



# FOUR INSIGHTS ON THE CULTURE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TODAY

*Key insights on creating a culture of transformation that strengthens and reinforces an organization's business agility through people, process, and technology.*

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# THE STATE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS DISRUPTED

Welcome to *Four Insights on the Culture of Digital Transformation*, which presents our perspectives on both the challenges facing organizations today and the interests and desires of employees to participate and contribute to the successful implementation of new digital technologies and business processes.

Our perspectives are informed by both our ongoing research and analysis engagements with vendors, providers, businesses, and consumers and a primary research study we completed in the first half of 2020, involving executives, technology leaders, and general employees from over 500 enterprises in North America and Europe.

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Faced with uncertainty and disruption, businesses and organizations are finding themselves in a situation vastly different than that of just a year ago. Today's workers are increasingly distributed and remote, often working from the home or in offices or facilities that have been reconfigured to maximize social (physical) distancing.

**It's a brave, new virtual world, and one where digital disruption often outpaces digital transformation.** As a result, many organizations are rapidly developing, adjusting, or accelerating digital transformation plans and strategies to meet this new virtual reality, and provide the technical and business agility and adaptability they need to update and adjust their business processes, from how their employees work and collaborate to how they engage with their partners, suppliers, and customers.

But strategies can vary significantly in their design and effectiveness, and not all strategies have been operationalized into active initiatives. Having a plan is not the same as implementing a strategy, and not all strategies are on point.

Recent research by the Futurum team (independent of this study) indicated that over two-thirds of enterprises feel that while their existing (pre-2020) digital transformation strategies have been an asset in adapting to recent change, they are not as far along in implementing their plans as they'd hoped, leaving many organizations unable to adapt and maintain continuity of their business operations.

But even for those organizations whose plans and strategies for digital transformation anticipated a shift to a more mobile, remote workforce and customer base, the magnitude of the abrupt change that has taken place during 2020 has overwhelmed the ability of many IT organizations and business units to meet the remote working needs of their employees.

What happens when IT can't meet employee needs? That's when shadow IT comes into play, a disruptor of digital transformation plans and a significant concern moving beyond 2020.

Over 40 percent of enterprises queried by Futurum in mid-2020 (as part of a separate research study) indicated they've decided to cede control to remote and work-from-home users, allowing them to select and deploy their own personal tools of choice for remote communications and collaboration, setting up what we believe will be a serious shadow IT and technical support challenge in the years ahead.

**Digital Transformation starts with the customer.** It's not just businesses that have been disrupted or forced to adapt, it's the customers, consumers, and users as well who are now in a position where the majority of their purchasing or information engagements are now virtual, online, and remote. And that presents a unique challenge to businesses, brands, and organizations.

#### KEY INSIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS

**ONE** Employees care about digital transformation and want to be part of the solution.

**TWO** Barriers to success must be addressed holistically.

**THREE** Digital Transformation leadership at the top drives results all the way down.

**FOUR** Digital Transformation is a journey, not an event.

If an organization can't meet internal employee and business demands, how will it meet — and exceed — the expectations of its customers, clients, and users?

We believe that the most trusted and valued organizations are those that place their customers, clients, or users at the center of all business decisions and let their needs and expectations drive both business and technology decisions.

Particularly during a time of disruption, organizations need to start their digital transformation journey with the customer. We think of it this way: digital transformation, and the business agility and adaptability it provides, isn't a means to get to the customer but, rather, a means to enable a journey with the customer.

**It takes the entirety of the enterprise to transform an enterprise to meet the needs of the customer.** We believe it's essential to the success of any technology, process, or business initiative that employees (including end users) are engaged to both inform and support these initiatives that ultimately support the customer.

And enterprise employees agree.

Over 90 percent of general employees queried for this study said they'd like to be more involved in helping their company implement new technologies and digital transformation initiatives, yet more than half of them say they don't know how to make it happen.

But if it's typically difficult for employees to become part of, and support, digital transformation initiatives, what happens during a time of disruption when business executives and IT leaders are reacting on the fly to adapt, accelerate, or even develop new plans as quickly as they can?

We believe it's not only possible but very likely that those making or influencing decisions are doing so unintentionally in an ad-hoc bubble, leaving not just general staff and employees out of the process but also neglecting to involve those charged with the day-to-day implementation and support of digital technologies and transformation initiatives.



## FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

For this study, we engaged with a wide range of individuals across a variety of industries and geographies. As our goal was to better understand the complexities of digital transformation within the enterprise, from goals and drivers to leaders and barriers, we engaged with both influencers and decisions makers (top executives, technology and business leaders), as well as operational staff that support these initiatives and general employees and users who use these technologies in their daily activities.

Collectively, these perspectives paint a picture of a digital transformation culture, and a culture that has both commonalities and differences. Perhaps most striking in the research was the overwhelming 90 percent-plus of all individuals saying they wanted to be more involved in their organization's digital transformation initiatives, from executives and leaders to general staff.

A well-planned and carefully executed digital transformation initiative can provide the business agility and adaptability that organizations need to survive in the digital era, but only if the entire organization, from executive leaders to entry-level staff, is informed, mobilized, and working towards a common goal.

We believe that digital transformation is a journey, and not a destination. As such, it's important that a culture of transformation exist within an organization, one that is woven into the fabric of the business, its employees, and the decisions they make.

The only way that such a culture can exist is if its leaders are willing to encourage and nurture it on an ongoing basis, ensuring that those who want — or need — to participate are able and that all share a set of common expectations, goals, and responsibilities. This goes beyond training on the latest tools and processes and begins with educating on the need and value of business agility and that capability to rapidly adapt to changing market conditions and customer requirements.

While the current global situation has forced many organizations to alter, accelerate, or even question their previous plans and strategies, we believe it's critical that a culture of transformation is maintained and embraced, as it is needed now more than ever.

The decisions and investments organizations make today will form the basis of new business and operational models that will not revert back to a pre-2020 state anytime soon. Ensuring a culture of transformation exists today will help ensure that this year's decisions not only address current needs but also provide for long-term agility and adaptability to deal the challenges ahead.

The Futurum Research Team

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### ABOUT THIS PAPER

This paper and our perspectives are based on both our experience as researchers and analysts in the business and technology sectors, as well as the results of a recent research study conducted in partnership with Pegasystems during the first two quarters of 2020 involving over 500 organizations across North America and Europe.

The research spanned February to April 2020, beginning just as the pandemic was becoming known, but concluding after many businesses and communities had been directly impacted.

### RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

A summary of the demographics of the study are included in the Appendix.

# ONE EMPLOYEES WANT TO BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

*The transformation of any business or organization is most effective when buy-in and support is provided from all parties.*

Across all industries and demographics, we are seeing overwhelming interest from enterprise employees in helping their organization implement new technologies or digital transformation initiatives. This is not unexpected, as the future of business and individual lives is increasingly tied to the digital future and the desire to be part of a solution or process that impacts an employer or an employee's own job can be compelling.

*Employees want to be more involved in Digital Transformation initiatives, from the CEO to the general staff.*

**94%**

Percent of survey respondents across all demographics and responsibilities indicated that they would like to be more involved in helping their company implement new technologies or digital transformation initiatives.

But what is a bit concerning is how many who say they simply don't know how to be more involved, and this is a trend that spans all employee roles and titles.

## Who wants to participate but doesn't know how?

- 26% of all employees
- 22% of influencers and decision makers
- 44% of general staff and employees

## How exactly do they want to help?

As part of our research, we queried enterprise employees on the most significant ways they felt they could participate in and help their company successfully complete digital transformation initiatives. As it turns out, simply participating in any way could be considered beneficial.

Here are the top ways employees believe they can assist with digital transformation initiatives:

1. Helping train colleagues to utilize new technologies (50%)
2. Being open minded about using new tools (40%)
3. Voicing positivity about company change initiatives (35%)
4. Recruiting new talent with strong digital experience (33%)
5. Promoting cross-team discussions and collaboration (27%)

Do decision makers and influencers in the digital transformation process view their roles differently than general employees? Not significantly. Both groups see their value in being open minded about new technologies, their role in training others, and being supportive of new technologies and change.

General employees and staff also expressed a strong interest in helping by simply becoming better educated about emerging technologies and in helping others by offering to lead initiatives (potentially impacting their team). But currently, they report they feel left out of the process.

Only 10 percent of general employees and staff strongly agree that they know how they can contribute to their company's digital transformation efforts. So, while there is desire, the ability to contribute is lacking.

## FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

We're encouraged by the fact that employees actively want to participate, and that they understand that often the best way they can assist is by becoming better educated and helping those around them adapt to change.

We see the ability to create an organizational culture that supports ongoing digital transformation initiatives as essential to business survival in the 21st century. And employees are clear that they want to be part of that culture, to participate, and be a valued member of team.

### *Three questions for the enterprise...*

- ▶ Does your organization invite all employees to be part of the "digital" conversation?
- ▶ Is there a system in place to help educate employees on the value of digital transformation initiatives and how they can play a role in the success of the company?
- ▶ Are there systems in place to share the successes of both contributing employees and the overall initiative?

## TWO BARRIERS TO SUCCESS MUST BE ADDRESSED HOLISTICALLY

*The barriers to a successful digital transformation are as plentiful and diverse as the goals that drive the process to begin with, and that diversity requires a holistic approach, as well as a focus on creating a culture of inclusion that must include all perspectives.*

Transforming an organization's technology infrastructure to enable business agility and process improvement can be a complex and challenging undertaking. Understanding how organizations can best overcome the challenges and barriers they face begins with an understanding of the goals they seek to achieve, and an understanding that those goals may vary within an organization.

### **The customer experience drives digital transformation.**

The ultimate goal of any business or technology initiative must be to improve the value offered to an organization's customers, a point reinforced by our research. 68 percent of influencers and decision makers in our study cited improving customer experiences as a very important driver for their DX initiatives.

***How important are the following drivers of digital transformation to your overall organization? (very important ratings)***

- Improving customer experiences (68%)
- Automating existing processes (67%)
- Improving or updating existing processes (65%)
- Improving the ability to innovate new products and services (64%)
- Creating a flexible, agile technology implementation capability (64%)

It's worth noting that automating or improving processes drives efficiency and accuracy which, combined with an agile technology infrastructure and the ability to innovate new products and services, are all key items in enabling an organization to deliver excellent customer experiences.

*Digital transformation goes beyond improving an organization's technology and processes, it's also about improving the customer experience.*

**68%**

Percent of DX influencers say improving customer experiences is not only very important, but that it's also the top driver behind their digital transformation strategy.

### **Operational barriers must be overcome.**

While the drivers of digital transformation point to improving customer experiences, the barriers are decidedly operational in nature. When asked to identify the barriers to successfully implementing a digital transformation initiative, 42 percent of influencers and decision makers cited a lack of technical knowledge or skills as the biggest barrier.

***Please select the (top three) barriers your organization faces in successfully implementing digital transformation:***

1. Lack of technical knowledge or skills (42%)
2. Lack of appropriate partnerships (36%)
3. Procurement or budget issues (36%)



These barriers speak directly to the need for organizations to look beyond their own teams for assistance, expertise, and funding, all of which require a high level of coordination and for different groups to have a common, focused goal. But these too can be significant challenges to overcome.

While talent, partnerships, and funding are the top three barriers enterprises face, 33 percent of enterprises cite conflicting strategies within their company as a top barrier, while 26 percent say even coordination between teams is a top barrier they must overcome.

When these barriers are not overcome, an organization's employees and customers suffer as new technologies and systems are deployed.

While 90 percent of general staff and employees say their managers encourage them to use new technologies, 78 percent say these new technologies or systems don't always do what they expect, and 47 percent say they lack support on how to use or fix problems with new systems.

## FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

The challenges and barriers faced by those tasked with implementing digital transformation initiatives are formidable and can negatively impact the value to employees and customers.

In the current business environment, where many organizations are struggling to adapt or accelerate digital transformation plans, we believe the challenges can be even greater to overcome.

As the demands to support remote employees and socially distanced customers accelerate, so too will the pressure to implement new technologies and processes, further increasing the need for a holistic and collaborative approach to digital transformation.

### *Three questions for the enterprise...*

- ▶ Do we have an accepted set of goals and drives, and have they been shared and agreed upon throughout the organization?
- ▶ How have the normal, or expected, challenges and barriers changed as business and customer needs have rapidly evolved?
- ▶ Have our processes for including and educating our employees in the implementation of new technologies and processes been updated to reflect new business conditions?

## THREE DX LEADERSHIP AT THE TOP DRIVES RESULTS ALL THE WAY DOWN

*Digital Transformation is an ongoing process that requires executive leadership to establish the right culture.*

The successful implementation of a digital transformation initiative requires a total commitment to the ongoing evolution of technology and businesses processes. We believe this type of commitment can only be sustained when it is part of an organization's culture, and that requires leadership from the top down, and our research backs it up.

### Leadership in digital transformation starts with the CEO.

While the ultimate goal of digital transformation may be business agility and improved value to an organization's customers, it has traditionally been led by technology professionals. In this study, 47 percent of enterprises said the primary leader of digital transformation initiatives was either the CIO (chief information officer) or CTO (chief technology officer).

***When it comes to digital transformation leadership, it is important that the CEO be involved.***



While in many instances, the CIO is responsible for leading digital transformation initiatives, it is of equal importance to all within an organization that the CEO be involved as well.

In fact, only 18 percent of respondents said the CEO was in charge of digital transformation. And yet, when the CEO is the leader of digital transformation, the difference is notable.

When asked to rate how well the different leaders of digital transformation understand technology and its value to the organization, 66 percent say the CEO (when leading) totally gets it, in contrast to only 60 percent for the CIO and 24 percent for the CTO (when leading).

Even looking ahead, 67 percent of organizations where the CEO leads say they expect them to be very effective in technology leadership into the future, compared to only 51 percent for the CIO and 34 percent for the CTO.

Why the CEO? As businesses and consumers become increasingly digital, digital becomes core to the business and its employees. CEOs must understand technology and its potential to effectively lead.

When we compare organizations where the CEO leads digital transformation to those led by others, the differences are noticeable.

### ***When the CEO leads, influencers and decision makers involved in the digital transformation process:***

- 52% strongly agree their company is good at innovation (vs. 44% of others)
- 52% strongly agree their company is able to quickly adapt to new technologies (vs. 42% of others)
- 52% strongly agree their company delivers best in class customer experience (vs. 40% of others)
- 52% strongly agree their company is agile in developing and operationalizing new processes (vs. 42% of others)

This is not to diminish or minimize the capabilities or role of technology leaders within an organization, but to highlight the perceived value of digital leadership as a key characteristic of the CEO. It then falls on the CEO to instill this culture of technology innovation throughout the organization.

## **FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE**

As organizations adapt and accelerate the deployment of digital technologies and new processes in response to current global events, we believe the culture and leadership of an organization will be critical in determining the success of these initiatives. Digital technologies have now become core to the success of any organization, and employees, partners, and even customers expect executive leadership to lead in this area of the business as they would any other.

### ***Three questions for the enterprise...***

- ▶ Has the role of digital transformation and technology deployment been infused into the culture and leadership of your organization?
- ▶ Do all employees understand the role that technology will play in both their day-to-day roles and in support of driving value to the customer?
- ▶ Is there sufficient training available to employees to allow them to stay ahead of technology deployments and add value and feedback up the management chain as they would for any other business issue?



## FOUR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS A JOURNEY, AND ONE THAT WORKS BEST WHEN NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

*Digital Transformation is an ongoing process — a journey — that must be coordinated at different levels to ensure no employee, or customer, is left behind.*

While we talk of digital transformation as a journey, it's really best thought of as a series of parallel journeys, each with a potentially different pace or priority, but all working together to improve the agility of a business and the ability to adapt or change as needed based on business plans or market requirements.

Where your organization is along that journey may differ from others in your industry or even within different business units with your organization (which may have vastly different technology and process requirements).

There is no singular blueprint or framework for how an organization should design or implement their digital infrastructure, nor is there a "one size fits all" approach to digital transformation.

Technologies themselves emerge and mature at different rates, often having a significant impact on the pace of specific digital transformation initiatives.

For example, over half of the enterprises we engaged for this study say they are at least 50 percent along in the adoption of technologies such as big data & analytics, cloud & mobile computing, and collaboration tools. Meanwhile,

close to 60 percent say they've only made it 25 percent or less into their adoption of robotic process automation (RPA), artificial intelligence (AI), or augmented/virtual reality (AR/VR) technologies.

*Is there a "status gap" in the progress of the digital transformation journey?*

**41%**

Percent of C-suite executives who say their organization is at least 75% along the way in their initial digital transformation process, in contrast to only 26% of senior staff (SVP, EVP, VP, BU) who would agree.

### **The role of the employee is essential.**

Digital Transformation is defined by a culture of continual improvement, both in technology and in process, involving infrastructural components and those tools used directly by employees, partners and customers. And the faster the pace, the more the need to involve all parties in the process sooner rather than later.



*Digital Transformation isn't just needed, it's expected by employees.*

**57%**

Percent of general staff employees report they expect their company to implement additional technologies on an ongoing basis without pause compared to only 28% of company leaders, who would rather take a brief pause to evaluate (39%) or even wait a year or more (32%).

In the same way that consumers have adopted and embraced digital technologies, general staff employees are eager to use new technologies and feel they offer an advantage in their job.

- 88 percent agree they like to use new technologies at work.
- 85 percent agree they are comfortable with the pace of change in their organization.
- 44 percent say their current employer is ahead of the competition in providing them with the latest technology to help them do their job and better serve their customers (only 24 percent say they feel they are behind the competition.)

The type and pace of deployment of employee-focused technologies must take into account both the needs and training requirements of employees to drive successful adoption, and that means involving employees early and often.

91 percent of general staff employees want to be more involved in the implementation of new technologies in areas as simple as becoming educated on new or emerging technologies or helping train their colleagues in the field.

**The role of the customer is at the center of it all.**

Regardless of where an organization is in the digital transformation journey, or what technologies and processes are involved, it's essential that the journey begin with the customer in mind as a starting point and not a destination. But like the concept of multiple, parallel journeys, not all customers will be on the same path or advance at the same pace.

## FUTURUM PERSPECTIVE

We believe that organizations that view digital transformation as an end state, or the implementation of specific technologies as primary goals, will miss the opportunity to create an agile infrastructure that allows a business or an organization to be agile and adapt rapidly to changing market conditions. This will clearly place these organizations at a competitive disadvantage.

Over 90 percent of influencers and decision makers believe their digital transformation initiatives will allow their organization to offer noticeably better customer experiences over the coming 18 to 24 months. We believe that can only be achieved if the customer, and by extension the employee, is used to drive the digital transformation strategy to begin with.

As recent events have shown, it's not necessarily technology itself that helps an organization overcome adversity or disruption but rather the agility that technology can offer to rapidly evolve business models, employee processes, and customer engagements. And as the pace of disruption or change increases, the role of culture and employee involvement becomes critical.

## Three questions for the enterprise...

- ▶ Does your organization have a culture that takes a long-term perspective on change and encourages ongoing transformation and development of technology to enable process change?
- ▶ Are your executives, technology professionals, and other employees aligned in the steps of your digital transformation journey, and regularly informed on its progress?
- ▶ Is the customer at the center of both your long-term strategy and the incremental steps and decisions that form the core of the implementation plan?



# CONCLUSION

## THINKING CULTURE FIRST IS KEY

There are many issues facing organizations that are either planning or in the midst of a digital transformation initiative. We believe it is critical for these organizations to welcome and include as many of their employees as possible in the most appropriate way to achieve the ultimate goals of improved business agility, the ability to adapt quickly to change, and the capability of delivering a customer-first experience to market. Successful digital transformation doesn't happen in a vacuum — it's a company-wide undertaking and one that employees genuinely want to be involved in. Front-line workers want to learn about digital transformation, and they want to be an integral part of the process.

Equally important, when transformation initiatives are widely adopted at every level throughout the organization, transformation happens. When leaders focus on creating a culture of transformation and involve everyone in the organization in the process of change, they set themselves and the organization up for success.

## OVERCOMING BARRIERS IS A COMPANY-WIDE UNDERTAKING

While there is much agreement that the goals of transformation include delivering better customer experiences, automating existing processes and improving and updating existing processes, improving the ability to innovate new products and services, and creating a flexible, agile technology implementation capacity, actually making those things happen is often easier said than done.

The key barriers that exist include a lack of technical knowledge or skills, budget issues, and the lack of the right partnerships. Organizations must realize that successful digital transformation

will, in large part, depend of course on their commitment to fund transformation initiatives, as well as their commitment to training and upskilling their current workforce. Just as critical, however, will be their ability to form strong relationships with trusted vendor partners, and work together to effect change. Successfully navigate digital transformation without strong relationships with trusted vendor partners.

## SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION LEADERSHIP STARTS AT THE TOP

Now more than ever, digital technologies have become core to the success of any organization, and employees, partners, and especially customers expect executive leadership to lead in this area of the business as they would any other. Embracing this leadership role, creating a culture of inclusivity around transformation for the organization as a whole, and recognizing and developing a strategy to surmount barriers are the keys to organizational success with digital transformation.

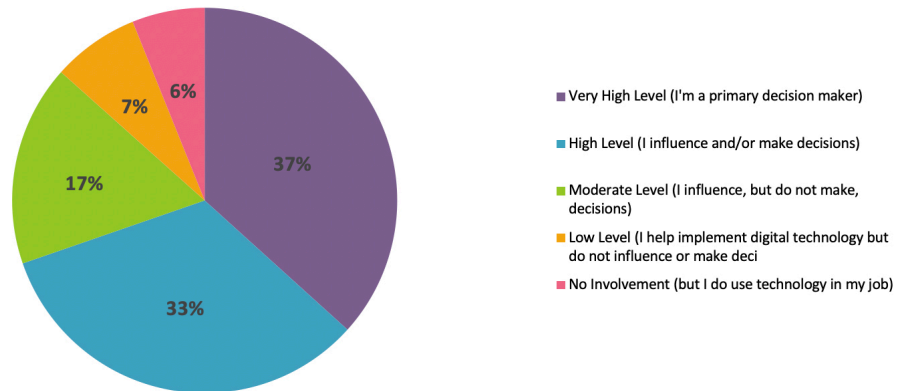
## DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS A JOURNEY — AND ONE THAT YOU'RE ALL ON TOGETHER

Last, but not least, recognizing that the process of digital transformation is a journey not a destination is important at every level within the organization. Circumstances change, customers change, needs change, and technology changes, but the one thing that remains constant is the fact that more change is ahead. There is no one-size-fits-all formula for success, but creating a culture of continual improvement, both as it relates to technology as well as processes, keeping the customer top of mind in everything you do, and also empowering and encouraging employees at all levels within the organization to be a part of digital transformation are the keys to success.



## APPENDIX: RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

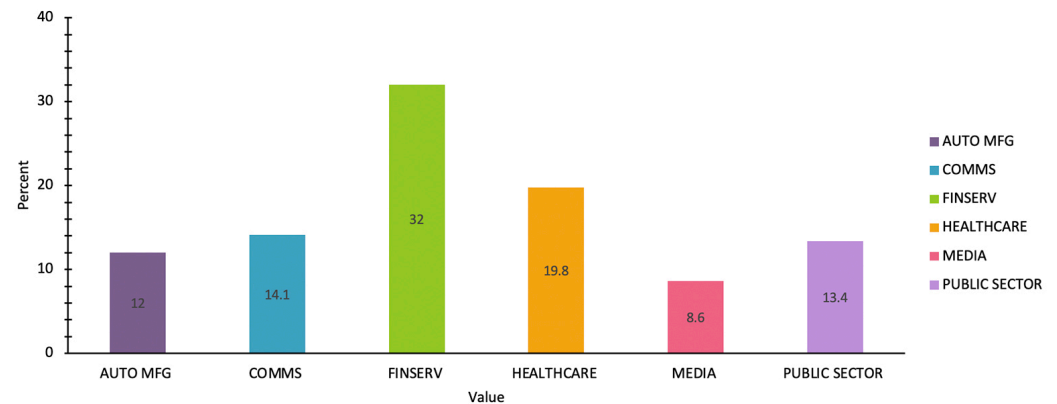
### DEMOGRAPHICS: LEVEL OF RESPONSIBILITY



QUESTION: How involved are you with the planning, implementation, management or oversight of digital transformation initiatives?

SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

### DEMOGRAPHICS: INDUSTRY



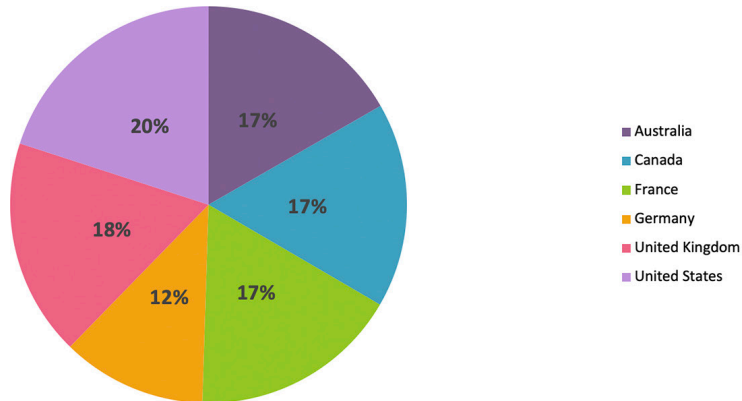
QUESTION: Do you work within one of the following Industry Sectors?

SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions



## APPENDIX: RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

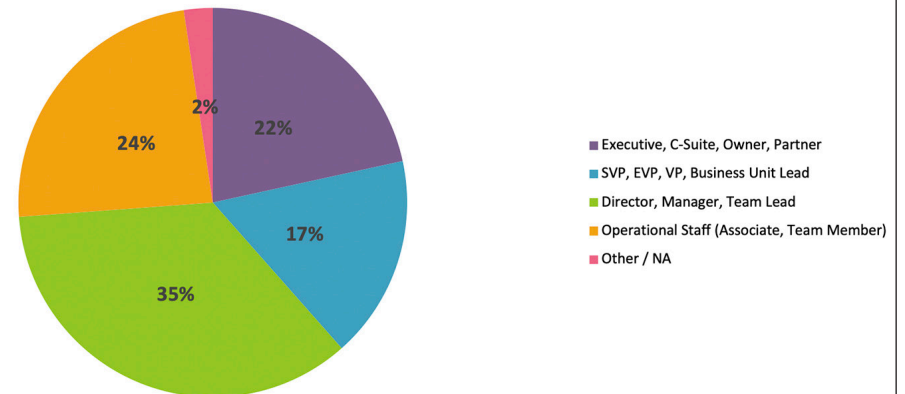
### DEMOGRAPHICS: GEOGRAPHY



QUESTION: Do you live/work in one of the following countries?

SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

### DEMOGRAPHICS: RESPONSIBILITY

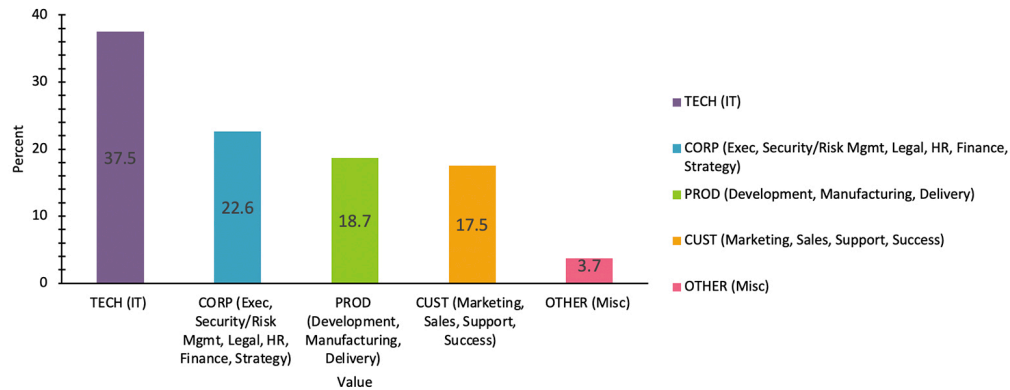


QUESTION: What is your level of responsibility within your team?

SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

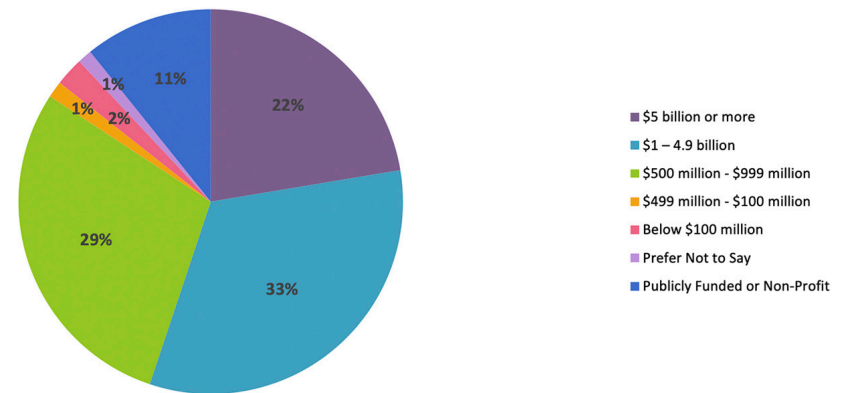
# APPENDIX: RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

## DEMOGRAPICS: RESPONSIBILITY



QUESTION: Which of the following best describes your functional area (by group) within your organization  
 SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

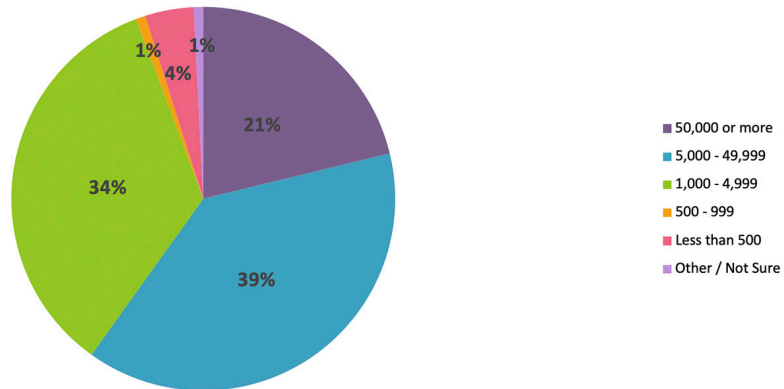
## DEMOGRAPICS: REVENUE



QUESTION: Which best describes the annual revenue (in \$USD) of your entire organization?  
 SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

## APPENDIX: RESEARCH DEMOGRAPHICS

### DEMOGRAPICS: EMPLOYEES



QUESTION: How many people does your organization employ across all locations (select one)?  
SOURCE: PEGA DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION Perceptions

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