

DBS Bank:

Transformation to the Best Digital/Bank in the World



DBS Bank received Euromoney's inaugural "World's Best Digital Bank" award in 2016.

Within six short years, DBS was transformed from the poorest-performing service company in Singapore to being recognized as the best digital bank in the world. Then in 2018, it won the coveted "Global Finance" best bank in the world award and "World's Best Digital Bank" again in 2018.

This workshop explains in detail how DBS achieved this phenomenal transformation in an absorbing, informative and enlightening one-day workshop facilitated by Robin Speculand. He has literally "written the book" on it: *DBS Bank Transformation to the Best Digital/Bank in the World* (due for release in December 2019). The workshop conveys key messages and lessons from the book, including exclusive videos of the bank's leaders.

In 2014, the DBS Board gave the leadership team S\$200,000,000 to bet on digital transformation, no questions asked. At the time, the team was celebrating the success of implementing the first strategy under CEO Piyush Gupta's stewardship—to operate at international banking standards, 12 months ahead of schedule. But before the bank could sit back and relax, its leaders had to re-engage to implement Strategy 2.0 – Making Banking Joyful.

The workshop's introduction explains why DBS moved to a digital strategy ahead of its competitors and the challenges it had to address. Piyush, who has a technology background, said Strategy 2.0 was not about technology but about technology *and people*. This important distinction shows why DBS has succeeded when the failure rate for digital execution can be as high as 84 percent.

The workshop reveals the secrets behind the bank's achievements while sharing amazing stories of how different parts of the business adopted Making Banking Joyful their own. It explains how the bank's digital transformation was not an overnight success and how Strategy 1.0 laid the foundation for Strategy 2.0. For example, the bank eliminated 250,000 million customer hours of non-value-add time to their customers in Strategy 1.0, an approach Google later adopted from DBS.

As Piyush said, "The first stage was relatively straightforward; I knew what the result should be to become an international bank. The second stage was tougher because no one knew what a digital bank should look like!"

The workshop then delves into how DBS became the best digital/bank in the world and includes stories, exclusive video and key takeaways. Specifically, it explains how DBS executed Making Banking Joyful by driving the transformation with three strategic initiatives: 1) Become digital to the core, 2) Embed ourselves in the customer journey and 3) Create a 26,000 people start-up. There is also an option to conduct the case study, published at Singapore Management University and written by the workshop facilitator.

Workshop Outline – Morning

S\$200,000,000 Bet

In 2014, a perfect storm struck at DBS Bank. It had just executed its Strategy 1.0; Alibaba started spreading its tentacles across Asia; Fintech was gaining momentum while the bank's CEO was envisioning the future. As a result, the bank started its digital transformation.

In this opening module, you'll understand how Strategy 1.0 laid the foundation for the digital transformation, the decisions the leaders took and why they decided to create a digital-centric bank.

Strategy 1.0 – The Back Story

The Asian Bank of Choice in the New Asia strategy was crafted to find the sweet spot between international and local competition while transforming the bank to operate at an international banking standard.

This module reflects how far the bank has come since having the worst service in Singapore, not just among banks but other key companies. It had no daily management information's system (MIS) to track how it was performing, and its culture was considered old and traditional. Like many overnight successes, this was not an overnight success!

Strategy 2.0 – Making Banking Joyful

How do you become a digital-centric organization? This module explains how the bank started to transform and why it chose to Make Banking Joyful by making it invisible to its customers. It also explains the philosophy of Strategy 2.0 and includes details of its execution.

Understand how DBS built momentum across the whole bank, engaged and trained employees, created a new culture and encouraged its leaders to adopt and implement the strategy into their business.

The Digital Engine that Drives the Bank

Digital is like the engine that drives the bank, which means every part of the bank has to be aligned and finely tuned to move it forward. A department cannot work in isolation or it will clog the engine. The culture is the lubricant that ensures the engine runs smoothly; innovation focused on the customer is the fuel that drives the bank forward while the leaders firmly hold the steering wheel.

This module introduces the highlights of DBS's journey. It discusses the nuts and bolts of the bank's digital transformation, including how it:

- Transformed its technology
- Created "digibank" – a mobile-only bank
- Developed a "data first" culture
- Adopted agile audits, transforming the way audits are conducted
- Launched SPARKS, transforming the way banks market to customers
- Launched Smart Buddy, a digital wallet for Singapore school children
- Discovered the mistakes it made, for example, how it adopted AI
- Inspired its customers to adopt digital banking
- Eliminated front, middle and/ back-office silos
- Moved from focusing on products to platforms and eco systems
- Created its own digital wallet and lending
- Moved from cross-sell to cross-buy
- Transformed its Global Transaction Services and showed companies how to manage their corporate treasury

The Value of a Digital Customer

Customers of DBS Bank who have adopted digital banking bring in twice the income as traditional customers do. The bank now tracks and shares the return gained from the digital transformation strategy with its shareholders and analysts.

Discover how to track your digital transformation and build the measures into your strategy scorecard for reporting to your organization's Board.

Workshop Outline – Afternoon

You have the option at the start of the afternoon session of 1) learning more about the DBS story and anchoring the morning learning by conducting the case study or 2) focusing more on why digital transformation fails and what it takes to succeed.

Option One

DBS Case Study – published by Singapore Management University

While writing the book on the bank's transformation, the course facilitator also collaborated with the University (where he is an adjunct professor) to write a case study. DBS's case study chronicles the bank's transformation, which centered around its three strategic initiatives – digital to the core, customer journeys and a 26,000 people start-up.

The debrief focuses on understanding the different moving components of how the bank became digital-centric and outlines the two frameworks below.

Option Two

Why Digital Strategies Fail and What it Takes to Succeed

Various research reveals that the failure rate for digital execution is as high as 84 percent. This means after steadily improving in their ability to execute, organizations are actually getting worse!

This module explains why companies fail in adopting digital. It also explains the seven differences in executing a *digital* strategy compared with *traditional* strategies while featuring key takeaways from DBS's experience.

Two Frameworks for Becoming Digital-Centric

Leaders are too often missing frameworks to guide their implementation.

1) Ticking Clock© – 11-Step Model for Adopting a Digital Strategy

The Ticking Clock–11-Step Model provides you with a proven approach for adopting digital transformation into your organization.

Tapping into extensive research of 1,847 leaders across three continents, you'll gain an understanding of the initial challenges facing you in adopting digital today. Then you'll examine the three strategic steps of 1) future thinking, 2) business centricity and 3) future proofing. You'll be able to assess your organization against the 11 steps required for adopting a digital strategy.

2) The Implementation Compass™

How do you *implement* the strategy that's been designed for your organization in the digital world? The Implementation Compass features the eight areas of excellence in execution required to be successful.

The Implementation Compass, developed by Bridges, has been adopted to implement strategies by companies and governments around the world since 2004.

What To Do Now

The final part of the workshop creates the opportunity to apply the key learnings to your organization.

Robin Speculand

Workshop Leader



The current approach to implementing strategy is not working. A different thinking is required.

Robin Speculand is driven to transform strategy/digital implementation by inspiring leaders to change their attitude and approach. His work begins when leaders are crafting their organization's strategy and are starting to define how to implement it.

Robin is a global pioneer and expert in strategy implementation. He is the founder and CEO of Bridges Business Consultancy Int, co-founder of the Strategy Implementation Institute and creator of the Implementation Hub—the first portal in the world dedicated to strategy implementation and featuring over 650 resources. Since assisting its first client, Singapore Airlines, Bridges has worked with governments, multinational corporations and local organizations across five continents to implement their strategies. Guiding Bridges' client implementation journeys involves transferring knowledge and applying unique tools and templates developed over two decades. These tools include the Implementation Compass™, a proprietary framework for successful implementation; the Ticking Clock®, an 11-step model for adopting digitalization; IMPACT, a toolkit with a structured approach for implementing actions in 90 days; Readiness2Execute, an audit of your organization's execution capabilities.

A prolific writer and thinker on implementing strategy, Robin is an international bestselling author. His latest books include *Excellence in Execution—HOW to Implement Strategy* (Morgan James) with a new approach to adopting the right mindset, toolset and skillset and *182 Questions for Digital Execution—Strategy Implementation Starts with the Right Questions*, a workbook supporting *Excellence in Execution*. He has also authored *Bricks to Bridges—Make Your Strategy Come Alive* and *Beyond Strategy—The Leader's Role in Successful Implementation* (John Wiley & Sons). His book on DBS Bank is due for release the end of 2019.

Robin's pioneering work has been featured on various media: BBC U.K. & Global, CNBC, *Financial Times*, *Sunday Telegraph* and *Singapore Straits Times* and in strategy journals and international print.

A sought-after keynote speaker at strategy and international business forums, Robin is also an award-winning case writer, an educator for Duke CE and an adjunct faculty member at the Office of Executive and Professional Education in Singapore Management University. Outside of work, he's a die-hard ironman athlete.

Robin Speculand is a global pioneer and expert in strategy/digital implementation.

