Explore and exploit for company growth

This is one of the quick win strategies in the COM³ quick win strategy series. Find all available quick win strategies at www.ruraldigital.eu.

NO COMPANY OPERATES IN ISOLATION

COM³ is COMpetencies for COMpetitive COMpanies. To develop such competencies, companies need to EXPLORE what is possible and then EXPLOIT it by lean methods and digitalization. No company operates in isolation. It is vital to be part of a relevant infrastructure and utilize any possible network for exchange of ideas and knowledge.

A roadmap in 3 stages is introduced as recommended process for company and competence development in a collaborative environment. Such a development should be sustainable for stakeholders, environment, and the profitability of the company. So, the development process should show on the bottom line and be resilient to changes that will occur.

THE ROADMAP

Stage 1: We should start by adopting the thinking from Disciplined Entrepreneurship where we utilize the following sequence
i. Understand who is the "customer"
ii. What do we do for the "customer"?
iii. How does the "customer" acquire our product or service?
iv. How do we make money from the "customer"?
v. How do we develop, maintain, or scale needed products, service, and processes?

Stage 2: And then from LEAN processes and management
vi. What is needed sequence (flowchart) with activity capacities versus demand?
vii. Where is added value or waste (MUDA)?
viii. Do we have overburden (MURA) or unbalanced load (MURI)?
ix. Is the variation in processes or activities too high?
x. Do we have proper plans for improvement and sustainability (A-3)?

Stage 3: And at last, we can do useful digitalization
xi. Where do we collect facts by sensors and Internet of Things (IoT)?
xii. How do we communicate and store information?
xiii. How do we do analysis or machine learning to utilize the facts from LEAN stage?
xiv. What kind of reports and key performance indicators tells us how to adapt or improve?
This roadmap is made to generate sustainable and profitable operations. It is tested in the COM³ project

KEY MESSAGE

- Establish what you do or should do for whom (EXPLORE) before developing product or processes.
- Develop the processes, products, or services by LEAN methods before any digitalization. Make them focused according to the exploration.
- Make sure all processes and services are sustainable and resilient by utilizing available resources and competencies (EXPLOIT).
- When you know what to do for whom and how related processes and services are good, then it is time to digitize.

University of Stavanger

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COM³

CIAM, Cluster for Industrial Asset Management, is a network and collaboration organization based in Stavanger, Norway. It is a collaboration between university and member companies. CIAM is established for mutual exchange of knowledge between university and companies in operation and maintenance and related issues. These areas are crucial for the cost and sustainability of the companies and their ability to deliver products and services.

SKAPE is a small organization owned by the county of Rogaland, Norway. Their main purpose is to help start-ups to develop and survive. This is done by tutoring each company and by seminars for providing the start-ups with needed knowledge. Skape asked CIAM to test out the 3-stage process in COM³ setting and intend to use it for new companies.

Take away from the test-run for 7 start-up companies were:

- It was essential to run the presentations in the proposed order.
- It was very useful to present each stage as a lecture, and then let the company make a presentation for the other companies about were they saw themselves in the context of the current stage. The discussion between the companies about each of the presentations was reported as very useful.
- The test-run was made over 3 weeks, allowing time for the companies to make presentations in the beginning of the next stage.
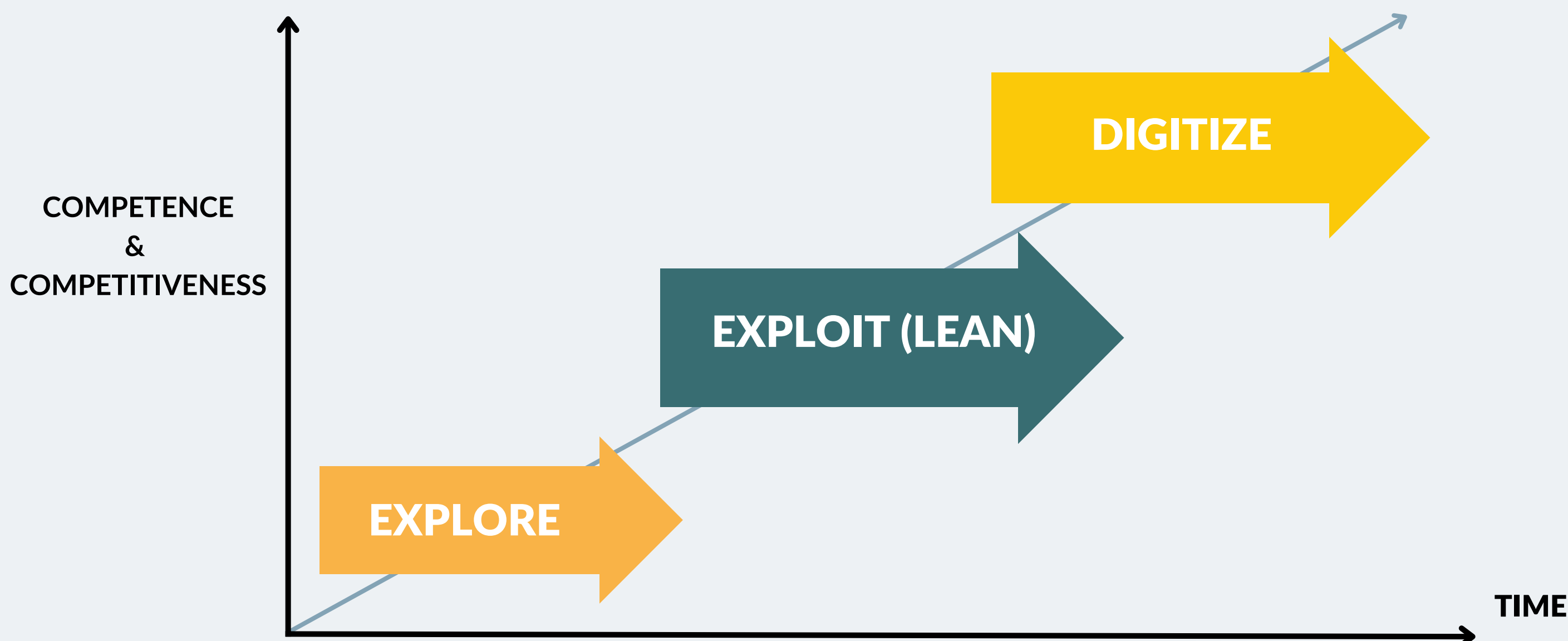
RECOMMENDATIONS

- When establishing a learning network like this, make sure that the companies are approximately at the same maturity level. This makes it easier for the companies to learn from each other.

- Make sure to use enough time running the process and give companies time between the stages to digest and make presentations before next stage.

THE COM³ PROJECT

Digitally enabled and transformed SMEs make rural areas more attractive places to live, work and invest in. Local and regional authorities need the right tools and competencies for supporting rural enterprises in their digital transformation.
COM³ partners develop a unique support model that strengthens and empowers local and regional actors in their role as innovation facilitators and enablers.

UNIVERSITY OF STAVANGER

This quick win strategy was written by Jan Frick and Odd Terje Høie from the University of Stavanger (Uis). The University of Stavanger on the South West Coast of Norway has an innovative and international profile, and is a driving force in knowledge development and in the process of societal change.

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