

# THE HD TECH WAY

Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Smoother, And More Profitably

Your monthly newsletter,  
written for humans not geeks.

## TECH OVERLOAD OR TECH OPPORTUNITY?



### Has your team had to adapt to new systems recently?

Perhaps you've rolled out new software, introduced automation, or started experimenting with AI tools inside Microsoft 365.

A few years ago, that level of change might have left people feeling overwhelmed.

Today, something different is happening.

Research shows that most employees have experienced organizational change in the past year, and the most common reason is new technology.

You might expect that constant updates and new tools would drain energy. In reality, many workers report feeling more

engaged, not less.

Artificial intelligence is playing a big role in this shift.

Around half of employees now use AI tools regularly at work. They say it helps them complete tasks faster, improve the quality of what they produce, and generally feel more productive.

When technology removes repetitive or frustrating parts of a job, it creates breathing space.

That said, there is a clear warning for business owners.

When companies don't provide approved, secure AI tools quickly enough, employees don't stop using them. They find their own.

This is known as shadow AI, where staff use unapproved tools without IT oversight.

It usually comes from good intentions. People want to work efficiently. But it can expose sensitive company data and create security risks.

The demand for smarter tools is coming from inside your business, not from software vendors pushing features.

There's another factor that matters just as much as the technology itself: Employees want to feel listened to during periods of change.

**Be engaged with and supportive of your team during the transition.**

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When leadership checks in, explains decisions clearly, and responds to feedback, engagement rises sharply. When change feels imposed without conversation, enthusiasm drops.

The businesses thriving right now are guiding innovation carefully. They are introducing new tools with structure, strengthening security, and having regular conversations about what support people need.

Technology isn't settling down any time soon.

**Handled properly, though, it can energize your workforce rather than exhaust it. And if you need help working out the right way to introduce AI for your business, we can help. Get in touch.**

## Technology Update

### AI Says You Need a Break From AI

If you've been using Copilot for hours, you might notice something unexpected from an AI. A small message appears at the top of the chat window suggesting it's "time for a break" and reminding you that Copilot is an AI, but you're not.

It seems Microsoft is tracking extended use and offering a gentle nudge to step away.

The reminder isn't a limit or warning, just a prompt to pause. As AI becomes part of the daily workflow, even the tools themselves are encouraging healthier habits.

## GADGET OF THE MONTH

### Insta360 Link 2C

You're about to jump on an important video call. It could be a new client. A supplier. Maybe even your biggest prospect of the year. You open your laptop and there you are. Grainy, blurry and backlit like you're in witness protection. Not ideal.

That's where the Insta360 Link 2C steps in. This isn't just another webcam. It records in true 4K with a large sensor, so you look sharp and professional even in tricky lighting. Built-in AI noise cancelling keeps your voice clear by filtering out background distractions. And fast auto focus means no more blurry moments when you move.



Studio-quality presence. No studio required.

\$149.99 from [Amazon](#).



## ANSWERS BY: TOM HERMSTAD, YOUR CYBER LIFEGUARD

**Q:** How do I know if our systems are AI ready?

- **Answer:** What will the AI access? Will it connect to your ERP or CRM systems and analyze private business data? Are access permissions clear? Does your team know what to share and what not to share? AI tools are only as safe as the environment they're connected to. People need to know how to use the tools but also about what they are allowed to put into them.

**Q:** My team says they're overwhelmed with tech changes. Should we slow down?

- **Answer:** Not necessarily. The key isn't slowing change, it's guiding it. Introduce tools properly, explain the why, offer support, and check in regularly. The pace of change is going to increase exponentially-getting your team ready to deal with and excel in this environment is your other key.



**Q:** What's the one thing most businesses overlook with AI Adoption?

- **Answer:** Preparation. Many companies react to problems instead of reviewing their setup proactively. A short quarterly technology review can prevent expensive surprises later. Having a usage plan and your employees knowing the plan are imperative.

# STRATEGIC EXECUTION SERIES

## PART 1: WHAT IS STRATEGIC EXECUTION?



**Written by: Thomas H. Willingham**  
**The Hampton Group**

As you reflect on the past quarter, a simple question stands out: **did your organization achieve its goals by design — or by chance?**

If execution felt inconsistent, you're not alone. Research from The Balanced Scorecard Institute suggests that **67% to 90% of strategies fail due to poor execution**, while a well-known Harvard Business Review study found that **87% of companies fall short of their growth targets**. The issue isn't strategy—it's execution.

So, what exactly is "execution," and does your team share a common understanding of it?

In *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done*, former Honeywell CEO Larry Bossidy and business advisor Ram Charan define execution as more than completing tasks. It is a **disciplined system of behaviors and practices that organizations must master to achieve a competitive advantage**.

That distinction matters. Execution isn't a one-time effort—it's a capability.

A helpful analogy comes from *Discovering Execution* by Miles Kierson and Gary Tomlinson, who compare

execution to air. Before we understood air's composition, we couldn't improve its quality. In the same way, organizations cannot improve execution until they clearly define and understand its underlying components.

At its core, **strategic execution is the ability to consistently translate priorities into results**. It connects vision to action—ensuring that goals are clearly defined, effectively communicated, and reliably achieved.

### What This Section Will Cover

In the coming installments, we'll break down the essential elements of execution, including:

- Where execution breaks down in organizations
- What high-performing organizations do differently
- Execution at the individual level
- Leading through the lens of execution
- A practical process for improving execution

### The Takeaway

Execution is embedded in everything your organization does. Strengthening it isn't about working harder — it's about working with greater clarity, alignment, and discipline.

The question to consider: **Is your organization executing by design — or reacting in the moment?**

NEW TO

## Microsoft Copilot joins you for Windows 11 PC setup



Setting up a new Windows 11 PC is a little easier now.

During the initial setup process, while your device downloads updates, there's a "Try now" button for Copilot.

This lets you open the Copilot chat window directly inside the setup screen, even before you've signed in with a Microsoft account. You can ask questions, explore features, and even generate images while your PC finishes installing.

Instead of staring at a progress bar, you can start getting familiar with Microsoft's AI assistant straight away.

**HD TECH**  
Security Delivered

# YOUR NEXT BEST EMPLOYEE WON'T BE HUMAN

AI FOR BUSINESSES

## What would happen if your competitor could suddenly get twice as much work done...without hiring anyone new?

No extra desks, recruitment fees or bigger payroll. Just more output.

That's the shift we're moving into.

You've probably heard people talk about AI and wondered what that means for a normal business like yours.

An AI worker isn't a robot. It's software that can think through tasks in a surprisingly human way.

It can read documents, write emails, summarize meetings, analyze numbers, draft proposals, create job descriptions, and even help write computer code.

If you're using Microsoft 365, you're already seeing early versions of this built into tools like Word, Outlook and Teams.

Right now, many SMBs are dabbling. Someone asks AI to tidy up an email. Someone else uses it to help write a report.

But the real advantage comes when a business is properly set up to use AI across the organization.

And this is where some companies are going to struggle.

## AI Usage Policies and How to Navigate Security Risks

AI tools work best when your data is organized and accessible. If your files are scattered across personal laptops, old servers and mystery cloud apps no one remembers signing up for, AI can't safely "see" the information it needs.

If your security is weak, giving AI deeper access could create risk.

Being ready for AI doesn't mean being technical. It means having tidy systems, clear permissions (who can access what), strong security, and leadership that's willing to adapt processes.

Because this isn't a small improvement.

The people building these tools are predicting dramatic leaps forward very quickly. Tasks that currently take hours could shrink to minutes. Research that once required days might happen in seconds.

When that becomes normal, businesses that can plug in AI workers smoothly will accelerate. Those that can't will feel slower, more expensive, and less responsive.

And this isn't about replacing your team. It's about giving them superpowers.

**And in the next few years, the businesses that win won't necessarily be the biggest or the oldest. They'll be the ones that were ready.**

If you'd like to discuss how AI could benefit your business,  
**Get in touch.**

## INSPIRATIONAL QUOTE OF THE MONTH

*"The fastest way to change yourself is to hang out with people who are already the way you want to be."*

*Reid Hoffman, LinkedIn co-founder.*