



Competitive Business Solutions

WHY ARE STEERING COMMITTEES IMPORTANT FOR IMPLEMENTING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES?

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How often have you seen where a value stream map was executed, projects were developed, a roadmap was agreed upon and after that there was a loss of momentum and eventually back to business as usual? Was the effort to perform a VSM, develop a CI roadmap, but to not execute the roadmap? Who is responsible for executing the roadmap? The Operations Director, the sponsor of the mapping event or Program Director? All the effort up to this point is very transactional and real change has not occurred. Or in other words the really hard work!

Most organizations try to deploy CI initiatives by functional direction versus committee's and almost always the functional priorities will prevail over the enterprise improvement efforts. We say to ourselves "what happened?" Why did we not execute to our roadmap? Who is at fault? Rationalizing the situation most companies determine that they do not have the right people to execute the work or create change. The truth is that we all need something greater than ourselves to be accountable to. Just like a corporation needs a board of directors. So, does a CI Roadmap. It requires a group of individuals to represent the Value Stream map and the improvement projects.

The CI Steering Committee is responsible to oversee the activities of the improvement initiatives, cheer their successes throughout the organization and properly resource the effort to alleviate functional bias from overshadowing the greater improvement effort of the business. Most importantly they are to provide follow up accountability for implementation. The CI Steering Committee keeps an organization on " True North ". By having a steering committee, an organization is



less likely to change direction, cancel projects or efforts without enterprise discussion. Independent leadership actions are minimized with this type of organization commitment.

CADENCE & STRUCTURE IS SO IMPORTANT TO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Leadership commitment to the steering committee is essential to the success of a Continuous Improvement initiative. By establishing a cadence for the steering committee, establishing basic roles for the committee (Chairman, Vice Chairman, Finance, etc.), by laws and dedicating a “room” for this meeting to take place will establish a foundation for the organization to galvanize it’s change around. By meeting every other week, reviewing the value stream map, its agreed upon improvement initiatives, results to date, establishing priority and giving permission to execute the initiatives by assigning resources — you are half way through the battle. Otherwise the value stream mapping effort was a fact-finding effort not a method to establish enterprise improvement.

WHAT DOES A CI STEERING COMMITTEE “LOOK LIKE”?

A CI Steering Committee can be as big or small as you need for your business, but typical committees are 3 – 6 people consisting of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Finance Representative and key process owners. (For example: Director of Operations, Quality or HR for Process Owners). There should be a set of by-laws, meeting agenda, materials provided on a

timely basis, meeting minutes taken at every meeting and a meeting room with the ability to project or post the Value Stream Map, CI Roadmap, Critical Metrics and Follow Up information required to keep initiatives moving forward. The most important element of the steering committee is to have one and provide the follow up accountability for implementation of the organizations CI initiatives.

STEERING COMMITTEE’S PROVIDE OBJECTIVE EVIDENCE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT COMMITMENT

Many businesses are audited by 3rd parties to meet a specific competency criterion. Internal audits are typically designed to “ pass ” the next ASQ, ISO, API audit to continue providing a product or service to a specific industry. This is very important for the public reputation of a company and its ability to provide product, but does it mean that it is a successful company? Not always. By committing to a CI Steering Committee, a company is demonstrating an internal accountability to not only itself, but to shareholders and ultimately customers. This is a demonstration in self oversight that cannot be regulated — it becomes a way of doing business ... very, very well.

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Ready to optimize the transformation of your organization? We can help.

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