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## Navigating the Tensions of Digital Transformation in High Reliability Organizations

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## NAVIGATING THE TENSIONS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN HIGH RELIABILITY ORGANIZATIONS

Why do some organizations enable digital transformation and adjust to market conditions more successfully than others that face delays and fail to overcome resistance or rejection? The objective of my dissertation is to provide in-depth insights into the digital transformation implementation challenges in high reliability organizations. To explore how those complex and risk-averse business settings were primarily concerned with maintaining high reliability in avoiding catastrophes, navigating the tensions and various obstacles around digital transformation.

The central tenet of this dissertation is that, in addition to organizational, technological and business model dimensions, which have been the focus of prior research, employees across various organizational layers play an important role in the success or failure of digital transformation efforts. They need to adapt to changing working environments, contribute to developing new digital resilient working routines and enact appropriate cognitive processes. The findings report the multi-level interactions, tensions and paradoxes across different organization hierarchical levels. In addition, the research illuminates the specific self-protective behaviors through which employees derail the transformation process, particularly when the risk culture of an organization or the interest of individuals and groups within the organization are at odds with the vision of digital transformation.

### About the author

Martina Kersten-Poláková is originally from the Czech Republic, where she studied agricultural engineering, marketing, economy and management. As the Head of CoE Digital Risk in ABN AMRO, she is leading a team of dedicated experts responsible for digital transformation, risk, compliance, security and data privacy advisory. She completed her Bachelor's degree as an Auditor of Computer Systems in 2004 and her Master's degree (cum laude) in Information Technology and Management in 2006. Her diverse career experiences included roles as a part-time PhD researcher, ISF Council Member, Marketing Director and ICT and compliance management roles. In 2006, she relocated to the Netherlands and delivered solutions to various high reliability organizations - retail, utilities, defense and financial institutions. She shares her passion for secure, reliable and ethical digital transformation at various conferences and expert communities.



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