

Steering Organizational Change in an AI-Driven World: An Adaptive Leadership Framework for Digital Transformation

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Abstract: In today's fast-paced and technologically advanced business environment, organizations are under considerable pressure to integrate artificial intelligence (AI) tools to maintain competitiveness and enhance performance (Vial, 2019; Haenlein and Kaplan, 2021). However, such integration often encounters resistance, primarily due to poor communication, cultural misalignment, and lack of employee involvement (Tabrizi et al., 2019; Hiatt, 2020). This paper investigates the case of a mid-sized firm facing these very challenges during its AI adoption journey. Using the Leading Complex Change framework, the study explores how environmental conditions, internal structures, and leadership behavior interact to either enable or hinder transformation (Kane et al., 2021). Through a synthesis of scholarly research and practitioner insights, the paper proposes a hybrid change management strategy that combines structured models like ADKAR with adaptive leadership techniques. This blended approach emphasizes continuous learning, inclusive engagement, and psychological safety, which together foster higher levels of employee commitment and organizational agility. The findings offer a pragmatic blueprint with broad applicability for organizations navigating similar AI-driven transformations (Nguyen et al., 2022; Garvin and Malhotra, 2023).

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), ADKAR Model, Mid-Sized Enterprises, Digital Capability Building, Organizational Agility, AI Implementation Challenges

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