

Digital insights: Steering the right course

There's no getting away from it – while technology-enabled change is not new, the nature, pace of change and technologies available make digital transformation quite different. But there's one thing that remains unchanged and as critical as ever: without the right kind of leadership the transformation will fail, or at best fall short. So what does it take to lead a successful digital transformation? If digital transformation is a voyage into the unknown, how do you steer the right course? This article highlights five factors key to successful digital transformation.

1. Champion connections

Joining the organisational dots is always important but never more so than with digital, where seamless connections with customers and consumers, with colleagues, co-creators and suppliers are at the heart of creating value – faster and for longer. As leader, your job is to champion these connections in all their great variety.

 In digital, better connections breed greater success.

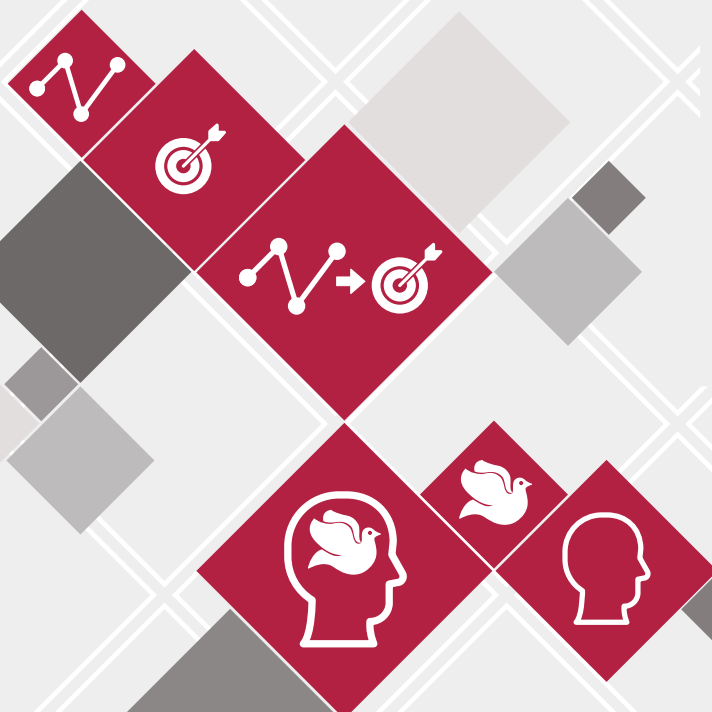
2. Do fast right

Speed's the thing with digital, but it can also be your downfall. It's tempting to rush ahead with any number of initiatives because that's what others seem to be doing. And there will be no shortage of people advising you to do just that. Pause. There's a better way to get there quicker. And it starts with taking a moment, or maybe a little bit longer, to plot out where 'there' is, and the way points to get you there.

This is where basic business disciplines, such as having a clear vision of where you want to go, a clear picture of roles and responsibilities and an approach that the whole team understands still have a big part to play. With one client, we were able to free up a logjam around different interpretations of an agile working approach with multiple delivery partners with a one-day workshop – that was a sufficient "pause"...

We're not talking about slowing down the ship but making absolutely sure it's heading in the right direction before calling "full steam ahead".

 In digital, it takes a cool head to go fast.



3. Scrape off the barnacles

Another key to success is to get rid of the things that are slowing you down – scrape the barnacles off the boat. In any big established organisation, there are bound to be many, from cultural blocks to procedural brakes. You need to lead in identifying then removing or navigating around these barriers in order to speed up the transformation and open up greater success.



In digital, it's about targeting the things that are slowing you down.

4. Find your sweet spot

There's a sweet spot between going too fast without due consideration and getting bogged down in overly designed explorations and preparations.

Digital still needs good business discipline, rigour and delivery management but done in a more flexible and adaptable way. So it's worth producing a business case – high-level at least. Less an instruction manual, more a map - this can help point to the real sources of value if the journey needs re-scoping or re-phasing. It's also worth having points to make good decisions on when to stop, speed up or change course. Think of them as islands to pause and take stock along the way.



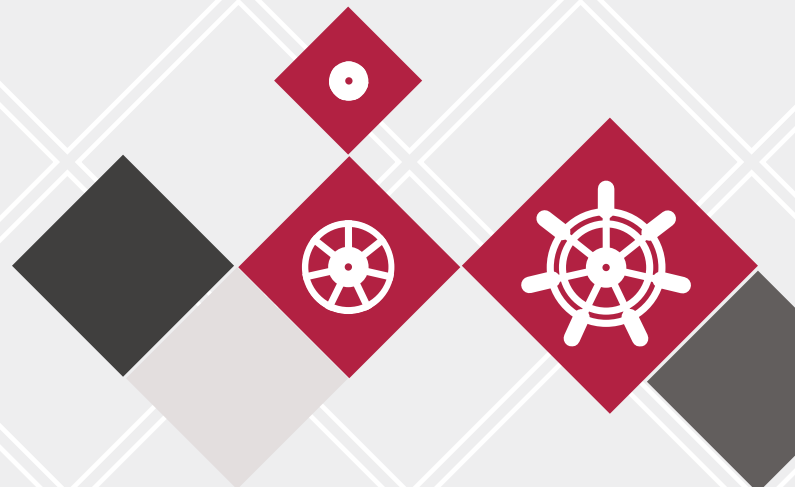
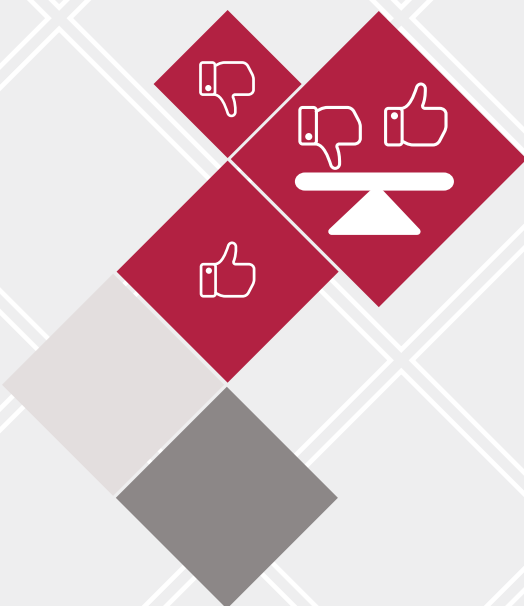
In digital, you need to find the right balance between JFDI and rigour.

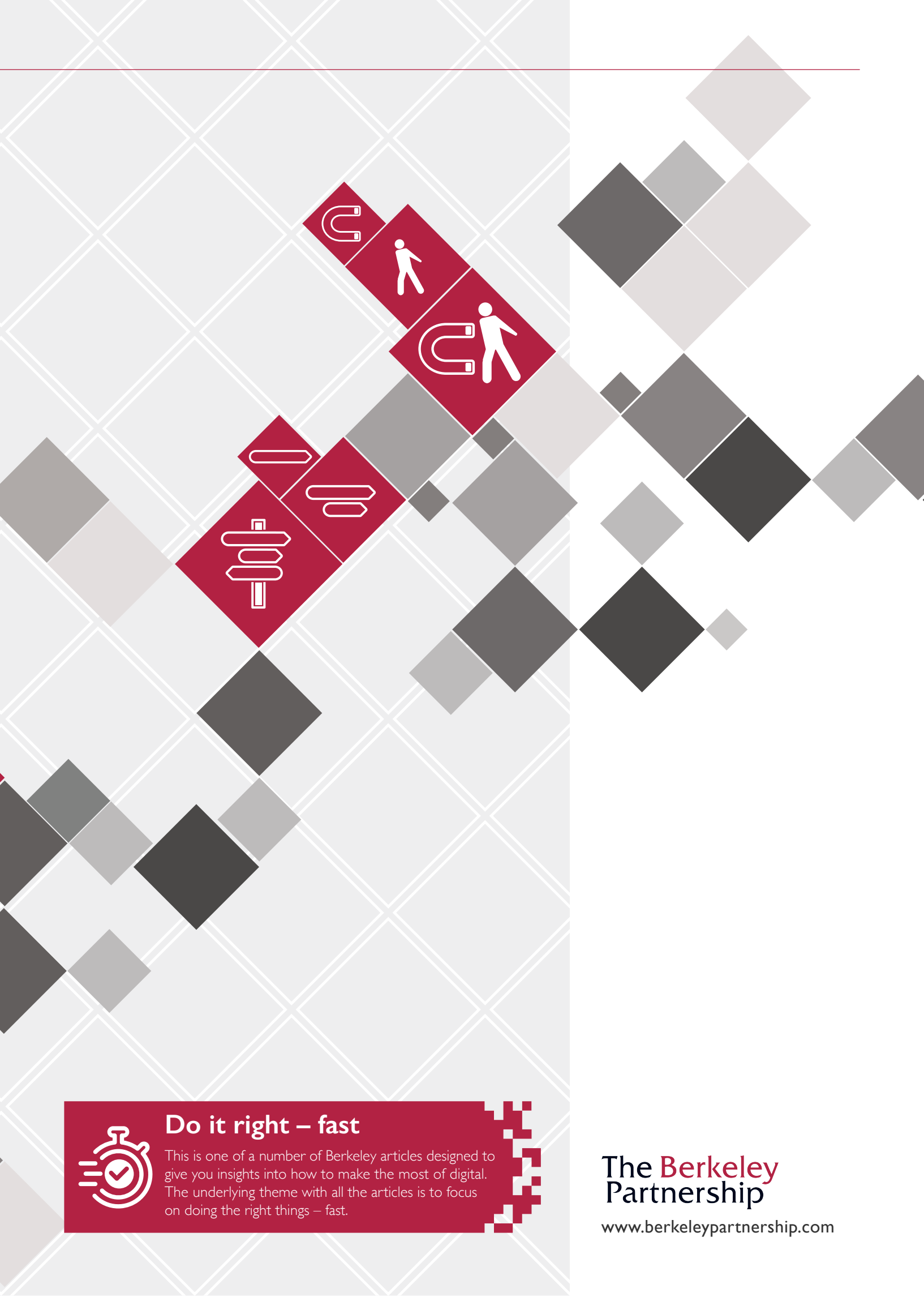
5. Focus on the harder softer side

With digital, as in any change, the harder task can still be the softer side – cultural, organisational change. It makes good sense for you to focus on leading the necessary changes that will create an organisation that best supports digital success. A more fluid, less hierarchical organisation. An organisation quick to connect and move. An organisation, and a leader, happy to live with and make the most of ambiguity. You might have the finest ship, but it is nothing without its crew.



In digital, pyramids are problems and ambiguity is awesome.





Do it right – fast

This is one of a number of Berkeley articles designed to give you insights into how to make the most of digital. The underlying theme with all the articles is to focus on doing the right things – fast.

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