Value Stream Mapping

Future State Design Questions

In *Value Stream Mapping*, we recommend a three-step process for designing the future state of your value stream: 1) determine the "right work," 2) make the right work flow; 3) manage the right work. The following questions provide a starting point for making appropriate design and management decisions.

General Questions

- What are the business issues (service quality, product quality, speed, capacity, cost, morale, competitive landscape, impending regulations, etc.) you wish to address?
- What are the customer's expectations? What does the customer truly value?
- What measurable target conditions are you aiming for?
- Which process blocks add value or are necessary non-value-adding?
- How can you reduce delays between processes?
- How can you improve the quality of incoming work at each process?
- How can you reduce work effort and other expenses across the value stream?
- How can you create a more effective value stream (greater value to customers, better supplier relationships, higher sales conversion rates, better estimates-to-actuals, lower legal and compliance risk, etc.)?
- How will you monitor value stream performance?

Specific Design Questions

Touch Points
- Are there redundant or unnecessary processes that can be eliminated (e.g., excessive approvals)?
- Are there redundant or unnecessary handoffs that can be eliminated or combined (e.g., work that can be done by a single department)?
- Are there processes that need to be added?

Delays

- Is work being processed frequently enough? Can you reduce batch sizes or eliminate batching completely?
- Do you have adequate coverage and available resources to accommodate existing and expected future workloads?
- How can you create more capacity or reduce the load at the bottleneck?

Sequencing and Pacing

- Is the work sequenced and synchronized properly? Are processes being performed too early or too late in the value stream?
- Are key stakeholders being engaged at the proper time?
- Can processes be performed concurrently (in parallel)?
- Would staggered starts improve flow?
- How can you balance the workload to achieve greater flow (via combining or dividing processes)?
- Do you need to consider segmenting the work by work type to achieve greater flow (with rotating but designated resources for defined periods of time)?

Variation Management

- Is there internally produced variation (e.g., end-of-quarter sales incentives)?
- How can you level incoming workload along the value stream to reduce variation and achieve greater flow?
- Can you reduce variation in customer or internal requirements? How can necessary variation be addressed most effectively?
- Are there common prioritization rules in place throughout the value stream?

Technology

- Is redundant or unnecessary technology involved?
- Is the available technology fully utilized?
- Are the systems inter-connected to optimize data movement?

Quality

- How can higher-quality input be received by each process in the value stream (to improve the %C&A metric)?
- Is there an opportunity to standardize and error proof work?

Labor Effort

- How can you eliminate unnecessary non-value-adding processes?
- How can you reduce the labor effort in necessary non-value-adding processes?
- How can you optimize value-adding processes?

Value Stream Management

- Do policies need to be changed to enable better performance?
- Are there organization / departmental / reporting structures that can be changed to reduce conflicting goals or align resources?
- Do existing performance metrics (if any) encourage desired behaviors and discourage dysfunctional behavior?
- What key performance indicators (KPIs) will you use to monitor value stream performance?
- Who will monitor the metrics? How frequently? Who else will results be communicated to?
- What visual systems can be created to aid in managing and monitoring the value stream?
- Are the key processes within the value stream clearly defined with key performance indicators, standardized appropriately, and measured and improved regularly?
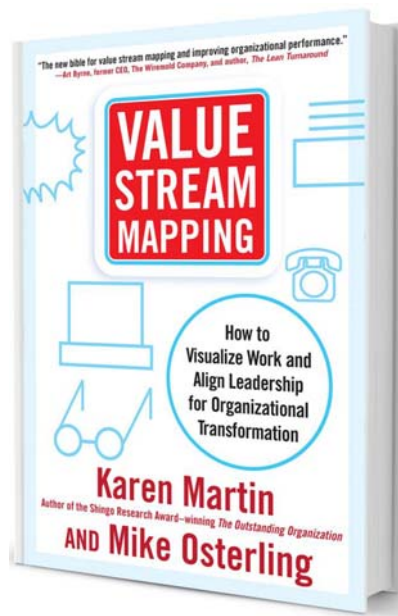
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