



The Rate of Adoption is the Key to Results “Business Process Management”

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Executive Insights
Gordian Transformation Partners Inc.
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Introduction

Business Process Management (BPM) in its current incarnation is perhaps the most sophisticated set of management information tools available. As always, selection and deployment are critical, but to achieve meaningful, relevant, and sustainable bottom-line business improvements, adoption by the organization will be the critical factor.

There are many examples in the business world where the selection and deployment of an IT tool has been left solely to the IT department. Business process owners are then told how marvelous this tool is and "... oh by the way, you are expected to improve productivity 30%, (or improve customer service response time 100%, or reduce scrap and/or rework 20%)". The two critical missing ingredients are: 1) understanding and 2) adoption. In this particular example the business process owner sees only that his or her workload has just increased dramatically, that there it will be a huge learning curve to overcome, and that the resistance from the employees will be enormous.

The most effective method to overcome these significant obstacles is to involve the business process owners very early. If one goes back to prime principles, the business process owners are the ones who can and will correctly define their operation. Armed with this knowledge and married to well researched information from the IT department, it is not only possible but extremely likely that the learning curve will be dramatically shortened, ownership will increase, and the anticipated return on investment (ROI) can and will be delivered in an expedient fashion.

A Guide for Sustainable Implementation of BPM:

Here are a number of critical success factors, based upon practical experience that has been found to have a direct and dramatic correlation to realized sustainable results in a BPM implementation effort.

1. **Behavior Change:** Recognize BPM for what it is – significant organizational and individual behavior change. Effective implementation will require significant effort to get actual behavioral changes from the people that perform the processes - employees will be required to perform the process differently than before. The total overall implementation effort required can be dramatically reduced by creating process documentation that supports behavior change.
2. **Plan the Work and Work the Plan:** A workable, multidiscipline detailed work plan is critical. All stakeholders need to be part of the review & buy-in process. The time invested, early on in the BPM effort to achieve this objective, will be paid back many times over during the course of the project. There is an up-front need to balance all the initiatives (high value –

quick return/low resource requirement vs. high value – longer term return/high resource requirement).

With the correct initial analysis and quantification, it is dramatically easier to break projects into the right pieces that will deliver value over time within your business. The ongoing goal, from beginning to end, is to provide real interim solutions all along the timeline, starting with staged delivery within the existing organization. *Using this approach will ensure that ROI begins to accrue as soon as possible AND at the end of the effort all the interim pieces fit together.*

3. **Communicate:** Create a shared vision with a compelling outcome. Demonstrating a strong commitment to that outcome, and getting the message right for those in the organization responsible for work processes is essential. Additionally, setting expectations which reflect appropriate action at the individual contributor level (something that they will be measured on) will significantly reduce the “pain” of future process changes
4. **Understand Your Processes:** The critical success factor for results realization lies within understanding the business processes. It is critical that this not be an abstract or theoretical exercise. The actual performers of actual tasks who face actual problems everyday with the current processes MUST be the main players. *This will benefit the organization well if conducted properly.*
5. **Quantify:** Quantify problems, opportunities, and solutions in terms of their business impact and value. Quantify business value and the business impact of process problems and solutions (increased productivity, reduced costs, etc.) to stakeholders. The objective of implementing BPM is to generate solid sustainable results, which in turn will require process improvement methods and techniques that contribute to business value in a quantifiable way.

Conclusion

Recognition that the rate of adoption by the organization is the key to the rate, which meaningful, relevant, and sustainable bottom-line business improvements will be achieved, is an essential starting point for the development of an effective implementation plan. The front-end activities of objective setting, measurement, communication, and behavioral change impacts will pay enormous dividends in both deployment and the sustainability of achieved results.

For more information about “Transforming Business Processes” or to contact the author, send an email to info@gtpsolutions.com or call Gordian Transformation Partners at (678) 353-3378.