

TRANSFORMATION

MASTERS

The New Rules of CIO Leadership

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“Disruption” is a common thread running through nearly every conversation I have with CIOs. Industries are changing so quickly—and technologies are evolving so rapidly—that even the most seasoned organizations are having to redesign fundamental aspects of their businesses.

So leaders are rethinking how they produce results. They’re structuring their teams differently. They’re approaching their planning processes differently. They’re making data-driven decisions differently. In short, they’re learning to lead by new rules.

But those rules are still being written and revised almost daily as we respond to the transformative changes around us.

That’s why I was so interested and excited to read this new research from Harvard Business Review Analytic Services, which Red Hat sponsored as part of The Enterprisers Project. This report offers an insightful, cross-industry look at some of the most salient issues and pressing problems CIOs are facing today, and offers clear and concrete tips for leaders seeking to address them. At a time when conventional rule books are becoming less useful, this report offers leaders some sorely needed advice and direction.

It also confirms some of my own observations: Command-and-control leadership styles are becoming obsolete. Technology-driven business projects are giving way to collaborative, co-owned initiatives. Agile teams composed of people from disparate business units are learning to experiment and innovate together. It’s truly a tumultuous—but exciting—time.

It’s also a time when helpful discussions are more important than ever. That’s why we’re sharing this report. But it’s also why we’re continuing the conversation about the future of IT leadership on The Enterprisers Project. Please join us there. We’re eager to hear your thoughts and to learn with you.



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The winds of disruption have swept aside old ideas about how a business operates and the pace at which it needs to move. The future is being built on new technologies, data, and digitization. Fast-moving, cross-functional teams of people from different parts of the organization experiment and innovate together to deliver new products and capabilities at an unprecedented pace. The old leadership rules don't apply.

In this report, we explore how leading organizations are transforming in the face of disruption so they come out as the beneficiaries and not the victims of change. More than a dozen top chief information and digital officers—true transformation masters—share their secrets for breaking down walls, resetting expectations, and leading in a completely new model. In the process, they are rewriting the rules of CIO leadership.

Driven by the Need for Speed

Two core themes inform these new rules: speed and collaboration. The shift to digital means everything must move faster: time to insight, time to market, the pace of development, and delivery. “The speed dynamic is becoming really critical for us in IT,” said Patty Morrison, CIO at Cardinal Health, a \$130 billion health care services company based in Dublin, Ohio. “We’re leveraging the cloud, DevOps, and agile methodologies ... so we can be more responsive to increasing demand.” Vanguard CIO John Marcante calls it “generating business value at startup speed.”

It also requires that IT pros collaborate in new ways across former boundaries—within IT (combining development, security, and operations); across the enterprise (for ideation, decision making, and development); and with strategic partners.

Taken together, these two imperatives fuel innovation in response to rapidly changing market forces. To achieve these goals, the 16 CIOs interviewed for this report are adopting some or all of seven new rules.

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SEVEN NEW RULES

OLD RULE	NEW RULE
1. Listen to customers	Take customer-centricity to the next level
2. Manage projects	Manage products and value streams
3. Use agile for new development	Use agile and lean methods wherever possible
4. Get details right the first time	Empower people to experiment; learn from failure
5. Manage contracts and vendors	Elevate your tech game—as a builder or orchestrator
6. Collaborate	Coauthor
7. Staff for stability	Make adaptability your team’s new power skill

RULE ONE

Take Customer-Centricity to the Next Level

Successful businesses today are changing what it means to be customer-driven. It’s not just about listening to what customers say they want, it’s about rallying all parts of the organization to quickly provide the most compelling offering. “You have to really pivot to take an outside-in view, a customer journey map view, and then gear your organization around the customer,” said Cynthia Stoddard, senior vice president and CIO at Adobe Systems, the \$7.3 billion software company headquartered in San Jose, California.

CIOs and other leaders become customer-centric through a multifaceted approach. They conduct hands-on focus groups, engage regularly with customers, work on the front lines of the business, and even co-develop products with customers.

Former American Cancer Society CIO Jay Ferro expects every team member to get hands-on with customers. “I don’t care if you’re a level 1 employee on the help desk all the way up to me, you’re going to walk a mile in our constituents’ or our customers’ shoes,” he said. At ACS, that meant listening to phone calls, fundraising, or working at an event or in a Hope Lodge, serving food and helping cancer patients. “It’s taking all of those things that we want to identify in our customer journey maps and saying, ‘Where can I plug IT in?’” said Ferro, who recently took on a new role as chief customer officer for Rackspace.

The point of this investment of time is to show employees the meaning of the work they do, Ferro said. “You’re [building] something that makes a difference in people’s lives. That is the fuel behind all the transformations that we’ve done.” This not only increases speed and relevance, “it helps employee engagement,” he said. “It helps ideation; it helps the quality of your product because people are emotionally attached to what you’re doing.”

Customers directly shape new offerings at Cardinal Health. “We don’t do work without having an external customer

involved,” said Morrison. Developers work directly with “alpha” customers to develop a minimum viable product, and “we really iterate with that external customer to evolve the product from there,” she said.

EmployBridge, the largest and fastest-growing temporary industrial staffing company in the United States, with revenue of \$2.6 billion, recently developed a new app for the 85,000 associates it employs, and customer input played a critical role in the ultimate adoption of the app. “We knew we were going to build communications, retention, and the offering and acceptance of the job into the app,” said Chris Loope, chief digital officer. “But what was going to make the associate download this app from a temporary staffing company, have it on their phone, take up that real estate, and allow it to push notifications? We weren’t sure.”

Working with a minimum viable product approach, the company held focus groups where associates performed a variety of tasks on the app and answered questions, including “what’s going to make this important to you?” Loope estimates that those focus groups were responsible for 70% of the features that went live in the first version of the app, which fueled adoption. The company, which typically employs 85,000 associates a week, had 110,000 active users by the end of the rollout earlier this year.

RULE TWO

Manage Products and Value Streams, Not Projects

Transformation masters talk about the shift from managing projects to managing products. The distinction is that projects have a start and an end date, while products are managed by a single team throughout their life spans. Each product has a product owner or manager and a team to support it.

For a digital business, this starts by getting rid of silos within IT and across the business. In the old model, said Clay Johnson, CIO at Walmart, “you basically had three different teams [for requirements, development, and support] that

potentially owned one application, and if you have three different groups or people who own it, basically nobody owns it. Think about making the right decisions for the application or product. Should it be shut down? Should it move to the cloud? How should we enhance it? What should we do with it?”

Once an IT organization shifts to a product model, with the whole product team involved, “you end up with a quicker development cycle and a better product at the end,” Johnson said.

This product model often extends beyond IT, with cross-functional teams of people from both IT and the lines of business. Product owners are generally determined based on the nature of the product. For example, at Cardinal Health, the product owner for the e-commerce system that crosses over many of Cardinal Health’s businesses is a vice president of IT. But for commercial technology, the role falls to someone in the line of business—for instance, the product manager for the customer inventory management system that Cardinal Health provides to pharmacies comes from the marketing organization, said Morrison.

Focusing on capabilities and using product road maps to discuss development has transformed the conversation between IT and other parts of the business at Adobe, according to Stoddard. “Before, you were talking about projects and milestones, and people weren’t actually clear about what they were going to get. Now they understand what they are going to get, how they can use it, and how they can plan their business around it. We’re removing any mystery about what IT is delivering to the business.”

Some CIOs view even the product focus as too limiting and instead are organizing around value streams—an approach that has its roots in lean manufacturing. Lean principles include identifying value from the end customer’s perspective (remember Rule #1); mapping the various steps in the value stream that contribute to the delivery of the product (and eliminating steps that don’t add value); and increasing process flow by eliminating bottlenecks.

AT&T Services has dedicated, full-time, cross-functional membership and co-location for a particular value stream, according to Pam Parisian, president, technology development. “A value stream is an aspect of scaled agile where you have a portfolio of funding and a mission of what it is that the team is going to develop, and we’re co-locating our IT folks with the business,” she said. The bottom line: AT&T is bringing “tech dev and the business together to speed up decision making,” Parisian said. “Having dedicated people who don’t just show up at a meeting once a week to check on status but who live and breathe this mission—that’s helping us get a lot of speed.”

Johnson, who in addition to his CIO role oversees shared services at Walmart, is applying the product or value stream model to Walmart’s business services. One person has end-to-end ownership of the processes, the technology development, and the delivery for services like recruiting

or accounts payable or learning. “It’s the ultimate DevOps model, because it’s not just the internal tech teams but all the processes that go with it,” Johnson said.

RULE THREE

Use Agile and Lean Methods Wherever Possible

It’s hard to find an IT shop that isn’t using agile for at least some of its development work today. [SEE BOX, “AGILE BASICS”](#) What’s new is that many large organizations are now scaling their agile efforts beyond a few discrete application development teams to apply agile methods throughout the broader organization.¹ That’s where value streams and lean principles come in (see previous section). Both AT&T and Cardinal Health are applying some version of the scaled agile framework (SAFe)²—a set of patterns to help organizations scale lean and agile practices.

The reasons to do so are compelling. AT&T had the ambitious goal to increase speed to market by 45% over two years. A year into its scaled agile efforts, AT&T has already achieved a 37% increase.

An increasing number of CIOs, like Walmart’s Johnson, are also adopting DevOps—integrating development and operations teams and processes to further speed delivery and improve quality. This requires a shift in thinking about roles and responsibilities, and shouldn’t be undertaken without a focus on organizational change.

DevOps is often complemented by DevSecOps—a security methodology that prioritizes including security from the

AGILE BASICS

Transformation masters have their own definitions of “agile.” For Zack Hicks, chief digital officer and CIO of Toyota North America and CEO of Toyota Connected, agile is about “delivering only what the customer asks and no more [a minimally viable product, or MVP], then hearing what customers like or don’t like and building that into the next iteration of the product.”

In addition to having a product owner, agile teams are generally small (five to eight people) and self-directed. They work in short sprints (two weeks is typical, but it varies), with short daily standups to review the work. Management’s role is not to direct the work but to remove obstacles. At Toyota Connected, which has fully embraced agile, “product owners bring to us any challenges, and then we as a leadership team have 24 hours to remove those impediments,” said Hicks. “We’ve created this very fast, very agile company where we’re building products.”

Connecting developers with customers shows them they’re building “something that makes a difference in people’s lives. That is the fuel behind all the transformations that we’ve done.” —Jay Ferro

beginning of development rather than waiting until a solution is almost delivered to test for security flaws.

DevOps typically encompasses continuous integration (with developers and testers working collaboratively to validate new code), continuous delivery (or deployment), cloud infrastructure, test automation, and configuration management.³ The first two of these are commonly referred to as CI/CD and employ automation. Walmart, AT&T, Cardinal Health, and Vanguard are all adopting CI/CD.

These terms can be confusing. While some CIOs call what they are doing “DevOps,” others don’t like the term, deeming it wonky or trendy. These may adopt DevOps principles but just call their work agile.

Not only does the agile and DevOps way of working produce results faster, it also increases employee satisfaction. “From a morale perspective, there’s nothing more frustrating than two-year projects that just keep growing in scope,” said the CIO of a midsize insurance company. “At the end of it you’ve done this massive project. You’ve killed yourself, given up nights, weekends, summer vacations But you’re six months to a year late and you’re \$1 million to \$2 million over budget. It’s not anybody’s fault, but nobody feels good.” In contrast, with agile, “the developers walk away on cloud nine because they are getting this instant feedback; it’s done.”

One piece of advice transformation masters have for those just getting started with agile is to apply agile principles to the agile program itself. In other words, don’t plan and design it as a big project (a la the old waterfall approach). Instead, “learn your way through,” said Marcante. Cardinal Health started with a viral approach, according to Morrison, and is now starting to formalize that using SAFe, figuring out how to scale teams to go faster.

Many CIOs view agile as a mind-set or set of principles versus a methodology. “No matter what you call it, whether it’s true agile or lean, it doesn’t really matter,” said Marcante. “It’s that concept of empowering cross-functional teams, iterating, and putting client feedback first that matters.”

RULE FOUR **Empower People to Experiment and Learn from Failure**

To truly realize the innovation potential of agile, transformation masters engage and empower people throughout the organization—and sometimes beyond—to experiment.

Zack Hicks, chief digital officer and CIO of Toyota North America and CEO of Toyota Connected, hires many new college graduates and turns them loose. “My job is to empower them,” he said. To illustrate why, he used the example of Servco, Toyota’s distributor in Hawaii, which wanted a car-sharing app. Hicks put a team of young engineers on the job; they built an app that makes it incredibly easy to locate and reserve a car. The app identifies and authenticates drivers and lets them lock, unlock, and start the car via their smartphone. An innovation the team came up with: Users can prepopulate most of the required fields simply by scanning their driver’s license. “I would never have thought of that,” he said. “But these kids coming out of school—that’s how they think today. If you’re running an operation and you hire these people but then you restrict their talent, that’s the old model.”

CIOs who are serious about transformation are building a learning culture, and a lot of learning comes from trying things that don’t work out.

“It’s imperative to foster a culture of failure, because you learn from mistakes,” said Adobe’s Stoddard. “If your rate of failure isn’t high enough, that means you’re not really pushing yourself or your team hard enough.”

Some CIOs avoid using the “f” word. “I don’t want to fail fast,” said Hicks, “I want to get to innovation sooner.” Lessons from repeated experiments become a key to success.

Marcante calls it learning. “What is goodness?” he asked. “It’s proving something works or proving something didn’t work—that’s learning. If it didn’t work, that’s just something that we didn’t have to build all the way through our pipeline, get to production, and spend millions of dollars and six months delivering something in the old way.” The only real failure in Marcante’s mind is when something is inconclusive. “That means that the design of the experiment wasn’t good. That’s how we think about it.”

Morrison finds the cultural acceptance of the word failure interesting. “It’s just such a negative word,” she said. “The way I like to look at it is learning to pivot. So you may conceive of a product doing X, and then you test it and you evolve it. Agile and DevOps and the cloud really help you do that, because you don’t have so much sunk cost every single time you pivot.”

Transformation masters uncover unexpected value by tapping their broader employee base and customers for ideas. When EmployBridge was developing its job app, one

surprising insight that came from the focus groups was that associates who were being offered a job wanted to know where they would eat lunch. The company didn't have that data in its CRM, so it crowdsourced it from the associates who were already working at those sites and added that data to the system.

Toyota Connected and Toyota's Connected Technologies group help people from the company's various lines of business and IT develop their ideas into working products. "If you're on the business side and don't know how to code, we'll give you six hours of free programming, or we'll connect you with somebody in IT to help build what you need. If you work in IT and you've got a great idea but you don't know how to pitch it, we'll hook you up with somebody in marketing who could help sell your idea." They also have a *Shark Tank*-like forum where people can bring their ideas. "But instead of being mean, we're actually nice, so it's more like a dolphin tank," Hicks joked. "We will surround you with warmth to get that idea off the ground so you can showcase it at the innovation fair."

RULE FIVE **Elevate Your Tech Game—as a Builder or an Orchestrator**

There's no question that businesses in all industries increasingly compete on the quality of their technology. This reality is driving some companies to dramatically increase the software engineering and tech capabilities of internal IT. Companies that have notably insourced their IT talent over the past few years include GE, GM, AstraZeneca, Deutsche Bank, and Goldman Sachs. Walmart just opened two centers for machine learning, artificial intelligence computer vision, and natural language processing in Texas (one in Austin and one in Dallas); this would have seemed like an unusual investment for a discount retailer not too long ago. Hicks, whose staff at Toyota Connected is 95% engineers, said having that talent in-house lets him build products faster than the large suppliers can, giving him that critical speed and providing him with a competitive edge.

However, some CIOs see these "builder" companies as outliers—leaders from whom others can learn, but not models everyone can or should follow. "They're the one-percenters of the corporate space," said Ferro. "There are thousands of organizations that don't have the capital to go hire 6,000 engineers, digital experts, and PhDs."

These companies instead build their tech strength through a multifaceted "orchestrator" approach—leveraging cloud and automation where they make sense, enabling business colleagues to manage some of their own IT, working closely with strategic vendor partners, and developing a radar to spot and take advantage of emerging companies, almost as a venture capital company might do.

To compete successfully as orchestrators, enablers, and vendor managers in today's tech-saturated environment, CIOs and their teams still need excellent individual technical knowledge. They need to understand the latest

HOW TRANSFORMATION MASTERS THINK ABOUT FAILURE

"You learn from your mistakes. If your rate of failure is not high enough, you are not pushing yourself or your team hard enough."

—CYNTHIA STODDARD

"The only real failure is when something is inconclusive."

—JOHN MARCANTE

"We don't look at it as failure; it is learning to pivot."

—PATTY MORRISON

"I don't want to fail fast, I want to get to innovation sooner."

—ZACK HICKS

developments in emerging technologies and be able to pick the right players to back. And depending on the business, certain specialized skills will remain in-house.

It's easy to see why the biggest "builder" companies might be more inclined to develop their own IT talent. And why they, like the orchestrator CIOs, are investing in automation and reusable pieces to drive speed.

This includes using core reusable platforms like microservices and APIs. "We're all about platforms because we have to do things that scale and that allow us to lower our cost structure and improve our speed so that we can capture reuse," said AT&T's Parisian. This includes developing microservices to replace some of "our monolithic architecture," she said.

Hicks' team recently built and launched a product in six days, "because we built these reusable containers that allow us to move quickly, along with a core reusable platform that APIs or containers can interact with."

Transformation masters are also incorporating AI, machine learning, and/or robotic process automation (RPA) into their IT and business processes. This will only accelerate, as automation promises to deliver the four-way benefits of speed, quality, efficiency, and lower risk, according to CIOs interviewed for this report.

An intelligent triage tool at AT&T uses machine learning to determine the root cause of system defects, reducing defect turnaround time by 10% to 15%. On the business

“Failure is the foundation for iteration and learning things. If your rate of failure isn’t high enough, that means **you’re not really pushing yourself** or your team enough.” —Cynthia Stoddard

side, machine learning is increasing the efficiency of the dispatch process by analyzing technician skill sets and skill levels, how long it took them to do previous jobs of the same nature, and even weather, traffic, and route patterns to optimize trips. Across the company, the use of machine learning is projected to save hundreds of millions of dollars over the next few years.

Automation also enables speed at lower risk, as with CI/CD. “We need to increase our speed and decrease the possibilities of things going wrong,” said Marcante. “The way you do that is through automation.”

RULE SIX **Go Beyond Collaboration to Coauthor Ideas**

As technology becomes more tightly woven into the fabric of the business, transformation masters push themselves and their teams to become better enablers. “Everything’s moving closer to the edge of consumption,” said Robert Walden, CIO at Epsilon, a global marketing company headquartered in Dallas. “We should really be looking at how we enable our stakeholders to do these things on their own.”

Stoddard sees this as adopting cloud-like characteristics throughout the organization. “Think about self-service,” she said. “Think about improved resiliency and being architectural, just like a cloud provider would do.”

At the same time that IT is evolving, so too are the other parts of the business. To be successful, businesspeople must become more tech-savvy themselves, understanding what’s possible and how things can best work so they are able to make the right decisions and increasingly participate in the development process.

At an executive team meeting at Walmart last year, CEO Doug McMillon was talking about “DevOps” and “product models.” Someone suggested tweaking the messaging “to put it in business terms,” said Johnson. McMillon’s response was that these are business terms—that this is the way the company is going to work in the future and so everyone needs to learn them. “He’s set that tone at the top.”

This is catching on across industries. At Toyota, said Hicks, the chief marketing officer talks about scrum teams and burn-down charts. The insurance company’s CEO equates MVP to a sales concept they’d used in the past to “win ugly”—a term coined by famed tennis coach Brad Gilbert to describe winning tactics that focus on getting results rather than finessing style.

CIOs have an important role to play in this. Those who are helping drive transformation engage their business partners through storytelling, proofs of concept (POCs), and MVP to show rather than tell what the future looks like. This helps increase understanding and get buy-in (and funding) quickly.

“We need to get these things into people’s imaginations so they do the work with us,” said Robert Austin, professor and faculty director of the Learning Innovation Initiative, Ivey School of Business, in Ontario, Canada. “Anything that’s new is unformed in people’s imaginations. CIOs have to do the hard work of providing archetypal examples, the vocabulary, proofs of concept—finding good ways to inspire that have the gist of change built into them.”

Hicks does all this and more, taking business partners to see how other companies are using disruptive technologies “so we can learn together,” he said. “This created new opportunities for us to change the conversation from being an order taker to being a business partner.” For instance, some years ago, he took the leaders of Toyota’s parts business to an Amazon warehouse to see how they’d flipped the workflow—instead of workers or robots going to pick a product from the shelf, the part was brought to them on robot-powered racks—something that clearly had relevance for their own business.

Increasingly, businesspeople are coauthoring solutions with IT developers and architects. Curt Carver, CIO at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, looks at it this way: “We’re not going to tell you what to do. We’re not going to come in and tell you how it is. We’re going to pull out a blank sheet of paper, envision perfect, and coauthor a solution toward that path.”

Coauthoring is a step beyond collaboration and alignment, which suggest two separate entities. To facilitate coauthoring, Cardinal Health, AT&T, and Walmart have begun to co-locate multifunctional teams that are responsible for specific products or value streams. With one team focused on the same outcome, “the opportunity for any sort of a disconnect for too long a time is going to be extremely rare,” Parisian said. Johnson has seen productivity “go through the roof” on these new teams.

Blurring the lines between IT and other parts of the business will naturally have an impact on the way IT is funded. For instance, said Morrison, rather than making capital requests for a project, CIOs and CFOs will have to look at “how much EBIT [earnings before interest and tax] am I generating

as a result of this product and therefore how much can I afford to invest on an annual basis?” she said. “It’s nuanced, but it’s really a different way of thinking. The return on investment is not a project view of it. It’s the IRR [internal rate of return] for the whole product over its life cycle.”

RULE SEVEN

Make Adaptability Your Team’s New Power Skill

While many companies are adopting new agile ways of working, organizing, and managing their businesses, different parts of a large organization will often need different approaches. “The pace, the technology that is needed, the mind-set that is needed, the skill set that’s needed to engage are dramatically different,” said Satish Alapati, CIO of customer experience at AT&T. Adding new channels of customer engagement adds another layer to that. “A one-size-fits-all approach fundamentally won’t work.” Rather, Alapati and others adapt their approaches depending on the needs of different parts of the organization. “That is key,” he said.

CIOs who are leading transformation in their organizations understand that there will be no steady state for the foreseeable future.

From a technology standpoint, that means building flexibility into systems and architectures, and using platforms, reusable components, and APIs. From a people perspective, it means changing roles and responsibilities, adding new skills, and working closely with a new range of colleagues. All this change can be hard. Transformation masters are working to help their teams see change as a personal opportunity rather than a threat.

Of course, this applies to IT leaders as well. In this new model, “the role of a leader on the team is to support the team and to clear roadblocks; it’s not to command and control,” said Marcante. For some, this can feel like an unwelcome loss of power.

The mantle of power and ownership slips even further as lines blur between IT and other parts of the business. “In the past, in the role of technology leader, I would go talk to specific project managers” and provide status updates to the lines of business, said Alapati. “That’s out the window in this new model. Now I sometimes have to talk to my business counterpart to get the status. This is very different from how we have operated in the past.”

All this adaptability is a means to the ultimate end: transforming the business to thrive in a different kind of future. “If you don’t continue to evolve and change [your business] models, you’ll be left behind,” said Walmart’s Johnson. Citing a number of once-prominent companies that didn’t make it, he said, “They just never changed. Woolworth’s could have been the next Walmart; Blockbuster could have been the next Netflix. They could have done something, but they just didn’t evolve.”

Conclusion

Transformation masters see this as a time of great opportunity for CIOs. “With every industry being disrupted with technology, there’s an opportunity for IT leaders to step into the gap that exists between what the market is expecting and what technology can deliver,” said Toyota’s Hicks. “As IT leaders, we can choose to lean into that gap and help drive those conversations and solutions or continue to sit back and wait for the order. But if you’re in the latter group, you’re going to be obsolete.”

To help their businesses transform, CIOs are forging new rules of leadership. This starts with taking customer-centricity to the next level—not just listening to customers but acting quickly on new insights and engaging them in the product development process. It means shifting from a project mind-set to managing products and value streams more holistically.

Transformation masters use agile and lean methods wherever possible, increasing speed and responsiveness while becoming ever more efficient. They empower employees and customers alike to experiment, learn from failure, and iterate their way to better outcomes.

Transformation won’t happen without understanding and exploiting new technologies quickly. Some leaders will build this themselves, while others will orchestrate the capabilities of third-party providers.

Traditional organizational lines blur in the digital world, with IT professionals thinking a lot more about how the firm makes money and frontline business employees knowing a lot more about how technology can change their business. Across the enterprise, people who were once separated into functional silos are going beyond collaboration and alignment to coauthor ideas and co-create solutions.

6 THINGS TRANSFORMATION MASTERS CAN DO TODAY

- 1. Co-locate your developers with the business.**
- 2. Green-light at least one MVP.**
- 3. Take a (small) risk.**
- 4. Remove an obstacle on one of your products.**
- 5. Make sure you, your directs, and their directs talk to a customer.**
- 6. Tell a marketing peer your vision for the company. Were they inspired?**

Transformation won't happen without understanding and exploiting new technologies quickly.

Given all this change, it's not surprising that transformation masters view adaptability as the new power skill—for themselves and for their teams as they transform their organizations for the digital economy. Part of that adaptability is understanding the new rules of leadership.

“The role of the CIO is no longer just controlling and enabling what's been ordered,” said Hicks. “It is about understanding how to triangulate these new technologies, market changes, and corporate capabilities, and facilitating those conversations without waiting to be invited to the table.”

A CIO who can do all that is a valuable C-suite player—a much-needed catalyst to transform their business during this time of great change.

ENDNOTES

1 Agile at Scale, *Harvard Business Review* <https://hbr.org/2018/05/agile-at-scale>

2 What Is SAFe? <https://www.scaledagileframework.com/what-is-safe/>

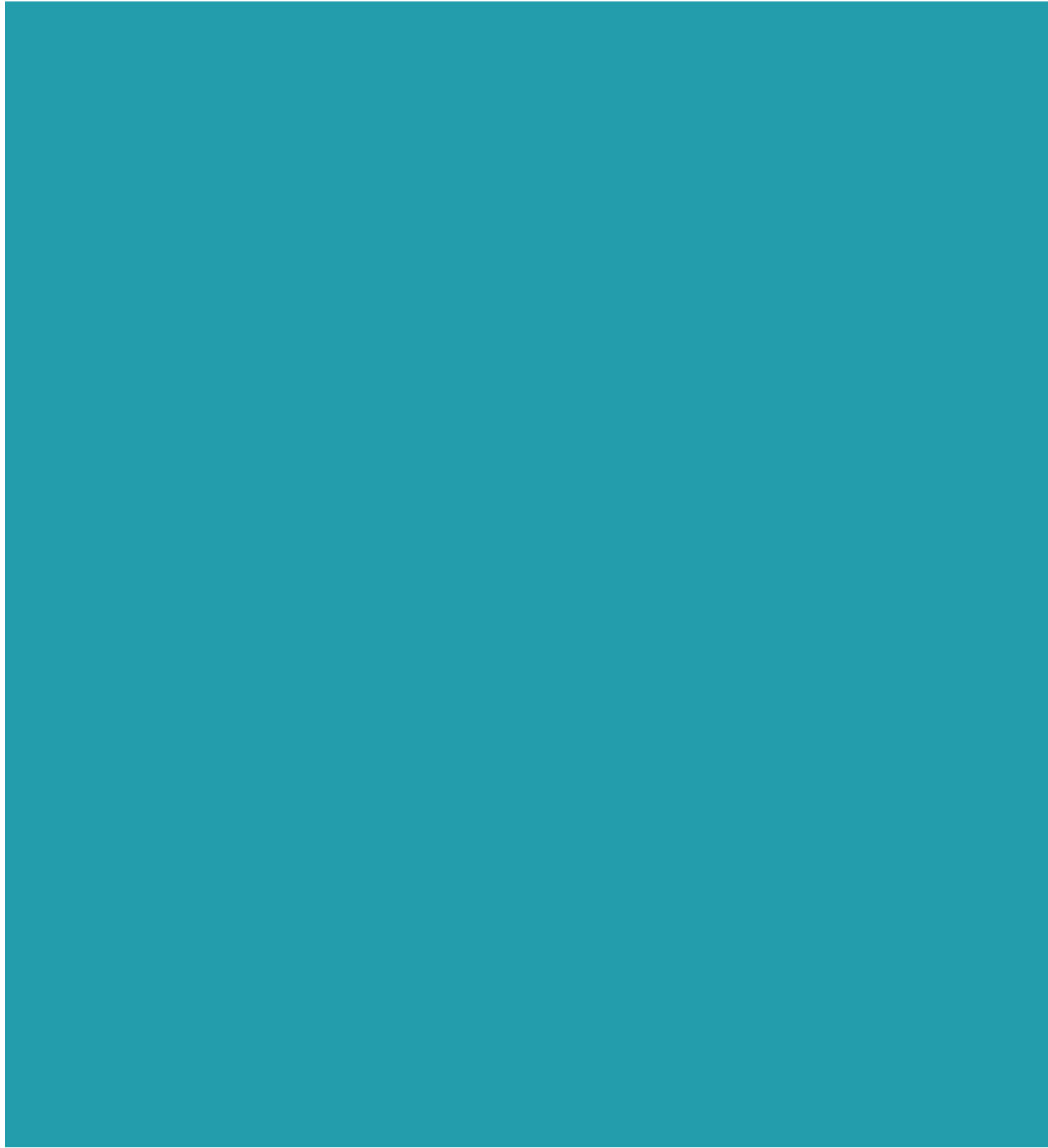
3 5 common pitfalls of CI/CD—and how to avoid them <https://www.infoworld.com/article/3113680/devops/5-common-pitfalls-of-cicd-and-how-to-avoid-them.html>



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