

# 2018 Summit Curated Notes

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## Executive Summary

Our 2018 Learning Leadership Summit was led by our speaker, Brandon Carson. Brandon is the Director of Learning at Delta Airlines and author of *Learning in the Age of Immediacy: 5 Factors for How We Connect, Communicate, and Get Work Done*. His latest book explores how the digital transformation is affecting workplace performance.

In the Age of Immediacy, learners expect information to be available anytime and anywhere. Brandon gave a two-hour presentation surrounding the topics of advancing technology, digital culture, and urbanization, and how they will impact our organizations and our lives. The increased speed of business is changing our world. The only way to keep pace is to keep learning. Welcome to the Age of Immediacy.

### What is digital transformation?

*The investment in and development of new technologies, mindsets, and business and operational models to improve work and competitiveness, and to deliver new and relevant value for customers and employees in an ever-evolving digital economy.*

– Brian Solis

There are three parts affected by digital transformation: humans, the workplace, and business.

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## Humans

### Big Questions

What near-past history has lead us into the Digital Transformation? What human elements will be affected? What elements remain the same?

#### Humans are Multiplying and Creating Megacities

By 2030 there will be 8.5 billion people on Earth. Of that population, 60 million are moving to cities. In 1950, only one-third of the population lived in urban settings. Soon that proportion will be flipped, and two-thirds of Earth's population will live in cities—megacities.

- The invention of the elevator was the key. Elevators are what allow cities and megacities to exist. They're enabling the largest human migration in the history of mankind.
- Clustering together allows for greater and faster knowledge transfer – humans learn when we come together.
- According to Betsy Sparrow, Google is changing the way the human brain works.



#### Some Facts on Megacities:

- China is quintupling its urban population.
- By 2030, 1/5<sup>th</sup> of city dwellers will be Chinese.
- China is currently designing 19 city "clusters" around its three largest cities (Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Beijing), turning them into megacities. 90% of all Chinese economic development will be based in these three megacities.
- Megacities are a successful premise: knowledge transfer is easier, productivity increases, systems become more efficient.

#### Workers and Megacities

- Megacities will require people to be able to rapidly learning new job skills – all workers, at all levels, are now knowledge workers. The "shelf life" for their knowledge and skills is currently only three years—and that's still shrinking. We need to develop training plans (a "bell curve of adoption" to respond to a constant need of continuing education and changing skill sets.
- Workers will need to develop large skill sets, with near-constant learning to keep up with knowledge.
- Reskilling is and will continue to be a top priority.
  - Stop using the term "soft skills" – these are essential skills! (creativity, flexibility, problem solving, innovation, finding information, making decisions, effective collaboration)
- Predictions on how the migration to urban will impact the economy, environment and lives:
  - **Jobs:** fewer people want traditional rural / lower paying jobs
    - Robotics/AI are changing what jobs humans need to do and how they will do them
  - **Skill gaps:** the skills we need aren't in the marketplace to hire
    - How do we identify what skills we will need?

- **Human interaction:** people from widely-diverse backgrounds will be living side-by-side
  - Finding commonalities while respecting differences is important
  - Proximity increases stress; at the same time, we need to be more flexible
  - The more we're connected, the more we're alone. Research shows rising rates of depression in young people. Thinking about our corporations, we have all the automations and tools and can do all these things online, but there's nobody there to tell you where the bathroom is. How do we get people to feel included and to feel a sense of purpose and belonging?
- **Economic and business planning:** hard to do long-term strategy because the economy changes so fast
- **The Workday:** concept of what a workday is has already begun to change. Workers will be constantly "at work" even if not physically present at work. Working remotely and telecommuting will increase as transportation commutes to and from work also increase.

#### Ongoing Concerns and Questions

- Will collectivist (ex: Japan) vs individualist (ex: US) societies have a competitive advantage?
- What is the risk of placing almost every resource, people, and the economy in one place if there is a disaster?
- What is the risk of keeping our technology centralized, i.e. data privacy and hacking?
- How will human error play into the ever-growing efficiency of communication technology?

## The Workplace

What specifically will change about the workplace environment as digital transformation occurs? What is already changing?

### Foreseeable Events

- By 2025, everything will be in the Cloud, leading to largest migration in IT history
- 80% of what the workforce deals with is exception handling
- Workers will need training embedded in the workflow that they can reference or learn at the time and place of need.
- The ability to collaborate will not only be a hugely advantageous but a necessary skill

## Three Waves of Digital Transformation

1. Internet Revolution (1989 – 2000)
2. Information Revolution (2000 – 2025)
  - a. We're in this now, changing how we consume content, changing behavior patterns
3. Social Revolution (2025 – onwards)
  - a. Everybody on the planet is connect—to each other, to technology, and to information
  - b. What will being a company even mean? Will they dissolve because everyone has access to the ideas/information? Will each company train its own workforce? Conduct warfare in the place of nation-states?

## Three Switching phases

1. Paper to digital to internet content
2. Desktop to internet apps
3. Enterprise to internet data

## Business

As data becomes larger and more accurate, how will business processes change? What will be the advantages, disadvantages?

## Business Imperitives

- Leverage digital technologies to drive productivity, efficiency, and innovation.
  - Accenture reports CEO investment in technology is 60% of overall budget vs investment in employee training at 3%
  - AT&T estimates an employee's skill shelf life is 3 years; they've committed to "re-skilling" their employees

## The Five Disruptors and Their Impact on Learning Strategy

1. **Workplace Automation:** will there be a violent revolution? Will this be an easy integration and shift of people from one role to another?
  - a. IT has been hugely impacted; jobs are completely transformed/different

- b. Training plays a crucial facilitator role directing employees to resources, SME, job aids, etc.
2. **The Cloud:** everyone is there; all companies are there.
3. **Mobile:** has the most significant impact. All workers are mobile, thanks to their devices. The hardest challenge for workers is accessing the information they need at the moment they need it.
4. **Big Data:** easy to get data, but what do you do with it? How do you make it actionable? We need to leverage it in order to justify our existence to our organization, as well as to improve our services. What justifies another head count for you?
  - a. We struggle with the idea that learning ROI is based on revenue numbers only. It's hard to assess learning's effect on the bottom line. We need to instead focus on a ROLE (Return on Learning Effectiveness) model—measuring how we impact productivity and retention via learning, rather than the revenue.
5. **Internet of Everything:** Proctor & Gamble's Kevin Ashton started looking at RFID to put it in the supply chain and track things more in the 90's.

#### A Few Last Thoughts:

- **Migration:** Company time on Fortune 500 list has gone from 75 to 15; S&P Index has gone from 33 to 12  
Subscription services (Blockbuster to Netflix)
- **Consumer experience should map to employee experience.**
- HR: Hire for 2 things: people who fit your culture and will advance your business (Patty McCord) Book is "Powerful" Netflix story

#### Outstanding questions:

- How will job requirements change?
  - What will a successful digital transformation look like for a business?
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## Digital Transformation Strategy

To be successful, Learning Leaders need:

Acumen in:

- Business
- Learning
- Technology

Competency in:

- Persistence with growth mindset
- Deal with ambiguity
- Multiple stakeholder lenses
- Ability to identify and define strategy through multiple lenses and execute
- Strategy = where are we going
- Execution = how we get there
- Business and digital expertise
- Cross-functional teams
- People connected
- Culture of innovation and continuous learning

## What does digital transformation require?

- Leadership and purpose – we need to be the SMEs here, drive investments in digital expertise, capabilities, and innovation
- Understanding new behaviors – tech has changed customer/employee expectations preference, and behaviors.
- Digital Literacy – prioritize DT strategies to enhance customer experience (“urgency to get people to do things, don’t assume gig economy will keep your standards and services up”)
- Recruiting and Training Digital Talent – what’s your value proposition. Up-level employee skill sets and invest in new digital talent
- Change Management –Not just about the technology. The feeling and fear of the impact of automation, figuring out how you will drive the change management.

## Competencies for Digital Learning Leaders

You are no longer a support organization – it's time to run Learning as a business. especially when you're in a regulated environment, when there is a problem, who gets called? Training.

1. Develop persistence with a growth mindset
2. Become able to deal with ambiguity
3. Look at the world through multiple stakeholder lenses
4. Prioritize incoming needs and requests
  - a. Brandon's example: At Home Depot, his L&D department refused requests for content creation because "that's not training; that's more communications". They closed the door on potential customers and lost out. E.g., a paint merchant releases a new type of paint – employees need to know how to help customers select the color, not what differentiates this paint on a chemical level from other paints.
5. Identify and define strategy through multiple lenses, and then follow through/execute
  - a. Strategy answers the question, "Where are we going?"
6. Develop business and digital expertise
  - a. Lead cross-functional teams
  - b. Keep people connected
  - c. Drive a culture of innovation and continuous learning

### Additional Details:

- Current "merger mania" means content creators are being bought by content distributors. Everything is mixed in together now.

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## Next Steps and Resources

### Reflection

We can teach people all day, but that doesn't mean they grow, develop, or learn. How do you grow people, retain people, engage people? It's not about the technology; that's the easy part. It's not about what we can build. **It's about the relationships.**

When you ask for that meeting with executives at your company next week:

- How will you deliver L&D solutions as companies bring in more automation that changes work processes?
- How do you get company leaders to understand how these technologies impact workplace performance?

## Resources

- Nordstrom innovation center
- Documentary – *Alpha Go* (available on Netflix)
- Book – *Digitization of HR* by Josh Bersin
- Book – *Learning in the Flow of Work* by Josh Bersin
- Book – *Powerful* by Patty McCord