



The ultimate guide

# Your guide to navigating transformations through business and IT alignment

**SAP**

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# What is business transformation?

**Change is natural for businesses.** They open new offices. They hire new leaders. They introduce new policies and standard operating procedures. Sometimes, however, businesses decide to do more than change – they seek to transform.

Businesses transform themselves by adopting new technologies and business models, devising new ways of engaging customers, merging with and acquiring other companies, or entering new markets with new products and service offerings.

While business leaders initiate and drive these transformations, they tend to reverberate across the organization, impacting both how the organization operates (processes) and the tools it uses (technology/applications). At the same time, transformations introduce new people with new skills into the organization and involve re-training existing employees on new ways of doing business. Transformations also involve a significant amount of data migration from one state to another, so managing data quality in these migrations is essential. And depending on the nature of the transformation, there may be new types of data to track and integrate.



## **What does business transformation mean?**

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Business Transformation refers to company-wide changes that support new, innovative business strategies. Almost every aspect of the business is affected, including people, processes, data, and technology. Given the increasing dynamism of global markets and the emergence of technologies such as AI, the ability to transform has become a critical, differentiating business capability.

Across the organization, business transformation requires thoughtful change management and consistent communication. It also requires a reengineering of business processes and a renewed technical landscape supporting those processes.

People have written entire books on business transformation, generally from the business leadership perspective. In this white paper, while providing some high-level insight into the broader topic, we will look at both business process transformation and technology transformation through the lens of enterprise architecture and explore the critical role they play in successful business transformation.

Along the way, we will show how initiatives focused on process and technology influence other aspects of business transformation, especially communication, change management, and employee enablement. On this point specifically, we will highlight the power of using solutions that are purpose-built to support business transformation every step of the way.



# The keys to business transformation success

# While businesses transform for many reasons, the keys to successful transformation remain constant.



## Alignment on strategic goals

Goals must be clearly formulated and consistently communicated to everyone impacted by the transformation. Everyone must be on the same page and understand how the transformation is relevant to them specifically. A clear vision sets the goals and the guardrails.

This is also true for the C-suite. For example, during a business transformation, what the CEO expects and envisions may be at odds with what the CIO knows is possible at execution. When aligning teams on goals and strategy, it is important to include upper management as well.



## Alignment on outcomes and your target state

In addition to defining strategic goals, successful transformations require a clear definition of concrete outcomes.

For example, the strategic goal may be to make most customer interactions digital. This could involve revamping the website and mobile app to increase functionality as well as changing the in-store experience to “digital-first” through self-checkout.

Alignment on outcomes facilitates planning and provides clear milestones. These concrete outcomes represent the “to-be” or target state for your business. In order to successfully transform the business, you must define the target state down to the business process and technology level.



## **Communication, communication, communication**

Transforming your business means transforming the way you do things. This means new processes and new technology, but it also means people working with new tools and doing things in new ways. Coordinating this process, getting people on board and motivated, addressing concerns, and negotiating conflicts call for ongoing communication.

Communication in transformation means conveying what the goals are, what the final state will look like, and what will happen along the way. It also means listening and providing opportunities for stakeholders to share their input.

Information is the key to communication. Giving people access to the information they need and ensuring the accuracy and reliability of that information provides the foundation for the communication efforts a successful transformation demands.



# **A scalable, repeatable approach to business transformation**

As a first step, we advocate dividing the transformation process into five stages. We believe these stages capture the key activities that lead to a successful transformation, from strategy to execution. They offer a structured methodology that is iterative and data-driven. They are also holistic, addressing the people, process, data, and application dimensions of transformation.

 **Discover**

 **Analyze**

 **Design**

 **Implement**

 **Operate**

In what follows, we will focus on applying this five-stage methodology to two specific layers of any business transformation: Processes and applications.



### **Discover: Capturing your as-is state**

Before advancing toward your future state, it's essential to understand your current operations thoroughly. How does your business truly function? Often, there's a significant gap between perceived and actual processes, and organizations lack clear visibility into how technology supports these processes. Establishing a single source of truth for business processes and IT infrastructure is key. By constructing a comprehensive overview, you lay critical groundwork for transformation. This process involves identifying bottlenecks, benchmarking against industry standards, and using standardized tools for accelerated understanding. Skipping this discovery phase risks basing transformation plans on faulty assumptions.

Modern analysis technologies enable rapid connection to source applications and visualization of workflows, thus compressing discovery tasks and transforming goals into tangible value. The takeaway: robust discovery capabilities streamline the identification of improvement opportunities, laying the foundation for impactful transformation.

## **How SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio help**

You likely already have some understanding of the technology you own, and you may have documented your processes to some degree. When preparing for a business transformation, however, your understanding of these things should be deep and comprehensive.

SAP LeanIX includes automated landscape discovery to identify your existing SaaS and on-premises applications. Application data can also be smoothly imported from Excel. SAP LeanIX's built-in, automated surveys enable you to regularly engage with all application owners and continuously collect the critical information you need.

SAP LeanIX comes with an out-of-the-box integration with SAP Signavio solutions, a portfolio that helps you understand, improve, and transform business processes. These solutions are an essential part of the holistic business transformation approach from SAP. The SAP Signavio Process Transformation Suite's process mining and analytics capabilities can help you understand, visualize, and assess the performance of the actual execution of processes within an organization based on data.

Process mining and analysis use existing data, digital traces, and event logs of your processes to visualize how each process actually works in comparison to how the process is supposed to work. Mining and analysis reveal how your processes are actually running, set the foundation for standardization and harmonization, and play a critical role in improving business operations and reducing risk.

SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio together give you a centralized, up-to-date overview of your IT and business process landscape, an overview you can analyze within the solutions themselves. This overview can also serve as the basis for building an accurate business capability map linking your applications and processes to the business capabilities they enable.

Business capability mapping isn't an academic exercise. Rather, it's the first step towards value creation. Connecting your applications to the specific business processes they support helps you identify duplicate apps to be rationalized and gaps to be filled. It can also help uncover areas for improvement and automation within your business processes

After completing the Discover stage, you will have the necessary foundation to begin defining the strategic vision for your transformation.





### **Analyze: Defining how you will bring your vision to life**

While the Discover phase reveals current processes and applications, analyzing their interactions and dependencies is vital for effective transformation. Understanding these relationships helps identify straightforward changes and those needing careful coordination. Processes rely on complex systems, and removing components like applications can disrupt functions.

Mapping dependencies and interactions among applications, systems, and teams helps prevent addressing symptoms instead of root causes. Detailed analysis uncovers efficiency losses and improvement opportunities, informing necessary changes and their impact. Prioritizing changes based on potential value aligns transformation plans with evidence rather than assumptions.

Maturing analysis capabilities enable organizations to translate complex data into actionable insights, building expertise and frameworks for sustainable transformation grounded in value-driven analysis.

### **How SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio help**

With intuitive visualizations and pre-defined reports, SAP LeanIX provides comprehensive views of data flows and dependencies between applications, systems, interfaces, APIs, and technologies.

You can also classify applications and define the transformation scope according to established methodologies and standard best practices, including the Gartner Pace Layer model (Systems of Record, Systems of Differentiation, Systems of Innovation) and the AWS 6R framework (Replace, Re-architect, Re-platform, Rehost, Retain, and Retire). This will allow for realistic prioritization of steps in your transformation journey as well as thoughtful resource planning.

By creating visual process maps that accurately reflect current operations, the mining and analysis capabilities of SAP Signavio enable stakeholders to gain a comprehensive understanding of process flows, inefficiencies, compliance risks, and bottlenecks. Having this visibility into your existing process landscape is critical for identifying areas that require attention and for communicating these needs across the organization.

SAP Signavio solutions also measure key performance indicators (KPIs) such as cycle times, costs, and compliance rates, allowing organizations to benchmark their performance against industry standards or historical data (all available within the solution itself). This helps prioritize actions based on the impact they will have on performance metrics crucial to the business's success. You can also identify gaps between current processes and desired operational or strategic outcomes so you can align processes more closely with strategic objectives.





## Design: Creating your to-be state

In this phase, you focus on creating a clear vision of your transformed business landscape by aligning it with your strategic objectives and priorities.

### Start with your business goals

Start by examining your business goals, which serve as a lens to scrutinize current operations and determine necessary changes to achieve these goals. For instance, if market expansion is a goal, consider new geographic information systems or business intelligence tools, along with partnerships for broader reach. Transforming the customer experience might require redesigning customer journeys and implementing omnichannel strategies, supported by advanced customer service training and technology.

### What will it look like when you have achieved your business goals?

Visualizing the end state—what success looks like—provides direction and motivation, ensuring effective communication, progress measurement, and resource allocation. Clarity about the essentials required to succeed—technology upgrades, skillset enhancements, and process changes—prepares stakeholders for commitments and reveals challenges early.

“We will have introduced our **new product** across all **major markets globally**.”

“We will have created an **optimized** and **highly automated** customer journey.”

“We will have moved all manufacturing offshore **without any loss of quality**.”

### **What processes need to be in place, and how will they be supported?**

Develop streamlined processes that serve as the operational backbone of your transformation, using scenario planning and simulation to validate approaches. For example, ensuring product availability globally may involve optimizing logistics with advanced analytics, while transforming customer support could mean adopting customer relationship management systems.

These capabilities need to be supported by technology roadmaps and training protocols, enabling informed decision-making through integrated data systems.

"We will have developed a [cross-functional process](#) that ensures seamless collaboration between R&D, marketing, sales, and customer support teams to [accelerate product development and market introduction](#)."

"We will have implemented a [continuous feedback loop process](#) that gathers insights from customer interactions across all digital touchpoints, [enabling swift adjustments to products and services](#) in response to customer needs and market demands."

"We will have established a [comprehensive data governance process](#) that ensures data quality, security, and compliance across all business operations, enabling [informed decision making](#) and fostering trust among stakeholders."

Ultimately, the design phase bridges the gap between insight and action, validating value creation assumptions before resources are committed, and fostering stakeholder confidence by demonstrating clear links between actions and outcomes.

Through collaborative planning and leveraging industry best practices, develop transformation roadmaps that prioritize high-value initiatives, enhancing future efforts with mature design capabilities, proven models, and simulation frameworks.

### **How SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio help**

Now that you have the required view of all your applications, business processes, and interdependencies, as well as a single source of truth for communication and collaboration between stakeholders, you can begin designing your target architecture and creating the roadmap to achieve it.

Both SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions offer scenario planning and simulation capabilities, allowing you to create a digital twin of all of your business processes, model different transformation scenarios, and assess their impacts. This includes understanding how changes to applications, technologies, or processes will affect business capabilities, operations, and strategic goals. SAP Signavio solutions also allow you to design, model, simulate, and compare new processes so that you can validate your ideas and their potential outcomes in an instant.

Both solutions also facilitate collaboration among stakeholders by providing a shared platform for documenting, analyzing, and planning transformations. This collaborative approach ensures that all perspectives are considered and that the impacts of transformations are fully understood and accepted across the organization.

With SAP LeanIX, IT landscapes can be visualized through a series of interactive timeline reports, so you can predict how IT and business environments will take shape at any stage during your transformation. This enables enterprise architects to understand which initiatives are sequentially dependent on others, so they can determine the optimal order of operations for transformation steps and build an actionable transformation roadmap. Meanwhile, SAP Signavio ensures that business process changes are reflected in IT systems and applications, facilitating a smooth transition and minimizing disruptions to operations.





### **Implement: Executing your plan**

The implementation phase transforms planned changes into reality, emphasizing team readiness to adopt new processes. Beyond technical execution, successful transformation requires effective communication and change management to keep everyone informed and engaged.

Enablement is key: provide ongoing training via digital adoption platforms that offer real-time, in-workflow guidance, boosting proficiency and value realization. Actively manage processes with real-time monitoring to ensure they align with design goals and prevent disruptions.

Strategically deploy applications, retire outdated systems, and prioritize data quality to maintain reliable insights. By embedding support within workflows and verifying execution, organizations sustain transformation value, turning strategic goals into measurable business benefits.

### **What's a digital adoption platform (DAP)?**

Digital adoption platforms enhance your applications by offering real-time guidance and automating routine tasks, all tailored to individual user behavior. Unlike traditional training that interrupts workflow, these platforms support users with on-the-spot prompts and walkthroughs.

They also provide valuable insights into application usage, identifying areas where users face challenges and pinpointing underused features, allowing teams to address adoption issues early and improve support strategies.

A great example here is WalkMe, a leading digital adoption platform that takes this approach to the next level. By seamlessly integrating with your existing systems, WalkMe supports users with intuitive guidance and insights, helping businesses maximize their technology investments.

With WalkMe, organizations can boost productivity, enhance user satisfaction, and accelerate digital adoption across the board, ensuring every user gets the most out of their applications.

## **How SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio help**

Alignment between stakeholders is one of the most difficult business transformation challenges. Changes will be made to people's daily jobs and multiple processes the business requires to function.

With SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions, you can align tasks within the transformation, thus supporting collaboration and monitoring your progress. For example, the SAP Signavio Collaboration Hub enables stakeholders to provide inputs and comments in a centralized solution, ensuring stakeholders are informed about changes to relevant content, requested feedback, and individual mentions. Since the content can be curated for specific audiences, stakeholders can focus on the information that is relevant to them.

SAP LeanIX enables you to determine what the direct and indirect effects of shutting down or migrating applications will be. You can know what processes and capabilities will be affected and when. You can also know who owns which applications, whom to notify, and which teams have to adjust workflows accordingly.

SAP LeanIX enables documentation of all changes as your transformation project progresses. Documenting the execution of each step provides visibility into project progression through reports and dashboards, helping to maintain alignment and buy-in.

All stakeholders can access SAP LeanIX reports and dashboards, ensuring that the right people with the best data on the actual use of their respective applications can share their input. You can also add the most important reports at each stage of the journey to your dashboard so that other stakeholders are provided with instant visibility into what matters to them. This helps everyone stay informed about the progress and results of the transformation.

The powerful combination of SAP Signavio solutions and SAP LeanIX allows you to automatically sync your enterprise architecture data with your business process data, then analyze the integrated data to inform your decisions. This enables you to optimize business processes and IT infrastructure implementations.

The seamless integration between SAP Signavio solutions and SAP LeanIX also allows business process architects and enterprise architects to use their tools of choice while maintaining a shared view of the ongoing transformation. This ensures that stakeholders across the organization speak the same language and collaborate effectively.

A shared point of reference is especially important for change management. By facilitating clear communication, training, and impact analysis, and providing KPIs and status updates, SAP Signavio solutions and SAP LeanIX ensure that all stakeholders are prepared for and supportive of the changes to come. Such support is critical for overcoming resistance, building consensus, and ensuring a smooth transition to the new process landscape.

The combined perspectives of SAP Signavio solutions and SAP LeanIX help you achieve business and IT collaboration, reduce uncertainty, make faster decisions with confidence, and ultimately streamline your business transformation.



Change management is one of the most important factors in a successful ERP transformation. Disruptions in workflows, complex dependencies, and new learning curves must be anticipated and overcome in a holistic, collaborative way.

Check out our [comprehensive whitepaper](#) on the five critical steps to change management in any ERP transformation project:

1. Identify and engage all stakeholders
2. Articulate the vision and bring everyone on board
3. Form cross-functional teams and keep everyone on the same page
4. Implement enablement programs
5. Communicate and celebrate milestones



## **Operate: Walking the walk**

Ideally, at this stage, your agile business operations are fully embedded, reflecting a continuous and iterative journey. Business transformation is not a “one-and-done” exercise but a perpetual process, responding to evolving environments and unpredictable disruptions.

To remain agile and resilient, it's crucial to engage in ongoing monitoring and assessment, refining processes and optimizing applications for continuous improvement and adaptability to new challenges. This ensures your business can swiftly respond to common challenges and leverage transformation as a sustained competitive advantage.

### **1. You missed something**

When mapping your transformation, unforeseen dependencies or incomplete data might arise, necessitating adjustments. New processes encounter unsupported steps, or legacy systems may require updates, requiring roadmap revisions to maintain alignment with your objectives.

### **2. The business situation changes**

The timeframe for successful transformation can vary considerably depending on the project. While a cloud migration might occur in stages, adopting a new business model may take longer and be influenced by external factors.

New competitors, technological advancements, or global disruptions can impact your organization and necessitate strategy adjustments. Continuously revisiting and adapting your plans is essential to accommodate these changes and ensure you remain aligned with current market realities.

### **3. Scope creep**

Scope creep can introduce unforeseen modifications that affect budgets and timelines. These often result from poorly communicated requirements or unclear project goals. Timely updates to project plans and timelines are necessary to accommodate the new scope while maintaining focus.

By embedding transformation into daily operations with robust governance structures, organizations can turn efficiency gains into sustained advantages. Continuous tracking and analysis empower businesses to evolve processes and optimize application landscapes, maintaining agility amidst perpetual change.

Avoid common pitfalls by ensuring the transformation doesn't end post-implementation, with reinforcement preventing reversion to old habits and safeguarding institutional knowledge. Regular measurement of KPIs is vital to monitor ongoing impact, preventing decay of transformation benefits.

Ultimately, maintaining focus on the dynamic business landscape allows organizations to leverage transformation for lasting value, ensuring strategies are adaptive and responsive to future challenges

### **How SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio help**

No matter the challenge, SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions enable you to dynamically adapt your roadmap and

maintain organizational focus with continuous communication, while staying on schedule and on budget. This is true for challenges of all types, from small day-to-day operational challenges to major market and/or technological shifts. All stakeholders in the business will be equipped with accurate insights to proactively make better decisions.

With SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions, you can always explore the potential impact of different scenarios as challenges arise. Both portfolios allow you to preview and contextualize the outcomes of different initiatives before executing on them. As a result, you can evaluate and compare future states, analyze results, and make adjustments to your roadmap.

As we said before, SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions keep everyone on the same page, viewing the same information, and speaking the same language. With a single source of shared truth, accessible to and updated by all relevant team members, you can ensure that the right people continuously understand the current situation and future outlook.

**Real transformation is continuous**


As the digital economy accelerates and market dynamics change, process and technology transformations will play an ever-increasing role in business success.

These complex transformations require a robust enterprise architecture practice and the right EA tools to ensure organizational alignment on strategic goals and outcomes. They also require continuous, seamless communication and collaboration across teams and the ability to swiftly adjust to changing circumstances and unforeseen roadblocks.

SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions offer a holistic approach to business transformation. They provide the data, tools, methodology, and collaboration capabilities you need to align all teams and make faster, more informed decisions,

keeping you on track and on budget. Bringing these solutions together significantly multiplies their respective value across both business and IT.

By aggregating information in a single source of truth, you can map and analyze your current state, design and simulate your target state, create an actionable transformation roadmap to get you there, and monitor the execution and value generation along the way. Throughout your transformation, SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions enable you to track progress and dynamically adapt your roadmap as challenges arise. What's more, by creating a single source of truth, they lay the foundation for your next transformation, whatever form that might take.



See how SAP LeanIX and SAP Signavio solutions can power your business transformation. Request an [enterprise architecture solution demo](#) or request a [process-centric transformation demo](#).

