

Use Quick Wins to Speed Your Healthcare Digital Transformation



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“Digital transformation” has the *potential* to improve the efficiency and performance of healthcare organizations distinctly and ultimately lead to improved patient care quality. Fulfilling that digital potential, however, has often proved challenging for several reasons, such as misaligned digital strategies, security and privacy issues, embedded legacy systems, existing processes impacting agility, implementation delays and lack of internal collaboration.

As member expectations and market demands for digital tools and streamlined digital experiences increase, healthcare organizations need to adopt new processes and technologies to improve operations, enhance patient care and stay at least equal to (if not ahead of) the competition. Organizations that fail to keep up not only miss out

on potential gains but also risk severe operational setbacks due to continued reliance on aging and vulnerable legacy systems and processes.

Once an organization decides to embark on a digital transformation effort, achieving a successful transformation may be difficult. According to a BCG [study](#), just 30% of digital transformation efforts in all industries met or exceeded their goals or resulted in sustainable change. Healthcare lags behind other industries in part due to its reliance on legacy systems, regulatory needs and security challenges.

Quick Wins to Combat Change Resistance

What does it take for a healthcare organization to expedite and achieve a digital transformation effectively? Start with the fundamentals, like having an integrated transformation strategy with clear goals across the enterprise, highly visible and vocal top-down leadership, and exceptional tactical talent for implementation. Next, consider pursuing multiple “quick wins” designed to demonstrate success and obtain buy-in.

Why quick wins? A digital transformation is a massive change management effort, fraught with internal resistance when handled incorrectly. Conversely, nothing motivates more than success. That’s why change management guru John Kotter made achieving “quick wins” a pivotal step in his seminal [8-Step Process for Leading Change](#). Too many times, companies try to make a big leap from strategy to execution to operations without considering the many gaps that quick wins can help fill.

By front-loading your digital transformation strategy with plans for quick wins, tangible results can help dissolve inherent internal change resistance. Fundamentally, quick wins are typically about experimenting, learning, building trust, delighting colleagues and customers, and celebrating and modeling a better way. By focusing as much on the small-scale “how” of quick wins as on the bigger “what” of overall digital transformation, you’ll more likely transform internal naysayers into champions and change agents.

Your strategy should also specifically work to break down traditional internal silos and focus on meeting the needs of members, providers and employees. Many digital transformation efforts fail when leaders get caught up with some shiny, new technology but fail to think through that technology’s scalability and usability.

Attaining Your Digital Strategy “Quick-Wins”

Once your quick win strategy is set, here are five ways to attain quick wins.

1. **Name your “transformation ambassadors”** – Start with designating a specific “digital transformation team” comprised of members from across the company with digital transformation experience, as well as those with organizational experience. Ensure this team has direct access to your organization’s top leaders. These are your “transformation ambassadors.” They provide the “connective tissue” for transformation

across the company, ensuring everyone is aligned and understands their objectives. Their charter is to lead the company through the transformation and collaboratively celebrate quick wins.

2. **Improve on member experience** – Identify a single opportunity for your organization’s members to experience success, such as more efficiently finding available appointment slots online or expediting the steps to refill a prescription online. Leverage quick wins by deploying such opportunities and measuring feedback for iterative enhancements. Don’t wait for “big buckets” containing multiple new features to deploy. Having a fierce focus on member needs and a commitment to quick deployment will help an organization stay connected and remain relevant.
3. **Increase internal agility** – Being able to pivot when needed is crucial for a company that wants to meet its members’ needs. Form a single agile team with all the skill sets needed to design, build and deliver a solution. For example, at the start of the Covid-19 outbreak, healthcare organizations created immediate online solutions for their members, including chatbots and interactive symptom checkers, to quickly guide members to assistance. This was achieved by agile teams pivoting and working toward a common goal, using quick wins for speed to market.
4. **Optimize a “value stream”** – Evaluate the company’s value streams and, through a value stream mapping exercise, identify any significant wait times or waste impacting the success of that value stream. Create a quick-win scenario to change one aspect of the end-to-end value stream flow. Measure and show the success of achieving employee buy-in and trust and then continue improvements.
5. **Proof of Concepts** – New technologies are the “enablers” for product roadmaps to realize business benefits and new product opportunities. For example, determine a new technology (e.g., cloud technology) and plan a proof of concept for moving company assets into the cloud. Or, conversely, build one new, reusable component that multiple products can use. This approach enables teams to quickly determine before time and money are wasted if vendor products or service offerings will meet company needs. Often, a company will create a plan containing multiple new technologies and multiple new components resulting in deployment delays and overspending as the teams rush to implement.

In Conclusion

There are many exciting aspects to adopting quick win strategies. The continuous deliveries, learnings and trust built throughout the company that results from such efforts, and the employees who celebrate each quick win and feel included, are all benefits of a quick win approach. Equipped with the right quick win strategy and applying tactics like those suggested above, you will more likely attain a successful digital transformation.