

IMPROVEMENT SKILLS CONSULTING LTD.

“Simply, improvement...”



People + Process =
Charity Performance

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Charities need to be sustainable

Voluntary sector organisations need to be financially sustainable in order to maintain services to their beneficiaries. To ensure your organisation is sustainable, as well as fundraising, you need vision, improved working practices and appropriate technology to help support your organisation make long-term changes. To be more efficient and work smarter you must have the right people doing the right things.

Processes?

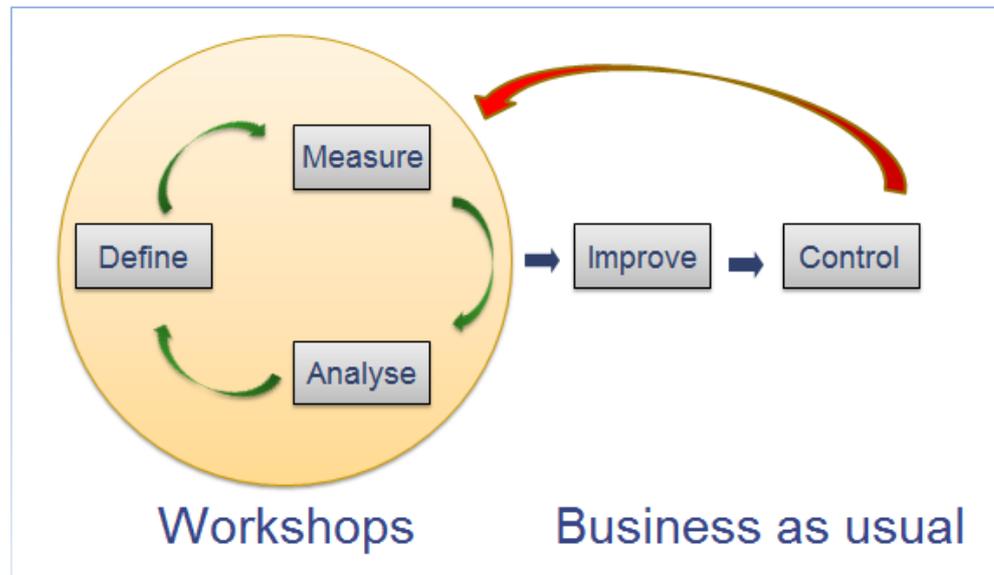
Processes probably aren't the most exciting thing on a charity senior manager's agenda, but the combination of “people” plus “process” is the ultimate determinant of performance. You can take great people, highly motivated, highly skilled, but put them in a lousy process and the process will win every time.

“Process: it's what we used to call work before you consultants got involved.”

Typically, there are two starting points for organisations that recognise the need to improve their processes:

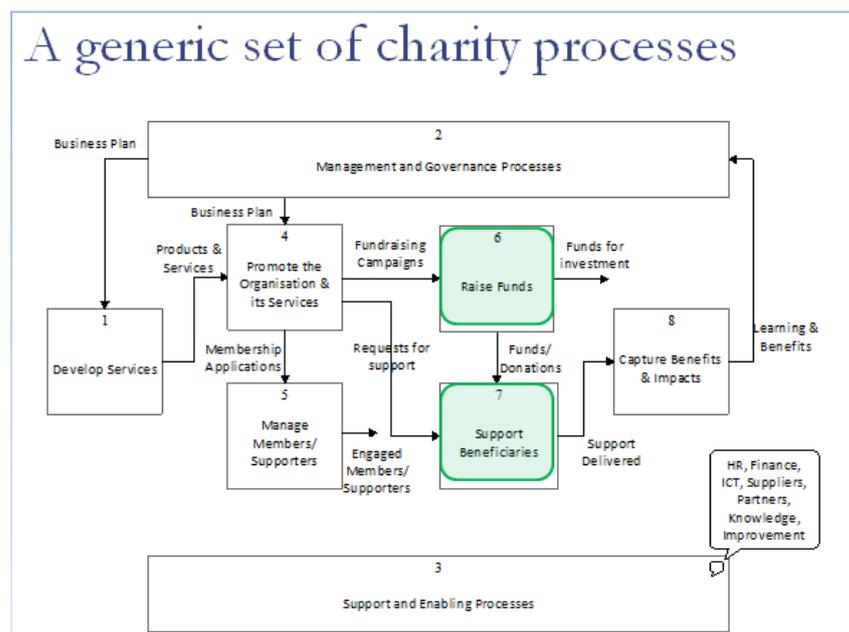
1. You need to be able to demonstrate a consistent, professional approach to managing the organisation
 - This is “Process Management”
2. You need to fix some problems, or achieve a step-change in performance
 - This is “Process Improvement”

Whatever your starting point, you need to do it in teams, led from the top of the organisation. The people operating today's processes are usually the best ones to work on improving them to make the organisation fit for tomorrow.

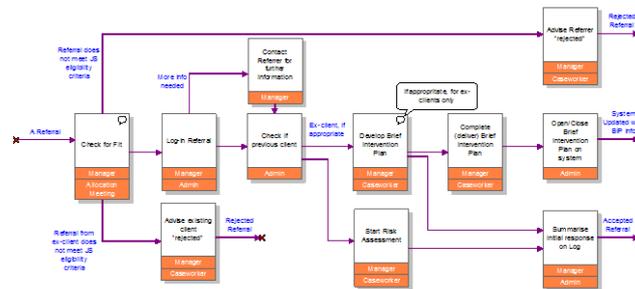
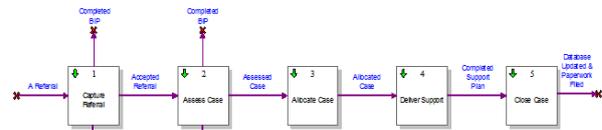


Teams, in workshops, can use their creativity to solve process issues such as bottlenecks, causes of rework and delays. The role of line managers is to ensure improvements are implemented and continue to achieve the required performance as part of “business as usual”.

As with organisations in the private and public sectors, any effective process approach in the voluntary sector will require a top-down view of the organisation’s key processes. These will comprise the management/ governance processes and support processes as well as the key, externally facing processes. It is these latter processes that you have to excel at in order to raise funds and support your beneficiaries. Each of these top-level processes should be “owned” by a Director or senior manager who can act as a sponsor for improvement.



The role of a process improvement team is to “drill-down” from the top-level processes, find out exactly how work is done in the organisation and then improve it.



Process Mapping is one of the tools your teams will need to use, but they’ll also need to be able to measure current performance and to develop creative solutions for better ways of working.

What is “improvement”?

As with any approach to performance improvement, you have to decide where you need to improve. Process must follow strategy. You have to decide if your process focus needs to address one or more of the following:

- Efficiency – driving out cost and waste
- Effectiveness – achieving better outcomes for your beneficiaries
- Capability – improving people and systems
- Flexibility – becoming more agile, responsive and faster at addressing beneficiary needs



My Top Tips to get you started are as follows...

- Pick something important, but do-able
- Decide whether it needs to be standardised first, or improved first
- Do it with a team, supported by a senior Sponsor
- Set a short deadline to come up with improvement ideas (4-6 weeks)
- Process Mapping IS NOT Process Improvement
- Understand today’s processes before you even think about adopting new technology
- Measure and communicate the improvements

Our track record

Our consultants have been helping organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors to manage and improve their performance and processes for over two decades. We have supported European Quality Award winners in their approach to process management.

We are not wedded to a particular methodology. We help clients identify their improvement goals and then develop an approach to achieve these; invariably ensuring their people develop the skills to make further improvements themselves.

Please contact us for more information about how we can help you to manage and improve your processes.

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