing technology and creating technology standards which fit its organizational requirements. At the high end, an organization wishes to take the risk through the development of technology or technology standards. The risk could be an investment into a technology that does not meet the requirements of the organization and is then perceived to be a failure resulting in a poor investment of public funds.

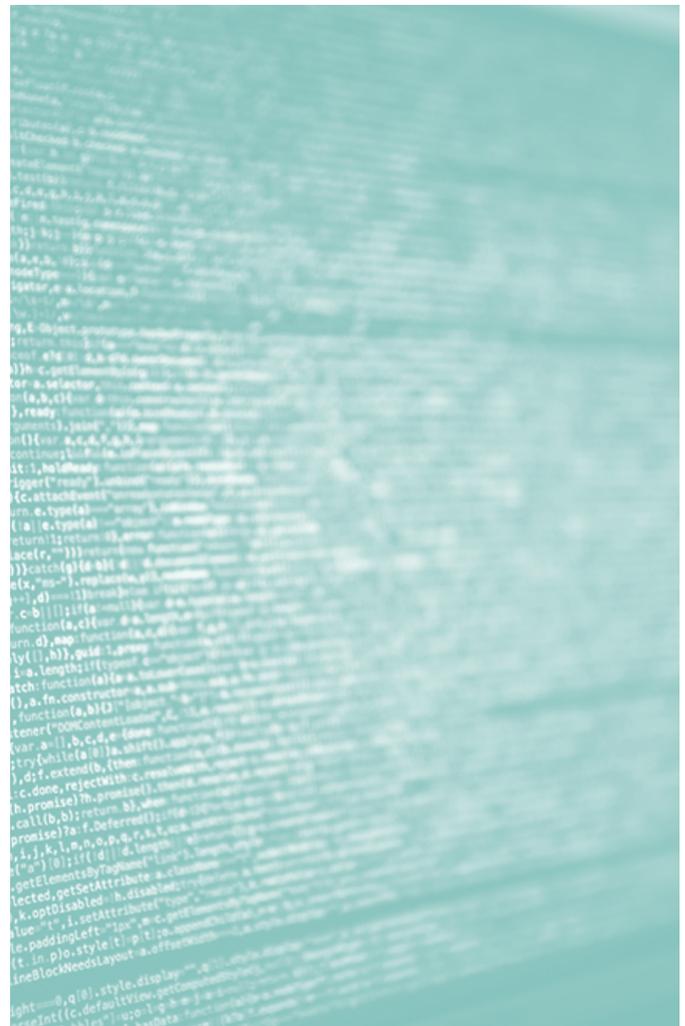
Question 4 requires an organization to reflect on its existing organizational context related to change management. The literature recognizes the importance of ingraining change management practices into the organization's culture and the existence of a formal change management program. This question has been placed on a conceptual continuum to assist with visualizing the organizational perspective relative to change management. If the organization is at the higher end of the spectrum, the fifth question of the checklist can be considered. Otherwise, the organization must consider how it can develop strategies and programs to ingrain change management.



Question 5 focuses on the importance of recognizing whether an organization has the appropriate knowledge, skills and abilities to undertake digital transformation, including the necessary capabilities required to sustain the ongoing use of the digital transformation. Through a skills assessment, an organization can understand what knowledge, skills and abilities it currently has in its inventory and inform the development of a workforce development strategy. By doing so, the organization can ensure that digital-savviness is ingrained in its workforce during the initial implementation of digital transformation, including its ongoing operationalization and sustainability.

Question 6 captures the organization's ability to undertake strategic planning through the development of a digital strategy. This factor assumes that senior management is committed to digital transformation, which allows for the prioritization and resource allocation to digital transformation efforts. It is important for an organization to prioritize the appropriate resources to develop a digital transformation strategy.

Question 7 is designed to understand an organization's commitment to ongoing assessment and continuous improvement of digital transformation efforts. As NPM coupled with the literature on digital transformation identifies the importance of program evaluation and continuous improvement, this question can be placed on a conceptual continuum to visualize an organization's position relative to the maturity of its program evaluation and continuous improvement efforts. If a local government organization finds itself at the low end of the continuum, it must consider ways to improve its program evaluation and continuous improvement efforts to ensure digital transformation success.



The checklist is designed to encourage discussion relative to key success factors that will provide some level of insight into the organization's capabilities to successfully undertake digital transformation. Through these discussions, organizations can approach digital transformation in a more informed and systematic way to increase the likelihood of success.



6. CONCLUSION

The literature review, discussion and analysis, and the comparative analysis of Deloitte's report (2019) have shown that there are several key factors to successful digital transformation:

- Having support from senior management
- Assigning digital transformation to a senior manager
- Gauging organizational attitude toward change management
- Completing an organizational skills assessment and creating a corresponding workforce development strategy
- Strategic planning and the development of a digital strategy
- Assessing the organization's attitude towards the adoption and use of technologies
- Committing to ongoing evaluation and continually improving digital transformation.

In response, the conceptual organizational readiness checklist was proposed to assist local governments in making a digital transformation, however it has not been tested for effectiveness or employed in practice.

This article consequently proposes a conceptual organizational readiness checklist that has been untested in a local government setting. Further research should leverage the readiness checklist within a local government setting prior to undertaking digital transformation, while reflecting on the learnings throughout the digital transformation.

It is important to note that the proposed conceptual organizational readiness checklist takes an inward-facing perspective of digital transformation. Public sector organizations owe it to themselves and the general public to also understand their community's readiness for digital transformation. As much of the community will be consuming public sector digital service models, the public sector should look at their community's digital literacy or include within their digital strategy an objective to assess their community's digital literacy. As digital services require broadband access and adoption within their community, public sector organizations owe consideration to their community's ability to "get online".

Digital transformation is a constant journey with no defined destination. Once organizations enter the digital arena, they must continue to analyze their existing products, services and business models through the ever-changing digital lens.

Public sector organizations owe it to themselves and the general public to also understand their community's readiness for digital transformation.

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