

High Impact Business Process Reengineering

Business needs to be speedy, nimble, and innovative to prosper. Too often unresponsive, slow, and tunnel vision is the operating mode. Increasing competition, shrinking markets, increasing cost structure, declining profitability, low productivity are all reasons that eventually management recognizes that it is time to work in new ways.

Business Process reengineering is the rethinking and redesign of a business system, the processes, organizational structures, management systems, and jobs for the purpose of achieving dramatic improvements in performance. The reengineering focus is on process not function. Processes cross organizational boundaries and are generally independent of formal organizational structure. Examples of process are developing a new product or writing a proposal.

Tackle the high impact business process or processes, those that will yield the greatest business benefits or those most in conflict with the business vision. Those will differ in each organization. An example might be the order fulfillment process for one organization, the customer service process in another. Likely outcomes might be time or cost reduction, increased output, or higher quality,

Getting started simply takes a roadmap from which to guide the process. The high level steps involve:

- 1) Develop the business vision and process objectives,
- 2) Identify and prioritize high impact processes,
- 3) Identify critical or bottleneck processes,
- 4) Measure the current processes,
- 5) Identify technology levers,
- 6) Brainstorm new process approaches,
- 7) Prototype new processes and,
- 8) Implement technical and organizational aspects.

These steps are oversimplified for this paper but know that each step has many subparts and details behind it. How each step is broken down to its subparts depends to some degree upon each organization. Resources and timelines are applied to the subpart and the entire process is managed.



Focusing on the high impact processes by definition will touch a number of individuals across organizational lines. The importance of executive sponsorship and stellar communication can not be overemphasized before, during, and after process reengineering.

Successful redesign takes leadership, management buy-in, active participation of many, and enthusiasm by all. The process of reengineering can take weeks to months depending upon how many processes are being tackled and how each organization works. Achieving the stated business objective once the process redesign is in place can take months to years.