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Many companies realize that making business process improvement a key competency within their organization is critical to both tactical success and tangible project savings. While they may see the need for a process Center of Excellence (CoE) to lead the way towards organizational-wide process optimization, many organizations either don't make it to the launch pad to begin with, or launch and fizzle quickly. Why?

While the very idea of a CoE brings with it some obvious benefits to the business (centralized documented processes, corporate standards and adopted methodologies, etc.), gaining internal support, collaboration and cooperation is difficult at best. How to sell the idea and gain buy-in is the first hurdle. And, without ensuring your CoE efforts are aligned to strategy and identified target business outcomes, any efforts to standardize, disseminate and utilize are ultimately doomed to fall short of desired goals.

With the fundamental basics of a CoE out of the gate being pretty straight forward, albeit incredibly challenging to achieve (improve processes/make sure they're documented and communicated, and that elusive white whale - adoption throughout the organization), the ever-increasing complexities in the business world demand the need to include larger scale Digital Business Transformations (DBT) into the mix.

DBT is all about building adaptive processes (specifically emphasizing where there are customer touch points). The idea is that the person creating the process can and should change it on the fly as needed, with the logic that they are in the best position possible to adapt the process to make the customer happy. With Business Process Management (out of necessity) now being driven by a focus on acquiring and keeping customers (not just back office automation), DBT is the perfect accompaniment to help ensure successful customer retention and acquisition for the business.

Now, the downside of such a flexible DBT approach is that Governance and Risk Mitigation become an even bigger challenge for an organization. But step away from the ledge – that downside can be turned into an upside. Ultimately your CoE can be victorious by understanding from the outset that Business Architecture and Risk/Performance Management

are components that need to be included. You'll ensure application of business transformation throughout your processes – not only across the value chain – but across the business.

If you've just gone into an inadvertent catatonic state based on the perceived enormity of the above, let's take a few minutes and break this all down into digestible chunks. Before long you'll see how implementing a successful CoE is critical to applying DBT to achieve your business goals. You can get through to the other side. Successful CoE = more successful company.

Buy-in from the Top

The CoE team ultimately needs to be championed by someone with a clear view into many areas of the business, such as a CEO or COO. They will understand that it's not just about cost savings, but improving metrics such as customer satisfaction and will best be able to communicate strategic goals for the business.

Visibility and Traceability

You need to have a clear view into both prescribed as well as adaptive process to understand interdependencies and resource interactions.

Governance

You need to have clearly identified values and goals to keep improvisation from becoming chaos. Identifying and managing change remain critical to effective transformation.

Managing Risk and Assessment Metrics

Especially for adaptive processes, any organization with regulatory or other business requirements will still need to verify that controls are in place to achieve effective Risk Mitigation even as the processes are adapting. It is also crucial to monitor key performance indicators so immediate reaction is feasible.

Training

You need to ensure all process participants are up to speed on current best practices and are aware of changes as they are brought online. Assigning ownership is not enough to drive process performance improvement.

Make Internal Customers Happy

In order for a CoE to be favorably thought of, internal customers need to be happy with the services provided. These folks need to have a deeper understanding of their processes and how to go about effectively managing them. A happy customer is bound to come back for more, and is your best advocate to others.

Managing Business Transformation

At the heart of Digital Business Transformation is a rich business model. Like the processes that are at the core of it, an effective business model is constantly undergoing change whether it be organizationally, operationally, or even strategically. A CoE is the perfect place to own and manage changes to such a business model.

Ultimately, it's clear that the best path forward to increasing productivity and removing inefficiencies from your organization, all while staying aligned with company priorities (which include keeping customers you have, and acquiring new ones), is by setting up a process Center of Excellence that includes the flexibility of Digital Business Transformation.

Want to learn more?

If the concepts outlined in this article are of interest to you, please visit www.igrafx.com or call 503.404.6050 to find out more.