Workflow Modelling
(Sharp & McDermott)

Method

Frame the Process
Understand the current ("as-is") process
Design the new ("to-be") process
Develop use-case scenarios

Process Enablers

Workflow design
- Workplan for responding to an event

Information technology
- Focus on information systems

Motivation and measurement
- Explicit and implicit reward systems
- People do what they are measured on

Human resources
- Knowledge, skills and experience
- Training, organisational structure, job definitions...

Policies and rules
- Internal and external
- May be obsolete

Facilities design
- Workplace design and infrastructure
Context Framework
(aka a FW for putting analysis of Bps in context with analysis of IS Requirements)

Mission, strategy and goals
Business process
Information system
  - Presentation
  - Logic
  - Data management

Modelling techniques
Business process: process workflow models ("swimlane" diagrams)
Presentation: use case scenarios
Application logic: various
Data management: various

Process Workflow Model

[Diagram showing workflow model with steps and decision points involving departments and advisors]
Workflow-driven Methodology

Frame the process

Understand as-is process

Design to-be process

Develop use cases

Design user interface

Describe application processes (transactions) and business rules

Develop logical data model

Build overall process map

Framing the Process

- Identify a set of related processes, and develop an overall process map.
- Establish the scope of the target process.
- Review or document mission, strategy, goals.
- Initial process assessment.
- Process vision and performance objectives
- Glossary of terms and definitions.
- Observations on culture, core competences, management systems.

A business process is ...

A collection of inter-related work tasks, initiated in response to an event, that achieves a specific result for the customer of the process.

achieves a specific result for the customer of the process initiated in response to a specific event work tasks a collection of inter-related
A business process: Some Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggested Process?</th>
<th>Actually Called</th>
<th>If not a Business Process, why not?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Customer Relationship Mgmt</td>
<td>Process Area</td>
<td>Doesn't deliver a single, specific result.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire new Customer</td>
<td>Business Process</td>
<td>Delivers a single, specific result and meets all other criteria. End-to-end BP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setup new Customer</td>
<td>Subprocess</td>
<td>Too small – delivers specific results but they are intermediate results in an end-to-end BP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calculate Credit Limit</td>
<td>Activity/step/task...</td>
<td>Much, much too small – a single step or instruction. Possibly one line in a procedure or step in a use case.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Oracle CRM Process&quot;</td>
<td>System</td>
<td>Doesn't deliver a single, specific result; a system that supports multiple Business Processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Our e-business process&quot;</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>Doesn't deliver a single, specific result; technology employed by multiple BP's.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Framing the Process
(document the scope of the process)

- Process name in verb-noun format
- Event that triggers the business process
- Result achieved by the process
- Customer that receives the result
- Other stakeholders and the result(s) they expect
- 5 – 7 major activities or milestones
- Actors with a rôle in the process
- Mechanisms
- Timing and frequency
- Related processes

Overall process map

Simply a set of related processes:

```
Define Item
   ↓
Qualify Vendor
   ↓
Establish Supply Agreement
   ↓
Procure Item
   ↓
Pay Vendor
```

Overall process map for Supply Management area.
Identifying processes (bottom-up)

- Identify ‘milestones’ (results from processes)
- Link the milestones
- Identify cardinality (1:1), (1:m), (m:1)
- Set of (1:1)s identifies a process!
- Name the process
- Identify the triggering event
- Identify stakeholders and expected results

“Milestones”

- Contract is established
- Payment is received
- Prospect is identified
- Marketing meeting is conducted
- Invoice is issued
- Order is assembled
- Order is received
- Amount due is calculated
- Receive Payment
- Issue Invoice
- Receive Order

Analyse Links

(Add extra steps if necessary)
Form Processes

Identify Prospects
- Schedule Meeting
- Conduct Marketing Meeting
- Establish Contract
- Receive Order
- Assemble Order

Ship Order
- Calculate Amount Due
- Issue Invoice
- Distribute Payment

Identify stakeholders and expected results
Customer may not be the only stakeholder
Results must satisfy customer, but also the organisation
e.g. Customer order is satisfied (customer receives) and paid for (other criteria met)
Initial Assessment

2 Questions:
• What's wrong with the process anyway?
• What will be better when we're done?

Perspectives:
• Stakeholders
• Enablers
• Metrics

Metrics

• Give a guide of where to focus efforts - no point in optimising a process that occurs infrequently, or uses few resources.
• Allow us to evaluate success.
• Collect all the metrics available:
  • Volumes
  • Frequencies
  • Effort
  • Exceptions
• Need to be appropriate for the process, not the function

What metrics

How many?
How long?
How much effort?
Who's involved?
Efficiency
Cost
Assessment by stakeholder

3 essential groups:

- Customers
- Performers
- Owners

May also consider:

- Suppliers
- Government & other regulatory agencies
- General public
- Industry bodies

Assessment 1 - Customer

- Has the product or service got the right characteristics?
- How much effort is required of the customer?
- Does the process require too many interactions?
- Is the customer the only one monitoring the process?
- Are the rules & requirements reasonable?

Assessment 2 - Performers

- "Is this how you’d do it if you had a choice?"
- "Does this process help you meet your goals?"

- Remember that the performers are not the customers!
Assessment 3 - Managers & Owners

• Process must be efficient and profitable.
• In a not-for-profit setting, it must be fiscally responsible.
• Consider opportunity cost as well as actual cost.

Assessment 4 - Suppliers

"How easy is it to do business with us as compared to other customers?"

"What errors or actions on our part cause difficulties for you?"

Assessment 5 - Other groups

General public – ethics, safety, environment.
Local community – involvement in local initiatives.
Regulators.

Don't assume - ask!
Process Enablers (review)

Workflow design:
- Workplan for responding to an event
- Information technology
- Motivation and measurement
- Policies and rules
  - Focus on information systems
  - Explicit and implicit reward systems
  - People do what they are measured on

Human resources:
- Knowledge, skills and experience
- Training, organisational structure, job definitions...

Facilities design:
- Workplace design and infrastructure

WF-Driven Methodology:
- Framing (the ‘Why?’)
  - Understand As-Is
  - Design To-Be

Enabler perspective

Workflow design:
- Examine
  - + steps
  - + precedence
  - + flow
  - + handoffs
  - + decision points
- What is the one thing you would do to improve this process?
- What aspect of this process causes you the most problems?

Information Technology
- Primarily manifested as systems. In many cases the system is the business process.
- What’s old and doesn’t work?
- What’s new and might work? or has become a necessity?
- Not only need to do things right – need to do the right thing. Many application development projects automate the root cause of the problem.
- Work from the bottom up in the framework:
  - Are the right data being maintained, and is the right information being presented to each step?
  - Are the right activities being automated?
  - Are the user interfaces appropriate for the task and the person using them?
  - Is the flow of work automated wherever possible and appropriate?
Motivation and Measurement

- People don’t pay much attention to what management says; they pay attention to what management measures.
- Do the measures of performers support or impede process goals?
- NHS example – waiting lists!

Human Resources

- How do organisational structures, job definition and skills impact the process?
- Will the workforce need to change?
- Will new staff skills and training be required?
- Keep the unions involved.

Policies and Rules

Rules reflect the organisation’s bias, e.g. two possible policies on refunds could be:

- “Refunds up to a certain amount can be handled by a sales person on the retail floor, at their discretion, whether or not the customer has a receipt.”
- “All refund requests must be accompanied by a sales receipt and a completed refund reason form; they will be processed by the Customer Service and Accounts departments, and a cheque will be posted.”

The process will be different in each case.
Facilities Design

- Workflow design/physical infrastructure getting more attention
- Design of eg Offices detrimental to work being done
  - Cubicle seems private but can be overheard/disturbs others
  - For highly collaborative Workgroups with meetings etc need a meeting room and usually not enough available.
- Space, quiet, privacy & ability to avoid interruptions are key productivity enablers that are frequently ignored in modern office layouts (open-plan)

Enabler Perspective:
- Workflow design
- Information technology
- Motivation & measurement
- Human resources
- Policies and rules
- Facilities design

WF-Driven Methodology:
- Framing (the 'Why?')
- Understand As-Is
- Design To-Be
- Develop Use-Cases

Approve customer credit application

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Subprocesses</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Credit application is submitted</td>
<td>Complete application</td>
<td>Credit application is complete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluate application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decide on application</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inform customer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Set up customer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case for action

Vision

- We're losing market share to competitors offering fast or instant credit, and our image is declining.
- Our paper-based workflow involves many starts and stops, and involves several departments.
- We don't capture the right information on the application, so we need to go back to the Customer repeatedly.
- We can't answer Customer queries about in-process applications.
- The effort and delay aren't justified for small Customers who pose minimal risk as a group.
- Credit Representatives spend most of their time on small accounts, not on large ones where their expertise is needed.
- Unless we fix the process, our market share will continue to erode and closure of the operation is likely.

- We will offer instant, secured credit to small Customers.
- Applications from large Customers will be handled in two days or less.
- All staff will perform higher-value work, and have more authority – Credit Reps will focus on large clients, and Credit Admin Clerks will handle small applications completely.
- Independent surveys show that Customers perceive us as the Customer Service leader in our industry.
- Once the new process is implemented, our market share decline will slow, and within one year we will again be growing at 12% per year.

Actors

- Applicant
- Sales Representative
- Credit Representative
- Credit Administration Clerk
- Credit Bureau
- Word Processing Clerk
- Marketing Administration Clerk
- Customer Data Maintenance Clerk

Metrics

- 1 to 4 hours and up to 7 elapsed days per application
- 6 Credit Representatives
- 150 applications per month, growing 10% per year
- 75% approved, 25% declined
- 85% of applications come from small customers
- 90% of sales volume comes from 10% of customers
- 10% of applications come from previously denied Applicants, and 10% from former Customers
- Small Customer bad debt write-offs are less than .2% of sales, and overall they are approximately 1% of sales.

The Environment

Any redesigned process must fit into the environment and 'culture' of the organisation.

Issues:
- Mission and strategy, especially strategic differentiation.
- Organisational culture.
- Core competences.
- Business context and focus.
Business mission, strategy and goals

Mission:
• what we do, and who we do it for.

Strategy:
• Why would a customer choose us?

Goals:
• performance targets, to focus effort and gauge progress.

Strategic discipline

Study by Treacy & Wiersema (in The Discipline of Market Leaders) shows that leading companies choose to excel in one of three disciplines:
• Operational excellence
• Product leadership
• Customer intimacy

"Also rans" make no choice or choose to be good at all three

Strategic disciplines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Three Disciplines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operational Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Intimacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Operational excellence**
  - Sharpens distribution systems and provides no-hassle service
  - Acts in an ad-hoc, loosely-coll and ever-changing way
  - Provides solutions and help customers run their business

- **Product leadership**
  - Nurtures ideas, translates them into products, and market them successfully
  - Acts in an ad-hoc, loosely-coll and ever-changing way
  - Pushes empowerment close to the point of customer contact

- **Customer intimacy**
  - Acts predictably and behaves "one size fits all"
  - Acts in an ad-hoc, loosely-coll and ever-changing way
  - Enforces and thinks "out of the box"
  - Measures the cost of providing service and of maintaining customer loyalty
  - Is flexible and thinks "have it your way"
Some process improvement goals...

- Flexible in meeting the needs of individual customers
- Easier for an entry-level workforce to adopt with relatively little training and support
- Fewer customer interactions
- Absolute auditability and adherence to applicable regulations
- Accessible anytime, anywhere, via any medium
- Easier to standardise and maintain at international locations
- Less time and effort to integrate new suppliers or customers into the process
- More suitable for support by commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software

Beliefs and Culture

- Organisational behaviour stems from a few basic beliefs:
  - "There's always a better way"
  - "We have a bias towards informed action"
  - "Decision-making should be close to the action"
  - "Our clients are trying to cheat us, the public misunderstands us and the media are out to get us. (and our employees couldn't care less)"

Identifying Culture

1. Are there stories or corporate legends that provide examples?
2. What factors continually get in the way?
3. What factors are seen as expediting progress?
4. How are decisions made?
5. Are all employees free to offer opinions or challenge decisions?
6. Is the orientation towards the individual or the group?
7. Whose opinion is valued?
8. Are there any identifiable behaviours that are rewarded or punished?
9. Is there a high tolerance for ambiguity?
10. Does the organisation favour results or following procedure?
11. Is the organisation cautious or will it take risks?
12. Is the emphasis on relationships and social interactions, or on tasks and getting on with the job?
Core Competences

- What are we really good at?
- World-class organisations have up to five or six core competences that their core products or services are based on.
  - "Core competence is the collective learning of the organisation, especially the capacity to coordinate diverse production skills and integrate streams of technologies. It is also a commitment to working across organisational boundaries."
  - "organising around strategic business units is problematic because they under-invest in core competences, imprison resources and bind innovation" (Prahalad & Hamel)
- We can scale down the idea of a Core Competence to the process level - design processes that play to the strengths of the performers.

Scoping questions - 1

1. What is the primary business objective driving this project?
2. What is the current situation?
3. Is this essentially a business process improvement project?
4. What is the technical or project objective?
5. Which business data will or will not be involved?
6. Organisationally who will be impacted by this?
7. What areas outside the process will be impacted, or will require interfaces?

Scoping questions - 2

8. Are there other initiatives we should be aware of?
9. What could go wrong?
10. What could go right?
11. Have any significant issues or difficulties arisen?
12. Are there any constraints we need to take into account?
13. Have any important decisions already been made?
14. Have project structure and personnel been identified?
15. Are you really the sponsor?
References


