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Can Corporations Leverage Lessons Learned from DX Through AI Utilization?

Rethinking “AI-Ready,” and considering strategic environment preparation and direction of corporate transformation

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Summary

- With the advent of generative AI, the importance of AI utilization in corporations is increasing. As a result, there is an urgent need to develop an environment that enables the effective use of AI, known as “AI-Ready.” In Japan, AI-Ready has been promoted by both the public and private sectors since 2019. However, as of mid-2025, with the rapid spread of generative AI in business, the importance of this concept is finally being recognized in concrete terms.
- However, many corporations are still not AI-Ready. In particular, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) face barriers such as a lack of human resources, funding, and knowledge for AI implementation, highlighting disparities between corporations of different sizes. Even among corporations that have already implemented AI, its utilization is limited to individuals or departments, and there is a continuing lack of company-wide frameworks for AI utilization.
- AI-Ready, which is necessary for effectively utilizing AI, also plays a central role in realizing DX. When mapping AI utilization to the three stages of DX, (1) Digitization (digitization of business operations) corresponds to data preparation necessary for AI utilization, (2) Digitalization (efficiency improvement of business processes) corresponds to automation and support of business processes through AI utilization, and (3) Digital Transformation (business model transformation) corresponds to value creation and decision-making support through AI utilization. AI-Ready addresses the critical stages of (1) and (2), which form the foundation of DX.
- In the process of promoting DX, companies have often misunderstood “digitization of business operations” as being the equivalent of “DX,” and limited their efforts to partial optimization. However, the successful utilization of AI requires a strategic approach that incorporates the lessons learned from DX. First, it is essential to become AI-Ready by not only introducing technology but also establishing a company-wide direction set by management, developing

human resources, and fostering an organizational culture. Especially in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), AI adoption has not progressed as much as DX, and there is an urgent need for government and support organizations to enhance understanding, provide technical support, and develop talent, tailored to the scale of each company. AI is a technology that can help make up for the delay in DX and holds the key to corporate transformation. Therefore, preparation and support for fundamental transformation are essential.

Attention

This report is a summary translation. The official document is only in Japanese.