THE FACE OF DIGITAL LEADERSHIP

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How would you describe your organization's enterprise-wide digital transformation strategy?

There are three things that describe Dark Fibre Africa's (DFA's) digital transformation strategy:

Forward-looking: As a leader in the ICT space, DFA is very aware of the need to digitalize, but we are also aware that our digital transformation strategy will only succeed to the extent that it helps us achieve our business objectives.

Customer-focused: We are in the business of making it possible for our customers to deliver connectivity to their customers. We are in an age of rapid technological advancements that are reshaping every aspect of our lives, and we must ensure that our digital transformation strategy enables us to respond quickly and effectively to the customer-driven needs of the industry.

People-focused: The success of our digital transformation will be largely dependent on our people, so we have had to make sure that it truly equips and supports them in carrying out their varied functions. This includes improving collaboration within teams and enhancing integration across divisions. Change management is an important component of the digital transformation strategy.

What's the biggest 'win' you've achieved so far?

The right technology is integral to successful digital migration. We have adopted the **TM Forum Business Process Framework (eTOM)**, and as a result, we are reviewing our legacy systems and processes to ensure that we are set up for future success.

In all of this, I would say that the biggest win is strategic clarity for where IT is supposed to be heading as a business enabler, and establishing IT as a strategic business partner rather than a support function.

What are the biggest challenges you face in achieving your goals for digital transformation?

We realize that digital journeys are not always smooth. We have been successful in terms of buy-in from our management structures, and being a relatively young company still, we have not had too much to overcome in terms of legacy systems. Our biggest task in implementation is getting every user of the systems we adopt up to the same level of skill. Good change management remains necessary to increase their willingness to adopt new ways of doing things. With numerous users and sources, managing data quality and maintaining data integrity is another key challenge.

Digital transformation is not just about changing processes and technology; it also involves a shift in organizational culture. How is your teamwork changing and what's your role as a team leader?

One of the first things we have done is a rebranding of the IT department within DFA. We now refer to it as Digital Business Services. This has helped to create awareness amongst team leaders and members, as well as the rest of the business, about the role of the IT division. This role has moved beyond taking care of daily IT support. My role as a leader is to ensure that Digital Business Services has a clear focus and direction and makes a tangible, positive difference to employees and customers.

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