500 WORDS ON
LEADERS & DIGITALIZATION

DIGITAL
LITERACY

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Here are some tips to keep up with the digital transformation; or use it as a checklist!

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In our business, we are dealing with top leaders and C-suite members from all kinds of organizations. And there is one alarming correlation to observe: the higher the leader in the organization hierarchy, the more digitally illiterate they are. Sadly, we can also often throw age into that equation.

Some of my clients are unable to follow either a Dropbox or a WeTransfer link (as another way of sending the promised data), nor are they later able to find the file I sent, or work proficiently with Microsoft Office software, or set up a Skype for Business conference without the help of their personal assistant.

The interesting thing about this phenomenon is that top leaders are the ones who play with big words: "We are facing the digital-transformation, we have to train our leaders to be agile, versatile, to become digital savvy, being able to deal with continious change and transformation in unprecedented speed, driving a new way of working (like design thinking and rapid prototyping), or driving the fourth industrial revolution."

How to become DIGITAL LITERATE?

Even more puzzling is the fact that these leaders are expected to be guiding their companies into this "fourth industrial revolution" with visionary strategies and decisions. This discrepancy is worrisome in light of the urgent need for all industries to keep up with the increasing pressure of digitalization.

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As a leadership development provider, CLP is often asked to identify the needed skill set, mind-set, and possible tool set for leaders to successfully keep up in the digitalised world. In a nutshell, it is to become digitally literate, to be able to see business opportunities, and thus to make the right decisions.

I believe that with the right skill set, we are able to change the mind(-set). Here are some tips to keep up with the digital transformation (or use it as a checklist):

1   Subscribe to *WIRED*

Start reading tech magazines like *WIRED, Creative Bloq*, or the like. Today I learned that [a pod raced through the hyperloop for the first time ever](#)! (Please, Elon Musk, become a UK national.)

Here, some links for tech reading:

- [Wired](#)
- [Creativeblog](#)
- [Digg](#)
- [Slashdot](#)
- [The Register](#)
- [CIO](#)

2   Seek out a digital outsider!

Think about hiring a digital native, millennial, or Gen-Z. Or invite one for dinner and ask this person to teach you how to use their favourite technology (a cool challenge for your ego)!

Or just follow a tech geek on [Appy Geek tech news](#)

3 **Happily spend money on digital technology.**

Buy a 2,- EURO app! Here are some apps you do not actually need, but they will help you become digitally literate. So, download today:

• Waze
• Evernote Food
• Everest
• CARROT
• Last Message
• The Chihuly App
• Stow

4 **Visit a geek conference once a year.**

Here are some good examples of "Glastonbury for Geeks":

• Web Summit
• Internet Summit

5 **Invest in cool products or services from start-ups.**

Then tell your friends about them. Better than talking about Brexit!

• Kickstarter
• Crowdcube
• Seedsrs
• Gust
• CircleUp

6 **Reprogram your mind-set towards digital.**

Incorporate digital knowledge into your everyday life. Make the smart choice when it comes to work (i.e., using an online team performance tracker, or a coordination app) or private life (i.e., choosing Kindle over a book, or digital shopping over going to the supermarket).

And while doing all of this, become DIGITALLY LITERATE.

Yours,
Marcus and CLP team

CLP is constantly evolving Leadership Development practices and publishes 500 words periodically that reflect CLP's experiences and research, organisations to comprehend and to master the challenges and demands of Leadership Development today. We are excited to hear about your experience. Please share with us your thoughts, concerns or examples at 500words@clp.world