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Is Your Company Ready to Reimagine Its Innovation Strategy?

Technology decision makers will remain front and center as business models continue to evolve, while the promise of launching mass COVID-19 vaccination programs start to gradually materialize throughout 2021. Technology decisions made in 2020 to survive the initial throes of the pandemic are not sufficient to sustain a new normal. A combination of legacy and new technologies must be architected into innovative solutions capable of running business operations with greater interoperability, while also increasing resiliency and scalability.

Achieving this level of innovation dramatically elevates the imperative of aligning leadership cross-functionally, since interoperability, resiliency and scalability are never accomplished in a vacuum by individual leaders. Decentralized remote workforces make leadership alignment more challenging, especially when management remains concerned about the fundamentals such as productivity and collaboration at all levels of the organization.

Many companies already reached an innovation inflection point in 2020, where the focus on these fundamental concerns around productivity and collaboration shifted strategically to designing new business models enabled largely by innovative digital solutions. Many more companies will reach this inflection point in 2021. Wherever companies sit on the continuum of meeting this inflection point, the magnitude of fresh thinking and true cross-functional alignment and advocacy within senior leadership will be determining success factors.

As a result, companies are restructuring to emphasize the criticality of creating a permanent senior leadership role to orchestrate an innovation vision and culture to optimize opportunities in the new normal. The profile of this innovation leader is not rooted in information systems, neither legacy nor cloud. A customer centric mindset bolstered by direct business operations experience sits high on the list of key attributes for these roles. These leaders are afforded the leeway to reimagine new pathways for their companies, unencumbered with returning to the pre-COVID normal.

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The freedom to reimagine what game-changing innovation means in a post-COVID normal will be tempered by heightened levels of complexity from multiple directions - people, processes and technologies. Optimizing existing assets, squeezing every bit of value to maximize effect and making it work will likely remain core tenants as these new leaders pursue their innovation mandates to unlock value as an unprecedented post-COVID period starts to unfold in 2021.

ESG listens, learns and shares expertise as committed partners focused on achieving results for companies as they pursue transformation of all kinds. We would welcome the opportunity to learn more about your current business challenges and determine where ESG can provide support.

—By Mark Newhall, ESG Founder and CEO

Based in Denver, Colorado, Execution Specialists Group (ESG) is a strategy execution-focused consultancy with extensive global experience engaging with client senior leadership to plan and deliver on complex post M&A integration and digital transformation objectives. Recognized by Forbes as one of America's "Top Management Consulting Firms" for the past five years (2016-2020), ESG clients include Advance Auto Parts, Bridgestone, Caesars Entertainment, Gordon Food Service, Office Depot/OfficeMax, Target Corporation, Whole Foods and more. To learn more about ESG, visit www.esgimpact.com