6.1. Patching the blind spot in implementation of IT process models

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Popular process models for IT Service Management are usually independent of the size of the organisation. That is, they specify which processes should exist in any IT service organisation, but not how many people or resources are needed. Scalability makes for applicability but, when it comes to implementation, leaves many 'how-to' questions unanswered. For instance: how to choose between multifunctional process teams and functional departments? This chapter discusses an implementation strategy that reduces the gap between model and practice while remaining generic. This is achieved through joint application of a process model specific for IT service management (Integrated Service Management or ISM) and a generic model for self directed work teams (Recursive Process Management or RPM). Both models are explained briefly, followed by a stepwise account of implementation issues.

Introduction

Scalable process models can be difficult to implement

Many currently popular IT service management concepts specify which processes are needed for good service management. These concepts may range from limited checklists for process structures to comprehensive total management concepts. Examples are HP's 'IT Service Management Reference Model', IBM's 'IT Process Model' and several models recently published for the IT service management community, such as R2C, IPW, IIM, SIMA and ISM (IT Service Management Yearbook, 1999).

A useful characteristic of these IT service management concepts is *scalability*. Scalable process models are designed for organisations ranging from very small to very large. For instance: in the IPW model an IT service provider is expected to explicitly organise incident management and problem management, no matter how many or how few people are involved. From the process point of view, scalability is a natural characteristic. It is much like a recipe: no matter how much beer you brew, the recipe and brewing conditions remain the same. When it comes to *implementation*, however, the number of people involved and the amount of services delivered becomes important. It will determine how detailed procedures are written, how many layers of management are needed, how formal or informal communications will be, to what extent standardisation is required, etc. In addition to this, at implementation

time other management areas and aspects get involved, such as Planning & Control, HRM, Communication and the company culture. Here too, size makes a difference: large organisations behave differently from smaller ones. Also, the project wise implementation of a process model can be very different between large and small organisations. Scalable process models, therefore, cannot be installed 'off the shelf'.

An implementation framework
What kind of models do we need to design, set up or improve an organisation? In other words, how do scalable process models fit into a larger framework? The following section is our method to get the big picture.

– To start with, organisations often have some frame of reference that helps them in designing their structure. This may include written or unwritten visions, philosophies, values, missions, strategies, etc. It provides a general direction for many decisions to be made when implementing a process model. We like to visualise this category of an implementation framework as an umbrella, covering all other categories.

– We may further discern between synthesis and analysis. In many organisations, structures are chosen *and* evaluated and processes are designed *and* audited, plans are made *and* progress is reported. Switching between building up and measuring results is a natural way of developing or adjusting organisations in changing environments. The activities of synthesising or analysing, though, are quite different. Synthesis often is a creative process with unpredictable outcome, while analysis can be a routine job with (preferably) replicable outcomes. This also influences the concepts, models and tools used for synthesis and analysis. Typical tools for analysis include requirements and criteria: questions that can be answered with 'yes', 'no' or 'to some degree'. It is the type of question found in EFQM self assessment
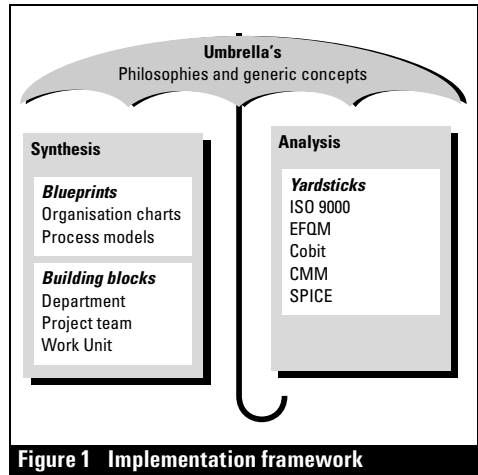
**Figure 1   Implementation framework**

guides, ISO 9000 standards and IT models like CobiT, CMM, SPICE, etc. Tools and models for synthesis more often prescribe structures or flows of events, or describe methods to arrive there. The process models we started with mostly fit into this synthesis category.

– We split up the synthesis category into 'blueprints' and 'building blocks'. Blueprints include scalable process models and templates for hierarchical structures. They usually picture the organisation as a whole and have limited detail. Building blocks, on the other hand, are models for the cells, molecules and atoms of an organisation, the smallest groups of individuals that are managed explicitly, for instance the 'department' or the 'project team'.

The resulting framework may be depicted as in Figure 1.

The blind spot
The building blocks category seems to be the blind spot in this framework. This category usually gets the least attention, especially the 'department' and the 'project team', which are accepted as facts of life. Everybody knows a department often carries out routine tasks, has a hierarchical leader, a plan, a budget and an
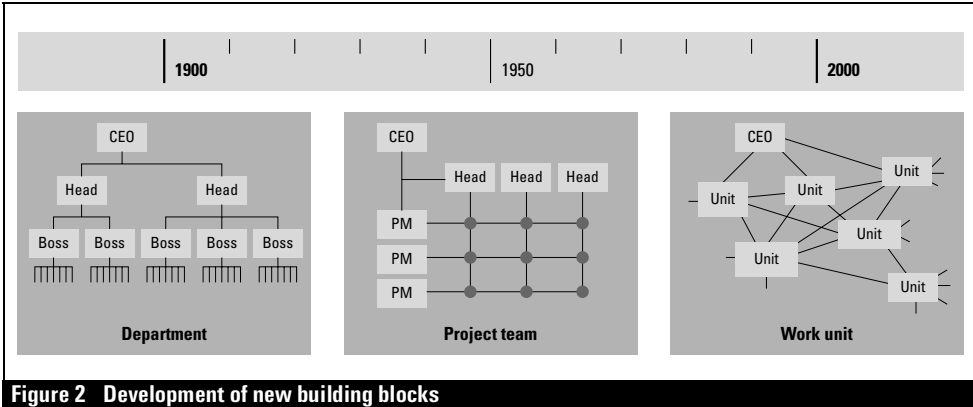
Figure 2   Development of new building blocks

undefined life span. Similarly, it is common knowledge that a project team usually has a limited life span, a time phased plan, milestones, a budget, matrix type relations to the rest of the organisation and a non-hierarchical leader. Both departments and project teams can be stacked *recursively* into hierarchies, which makes them universal building blocks. For a long while, these two were all you needed to put an organisation together.

On the other hand, building blocks is where the action is. In order to explain this, the following diagram provides a (simplified) historic overview (Figure 2):

—   The department is probably the oldest 'cell' in organisations, with a 'genetic code' dating back to prehistoric times. It had been very useful in the industrial revolution when untrained labour and routine jobs were the standard. Complexity was limited and cross-departmental issues could often be managed along hierarchical lines.

—   The middle of the previous century saw the rise of project management as a new discipline. This may be seen as a reaction to growing complexity in general: larger projects, shorter lead times, increased quality requirements. To manage this, specialists needed to co-operate directly, without hierarchical by-passes. Departments and project teams complemented one

another well: one covered routine tasks, the other unique assignments.

—   At the beginning of this century, complexity has increased further. Organisations need to address more issues, have to do it faster and have to involve more people in decision making. Direct co-operation is no longer the domain of specialists in project teams, but now also reaches routine jobs. This has contributed to the development of a new building block, suited for routine tasks *and* horizontal co-operation across functional borders. It exists in many forms: process teams, autonomous task groups, mini companies, etc. The new building block is commonly referred to as 'self directed work teams' or SDWT's. SDWT's not only enable process oriented work, they also add to a stimulating working environment. Decision lines are shorter, which enables informal problem solving (a major motivator). SDWT's are also positively related to business responsibility and personal development.

When SDWT's and departments serve the same purpose (routine jobs) and SDWT's are better adapted to current complex business environ-ments, then why not convert all departments to SDWT's? A major roadblock is that many SDWT concepts are, by design, incompatible with traditional management concepts based on

hierarchy and control. Implementing such concepts often requires a major mind shift from management and employees. Many organisations would rather stick to familiar structures or restrict themselves to 'tilting' their hierarchy in the direction of their processes. Process models cannot flourish in these circumstances, they just add complexity to an environment that already has enough.

The following paragraphs show a way to make some progress in this situation.

– The paragraph about Integrated Service Management (ISM) goes into the complexity of the IT service environment. An adapted scalable process model is presented, suitable for use as a *reference* model in conjunction with an SDWT concept.

– The paragraph about Recursive Process Management (RPM) takes a critical look at SDWT concepts. An alternative is presented ('work unit') designed for better interfacing with hierarchical structures.

– The paragraph about implementation shows how the two concepts match in a redesign of an IT service organisation.

Integrated Service Management (ISM)

Background

In the early 90's, the Datacenter department of a large telco's IT organisation developed and implemented IPW (for a description, see the relevant section in this Guide), a model of a process oriented IT services organisation. Since then, a lot of experience on the subject of process oriented organisations was gathered, but the IPW model, originally based upon ITIL (CCTA's IT Infrastructure Library), was only slightly adapted to developments. A fundamental update never took place. Yet, in the same period a growing number of constraints revealed themselves. Therefore, the organisation started looking for a new reference model that could contribute to the diminishing of these constraints. During this

search, in 1999, the model ISM (Integrated Service Management) was developed and targeted at updating the traditional, operations concentrated process implementation (IPW) and redesigning it with the strategic and tactical processes that were not yet sufficiently involved.

ISM was developed in a highly structured step-by-step approach:

1. Establish the constraints.
2. Determine demands.
3. Develop premises & paradigms.
4. Develop the reference model (Figure 3).
5. Publish and present the model.
6. Check and apply the model in different (internal and external) environments.
7. On-going development.

Steps 6 and 7 are executed simultaneously.

Constraints

Seven years after the deployment of IPW, the lack of development of this method had lead to several constraints. The organisation was not ready for the fact that almost all services had an integrated nature: the role of service integrator had not been developed explicitly. The focus was still very much on the operational processes, the tactical and strategic processes lacked management attention: many responsibilities were not covered by the model. The product of the organisation was still very much infrastructure focussed instead of service focussed. The general acceptance of process-orientation had faded away: hierarchical and project responsibilities were still valued more than process responsibilities.

Demands

The new reference model should be able to cope with at least the following demands:

a) *Acceptable* and *simple.*
b) *Recognisable* and *applicable.*
c) *Maintainable*.
d) *Process-focussed*, *service-focussed* and *customer-focussed*.
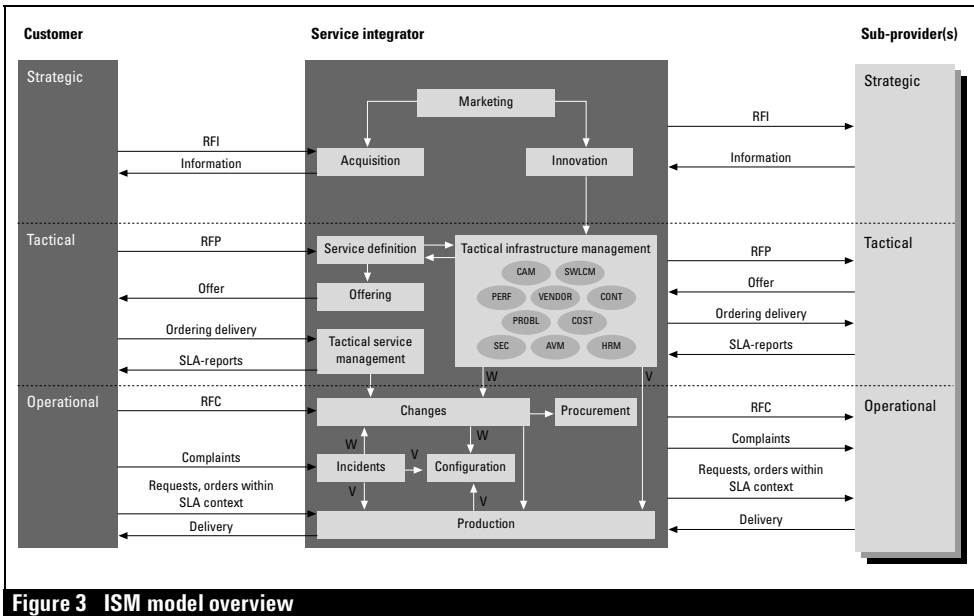e) *Deductible* and *reproducible*.

Figure 3   ISM model overview

f)   *Manageability of complex and integrated services*.

Paradigms
The premises are described in paradigms that will be used as building blocks for the model. The following paradigms are developed:
a)   *Delivery paradigm* – describing the relation between customer and supplier.
b)   *Infrastructure paradigm* – describing the elements used to produce the service.
c)   *Organisation paradigm* – describing the relation between Organisation, Processes and Means.
d)   *Management paradigm* – describing the relation between Strategic, Tactical and Operational level.
e)   *Integration paradigm* – describing the integration of sub-services into one delivery.

Each paradigm creates specific values to which the model should comply.

Publication and presentation
The ISM model was published in 'The IT Service Management Yearbook 1999' (in Dutch, Van Bon, 1999), in this Guide (in English, Van den Elskamp c.s.) and it was presented at a National Dutch congress 'The World of IT Service Management', February 1999.

Checking and applying the model in different (internal and external) environments
During the last 12 months the model was presented to various parties. In the meantime the model is already being used as a reference model by several organisations. Some of them are using the model to improve their organisation, some of them use it to design new functionality for support-tools. In addition, the model is used for training purposes (Service Management Awareness).

On-going development
The experience of the last year made it clear that ISM is well applicable for many purposes in service organisations, but can still be improved in some areas. The Strategic processes, in particular, should be better adapted to company vision and mission. At the tactical level, the

Tactical Infrastructure Management processes should be worked out in greater detail. These adjustments from empirical use will be made in the first quarter of 2000.

Recursive Process Management (RPM)

Introduction
RPM (Recursive Process Management) is an integrated management concept for self-directed work teams. It outlines a 'micro management system' for 'work units', with a special focus on efficiency and transparency. RPM was conceived in 1992 as the primary product of Quality Research and has been subject to on-going development ever since. Applications have been undertaken mostly in The Netherlands, in public and commercial organisations, including IT service management.
To introduce this concept, the following paragraphs discuss two of the main ingredients of RPM:
- The structure model of RPM, designed to link SDWT's to classical hierarchy.
- The dialogue model of RPM, designed for management control in learning organisations.

RPM can be implemented independently, but this chapter focuses on joint implementation with ISM.

Structuring organisations
The RPM structure model is designed to *detach* the network of teams in an organisation from the relatively static formal hierarchical structure. This creates more options to model the people network after the process network. To enable management control, teams are *linked* to managers as described below.
The building block provided by the RPM structure model is the 'work unit': a team of workers complemented with managers who are directly involved and selected specialist staff (Figure 4). Basically, a work unit is a team with a 'shell' around it. The team inside the unit shares
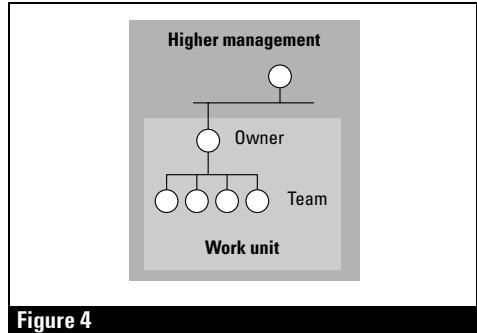
Figure 4

characteristics with self-directed work teams, process teams, and socio-technological concepts like autonomous task groups. The addition of managers and staff people serves to achieve a self-reliant and outcome responsible building block, effective from the day it is installed. Table 1 lists the main characteristics.

Managing results and quality
Managing a network of work units asks for an adequate dialogue between top management and work unit owners (Figure 5). This dialogue covers various issues: process design, policy, results, quality assurance, improvement actions, personnel, labour conditions, safety, environment, etc. When top management and unit owners stay tuned to each other, there is a double bonus: work units are better informed and can make better decisions while top managers get to trust management skills of units and can delegate accordingly.
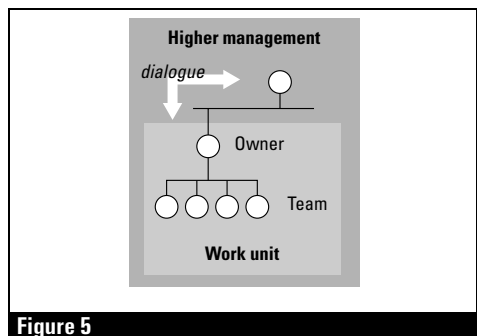
Figure 5

Table 1   Main characteristics of the 'work unit'

- A work unit manages and operates a specific process, a subprocess or a combination of process tasks. Processes are preferably segmented in such a way that all work units deliver *distinct products*. Sometimes this implies multi-disciplinary teams (for instance to improve customer orientation), other times it has advantages to bring together specialists in work units (for instance to benefit from scale factors).
- A work unit performs *repeating tasks* (production and/or co-ordination) for an undefined period of time (in practice as long as the process exists). This implies demands on quality assurance and continuous improvement. It also means a work unit is not a project team.
- A work unit maintains *network relations* with higher management, other work units and possibly external stakeholders. Work units are also concerned with the interests of their own members. In practice, work units operate in a tension field of interests, which requires competence in relation management.
- A work unit is controlled by higher management, in a participative style. This requires continuous dialogue in which top management is asking questions rather than giving orders.
- One of the team members is the *team leader*. This implies co-ordination tasks and a role as spokesperson. A team leader is responsible for good communication, but not for results (see 'owner', next). Team leadership can be fixed or rotational.
- The highest manager in the work unit is the *owner*. The owner reports to the person who initiated the work unit (mostly higher management). The owner is responsible for work unit results and work unit competence immediately after he/she is appointed. The owner, therefore, needs to be a competent person and needs a hierarchical position towards the team.
- The team can be *self-managed*. The owner remains responsible for results, but delegates in that case specific management tasks to the team leader. Contrary to outcome responsibility, self-management is not standard; the self-management level and the development pace may vary (the implementation paragraph has a model for this).
- Development towards self-management has consequences for the *team size*. Effective and efficient meetings must be possible, as much as members being able to recognise their contribution. Small teams (typically 5 to 10) often work best.
- A specific situation occurs when a team is cross-departmental. However, the same definition applies. All involved managers participate in the work unit and the manager where all reporting lines join (how ever high that may be) is by definition a member and owner of the work unit. It is good practice, however, that the owner delegates all daily management tasks (who, what and how matters) to the other managers in the work unit. What remains for the owner is to inspire the work unit and the occasional arbitration, often only for a few hours per year. Work units may, therefore, be cross-departmental but may also coincide with departments, which makes the concept backwards compatible (Bootsma, 1995).

The practical approach

How to achieve an effective, and not in the last place, efficient dialogue? The approach taken in RPM is to gather generic questions that can be asked to all work unit owners, for instance: 'what were the disappointing trends last quarter?', 'what causes are known?', 'what measures are taken?'. This has led to a current list of approximately 60 generic questions, designed to:

- save work and time on both sides;
- help develop a common language;
- improve understanding between work units;
- enable faster setting up of new work units;
- enable more effective and efficient auditing.

Introducing a dialogue model with 60 questions, all at once, may not be welcomed with enthusiasm. The alternative is to start with a minor selection and to grow stepwise to a professional dialogue. The benefits are:

- further reduced initial workload and reduced resistance against change;
- more opportunities to evolve the method, develop routines and get used to increased transparency.

An example is included in the paragraph about implementation.

An additional learning effect is built in by dividing difficult questions into easier ones. For instance, the list does not contain a question like: 'what are the work unit's long term objectives?'. Instead, five questions are asked in a specific order:

- Who are the work unit's primary stakeholders?
- What are their main interests?
- Given these interests, what success factors should the work unit focus on?

– What indicators measure trends in these success factors?
– What long term target levels are negotiated for each indicator?

In answering these questions, the tension field around a work unit may sooner be perceived as a challenge to communication skills, rather than as dilemma, bureaucracy or inertia. It may also help people to diverge from narrow perspectives like 'technical perfection' or 'minimum costs' to a balanced set of objectives that is easier to communicate with all stakeholders. Finally, it prevents the selection of indicators based exclusively on availability of measurements (such as the average time before someone picks up the phone).

The list of questions is generic in the sense that it can be used in all work units ranging from technical units, support units to management teams and staff units. However, prior to implementation, the list needs to be customised to the language and culture of an organisation.

To achieve the intended learning effect, all questions and answers need to be published within the organisation, for instance, through an organisation manual, bulletin boards or an intranet web site (RPM includes various templates). This will increase the transparency and will create conditions for transfer of skills. Transparency, on the other hand, can also be a threat. It therefore needs to be introduced with care and requires, at least, some good examples from the top managers.

Summary

RPM work units are teams of workers completed with managers who are directly involved and selected specialist staff. Work units are self-reliant 'shops' that collectively run the network of processes of an organisation, based on continuous dialogue with top management, short internal decision lines and customised self management. Work units, in this sense, are a modern alternative to departments, suited for complex organisations with highly intertwined processes, high demands on quality and a high speed of change.

Implementation

In this paragraph, the joint application of ISM and RPM is described as a stepwise project approach. The content is drawn mostly from implementation into an IT service department consisting of approximately 70 people, the ISA department of the Philips DAP division, located in Drachten, the Netherlands. We will discuss the issues that are specific to the combination of a blueprint and a building block. The following, therefore, is a collection of annotations rather than a generic implementation guide.

Phase 1: Focus

Setting objectives
As with any organisational change project motivating people to participate is one of the primary issues for the implementation team. A useful starting point can be to conduct intake interviews. These interviews can serve to build closer relations between the implementation team and the organisation, to gather material for pilot projects and to get an overall sense of the workplace atmosphere. To mobilise people, the objectives of the intended change need a connection with real issues or problems. A sense of priority (or even urgency) may be created by asking customers for their opinions. Similarly, an employee satisfaction survey or a hidden rules survey (Scott Morgan, 1994) may uncover roadblocks. Another useful approach involves making cognitive maps that reflect the shared ideas of the management team (Eden and Ackermann, 1998).

A well formulated paragraph about the objectives is in itself a powerful change tool, worth spending a few hours on. To start with, the objective paragraph should include a line of motivation

straight from the concern strategy to the intended change. If it is not relevant to the business, why bother? The other crucial line of motivation is the working environment. Somehow, the intended change should contribute to more challenging, varying or otherwise rewarding jobs, or the initiative will lack support from its primary target group. An example:

> 'The increasing speed of change, the increasing intertwining of processes and the increasing demands on quality have been main factors in establishing this change project. They have led us to the conclusion that central control, as a management concept, has reached its limits in our organisation. Adding more people to headquarters would make things worse rather than better. The only option is to reinforce decentralised decision making. At the same time this is a fortunate option for all people working here. It means that more of us will be involved in management matters and that decisions regarding daily work will be made closer to where the action is. It is also good news for young people with newly attained college degrees, starting a professional career. It means their future working environment here will be better suited for the skills and expectations of their generation.'

The next thing anyone expects from a well written objective is direction. This is about the first opportunity to get a bit more specific on the type of change that is ahead. It may ask for some explanation, for instance:

> 'The change project sets out not just to create a new organisational chart, but to create a new type of building block for organisation charts: the *work unit*. A work unit will contain a team of workers, one or more managers and specialist staff, to form a competent group of people. This group will be focused on a specific product, able to carry outcome responsibility from day one with the perspective of developing their own degree of self management.'

The remainder of the objective paragraph can gather all kinds of criteria that are important to special interest groups. An important group is middle management, where people are quite often reluctant to step into self-management initiatives. A final reminder: objectives need to be 'SMART': Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound (or, if you wish, 'Ambitious' and 'Realistic').

Choosing and customising tools

Language is a key to change. When a vision is formulated in appealing and unambiguous words, people will sooner be able to exchange positive views about it during their coffee and lunch breaks. Especially when fundamental changes are at stake, as with the introduction of work units, it is well worth the effort to write a glossary, a FAQ or another brief reference document. This should include a definition of 'work unit' or whatever synonym will be used. During this phase, a practical approach would be to introduce a concept text in the management team and work towards a consensus statement.

Another focus point in this phase is the dialogue between management and work units. First, the basic idea of a dialogue, based on fixed questions and internal publication of answers, needs to be agreed upon. In a following step, composing a prototype question list may help building consensus and identifying issues. The result may look like Table 2. This example has very few questions to enable a quick start for all work unit owners. During the next phases of the project, the list may develop into, for instance, a 'compact', a 'standard' and an 'advanced' edition, to match process maturity objectives for various work units. Inspiration for questions may well be drawn from process maturity models like CMM or quality assurance standards such as ISO 9000. Work unit maturity is independent from team autonomy. For instance: a well performing and competent work unit may have a team focusing on routine tasks and, consequently, an active owner. At the same time, another well performing work unit may have an autonomous team, saving the owner a lot of work. Team autonomy, therefore, is a dimension in itself. To avoid pushing teams into more or less autonomy than adequate, it may be

Table 2

Theme	Questions
Identity Reason for existence, who are members, who is owner, where are they located, etc.	1. What products/services does the work unit deliver? (possibly related to reference processes) 2. Who are the team members making these products/services? 3. Who is owner of this work unit? 4. How often does the owner discuss short term progress with higher management? 5. How often does the owner discuss short term progress with the team or the team leader? 6. How often are team meetings conducted?
Managing results Stakeholder interests, short and long term objectives, measuring, making adjustments	7. Who are the work unit's primary stakeholders? 8. What are their main interests? 9. Given these interests, what success factors should the work unit focus on? 10. What indicators measure trends in these success factors? 11. To what extent are current results satisfactory? 12. What improvement actions are planned or being executed?
Managing quality What can go wrong, how to assure quality, where to describe it	13. What are the major work steps (process description, flow chart, etc.)?

Table 3

Level	Characteristics
5. *Entrepreneur*	The teams develop their product and do internal marketing
4. *Organise*	The teams propose modifications in process design and team memberships
3. *Control*	The teams plan, do, check and act (PDCA cycle)
2. *Teamwork*	The teams have a group assignment and meet regularly to deploy work and solve problems
1. *Professional*	The teams provide quality products, but members receive individual assignments

useful to distinguish levels of autonomy. Each team then has its own autonomy target level and due date, independent from the work unit or process maturity level. Switching between autonomy levels is equal to shifting management tasks between owner and team leader. Table 3 contains the five level model used in the RPM concept.

A critical part of every management system is its representation in a model. This model may take the form of a policy note, an organisation manual, an intranet web site, or any description of how the organisation is managed. The model, however, is not the system itself. Management systems are in the first place agreements and interactions between working people, not paper or digital descriptions of this. Nevertheless, prints and screens are invaluable in explaining the design of the management system to employees and auditors. Especially during fundamental changes in the management system, the visible description of the new system needs to be available early to serve as a prototyping and learning tool. Installing it later and using it only to consolidate stabilised practices leaves a valuable integration opportunity unused. Intranet has a major advantage over paper manuals as it has the potential to provide all work units with a real time publishing tool. Phase one is a good moment to install such a system (see the example in Figure 1), so it is ready for use in phase two.
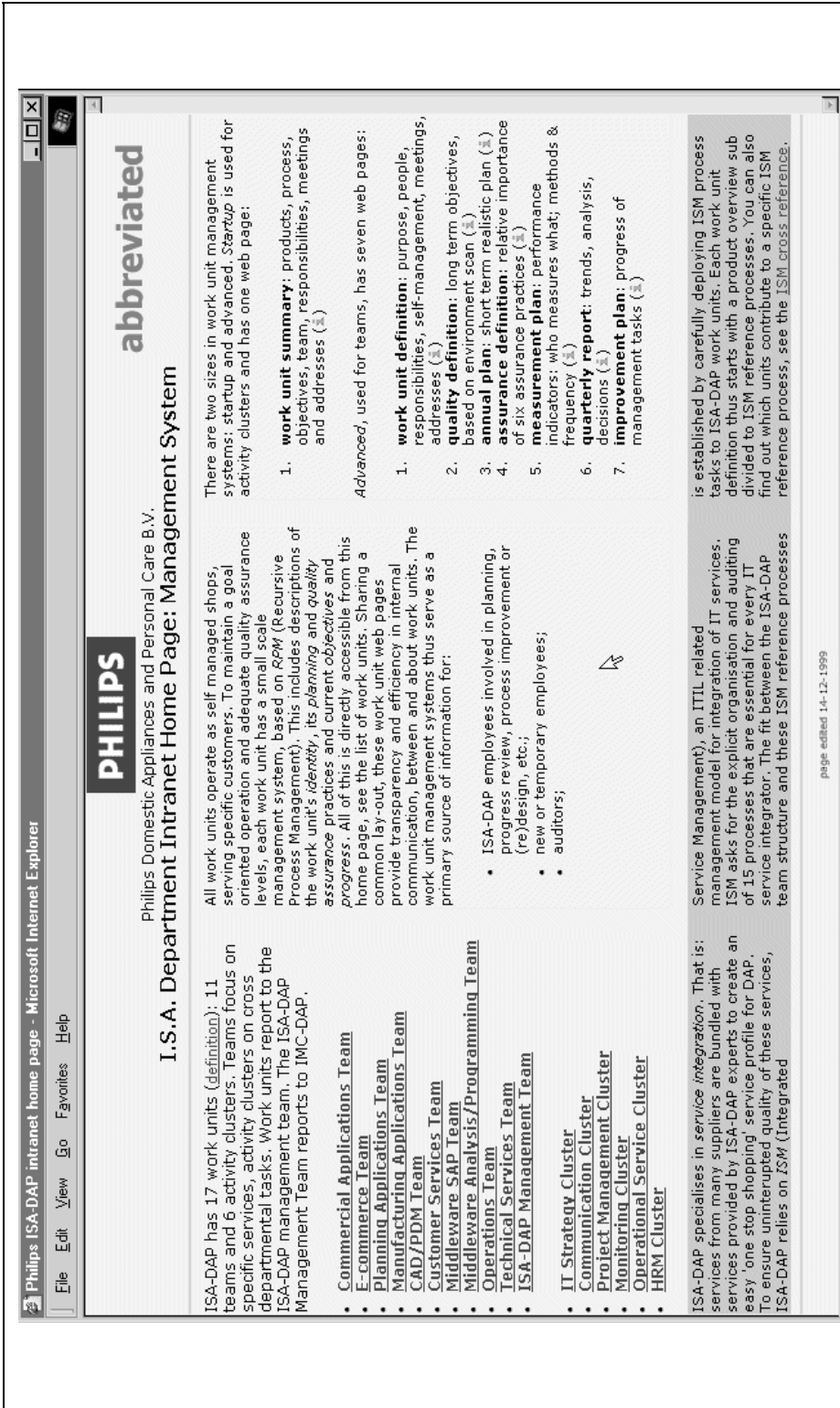
Philips ISA-DAP intranet home page - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File   Edit   View   Go   Favorites   Help

PHILIPS

Philips Domestic Appliances and Personal Care B.V.

I.S.A. Department Intranet Home Page: Management System

abbreviated

ISA-DAP has 17 work units (definition): 11 teams and 6 activity clusters. Teams focus on specific services, activity clusters on cross departmental tasks. Work units report to the ISA-DAP management team. The ISA-DAP Management Team reports to IMC-DAP.

- Commercial Applications Team
- E-commerce Team
- Planning Applications Team
- Manufacturing Applications Team
- CAD/PDM Team
- Customer Services Team
- Middleware SAP Team
- Middleware Analysis/Programming Team
- Operations Team
- Technical Services Team
- ISA-DAP Management Team

- IT Strategy Cluster
- Communication Cluster
- Project Management Cluster
- Monitoring Cluster
- Operational Service Cluster
- HRM Cluster

ISA-DAP specialises in *service integration*. That is: services from many suppliers are bundled with services provided by ISA-DAP experts to create an easy 'one stop shopping' service profile for DAP. To ensure uninterrupted quality of these services, ISA-DAP relies on *ISM* (Integrated

All work units operate as self managed shops, serving specific customers. To maintain a goal oriented operation and adequate quality assurance levels, each work unit has a small scale management system, based on *RPM* (Recursive Process Management). This includes descriptions of the work unit's *identity*, its *planning and quality assurance* practices and current *objectives* and *progress*. All of this is directly accessible from this home page, see the list of work units. Sharing a common lay-out, these work unit web pages provide transparency and efficiency in internal communication, between and about work units. The work unit management systems thus serve as a primary source of information for:

- ISA-DAP employees involved in planning, progress review, process improvement or (re)design, etc.;
- new or temporary employees;
- auditors;

Service Management), an ITIL related management model for integration of IT services. ISM asks for the explicit organisation and auditing of 15 processes that are essential for every IT service integrator. The fit between the ISA-DAP team structure and these ISM reference processes

There are two sizes in work unit management systems: startup and advanced. *Startup* is used for activity clusters and has one web page:

1. **work unit summary**: products, process, objectives, team, responsibilities, meetings and addresses (⬛)

Advanced, used for teams, has seven web pages:

1. **work unit definition**: purpose, people, responsibilities, self-management, meetings, addresses (⬛)
2. **quality definition**: long term objectives, based on environment scan (⬛)
3. **annual plan**: short term realistic plan (⬛)
4. **assurance definition**: relative importance of six assurance practices (⬛)
5. **measurement plan**: performance indicators: who measures what; methods & frequency (⬛)
6. **quarterly report**: trends, analysis, decisions (⬛)
7. **improvement plan**: progress of management tasks (⬛)

is established by carefully deploying ISM process tasks to ISA-DAP work units. Each work unit definition thus starts with a product overview sub divided to ISM reference processes. You can also find out which units contribute to a specific ISM reference process, see the ISM cross reference.

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Figure 6 Intranet home page

3 1 5

Phase 2: Structure

The second phase is about 'doing the right things', as a prelude to the third phase which moves on to 'doing things right'. To start with, a structure of work units needs to be established. This may involve the following steps.

– Making an inventory of all current activities in all current working groups. When a management system or quality assurance system exists, this should be relatively easy. The inventory should include all control and support functions, such as HRM, planning and control, facility management and quality assurance.

– Cross checking with the ISM process model to find white spots: activities prescribed by the model that are *not* carried out in the current organisation.

– Deciding to adapt the current structure or redesign it. Skip the next step when adapting the current structure.

– Work top down from the ISM process model to compose a network of teams. This may be a complex puzzle, requiring several iterations and many decisions on team size, specialisation or multifunctional teams, process interfaces, etc. Note that the resulting structure is a list of teams, not a hierarchy of managers. The next step is to design a flat and simple hierarchy. The art is to follow the team network as closely as possible and to ensure that most teams report to just one manager. A close fit between hierarchy and the team network, however, is a 'want', not a 'need'.

– Reallocate activities to teams, including the missing ones as found in the cross check.

– Identify ISM processes that involve more than one member of the top management team. Form process co-ordination teams including one member from the top management team and all team leaders involved. In large organisations, co-ordination can have multiple layers.

– Transform all teams (operation, support, staff and co-ordination) to work units by adding managers according to reporting lines and by adding specialist staff as required. Pick team leaders or, if appropriate, let teams choose themselves.

– Check the results by answering identity questions from the dialogue model for each work unit.

– Check again with all involved managers and employees.

– Decide upon starting dates and publish the new structure through the organisation manual, bulletin board or intranet.

The structure phase may, therefore, have various outcomes: for instance a tilted organisation or a functional organisation with additional process co-ordination. Basically, the organisation now has two structures: a dynamic work unit structure, closely following changes in the network of processes and a static hierarchy following the work unit structure on a distance. The advantage is that changes in processes (installing or terminating processes, changing interfaces, size, workflow, etc.) require less changes in the hierarchical structure of the organisation, the consequences are for work units only (for instance the team changes from departmental to cross departmental).

A separate thread in phase two is redesigning all control, development and support functions to cater for a new audience: work units. This requires a collective effort from all staff people and support people who will be asked to deliver services to work units rather than to departments. This involves more than renaming, since work units are in many aspects different from departments. The result may include a new or adapted training program, changes in the reward and recognition program, adaptations in the planning and control cycle, a new audit plan, new signposts and phonebooks, etc. The amount of work in this part of the project can be significant but usually requires little outside help. Start with top staff people and agree on objectives, methods and planning first.

Phase 3: Managing results and quality

Phase three is about achieving results and quality with the newly formed work units or 'doing things right'. This needs to start with setting two types of objectives for each work unit: output and competence. To some extent, these are independent. An incompetent work unit *may* get good results (probably not for long) and a competent work unit *may* fail to do so (force majeure or bad luck). In both cases, having both output and competence objectives is an advantage: it may help detecting risks or it may prevent frustrating competent people with unnecessary interventions.

- Setting competence objectives requires insight into current competence in management of processes. To measure this, the current process management practices should be compared to a standard. In our case this involves a 'process management maturity scan' in which work units are investigated along the lines of the ISM reference processes.
- Setting output objectives is much more integrated in the (adapted) management control cycle. Triggered by this cycle, management will be frequently asking work units to publish reports, plans and other documents or intranet pages.

In this phase, a limited number of questions are used to create focus on essentials and to get going with obvious improvement opportunities. Acceptance and motivation are more important at this stage than correctness or completeness. Changes should be recognisable for work unit members and customers. The ambition is moderate and the dialogue is more qualitative than quantitative.

It needs to be made very clear who are expected to take action in the dialogue. The person asking questions is the same that initiated the work unit, often higher management. Answers are provided by the work unit owner. Delegation from the owner to the team is not relevant yet, the owner needs to feel at home with the dialogue

first. Also, it needs to be clear that answering questions is not an audit or one time exercise, but a recurring event in a management control cycle.

The effort in writing answers can in this stage be kept to a minimum. For instance by agreeing on the amount of text. A format or work sheet is hardly necessary, but can easily be made. A template may be needed when answers are published through the intranet.

When the first answers to the selected questions are gathered, it may appear that the questions have been interpreted differently or that writing styles are different. This is a good moment to discuss definitions, amount of text, keywords or full sentences, etc. There is no need to get this all on paper. A collection of good examples may do as well and may even have a better learning effect. Another aspect here are unwritten rules about transparency, such as 'hiding facts leads to mistrust', 'showing bad results yourself is better than letting others discover them'. Such rules exist everywhere (Scott Morgan, 1994) and can work for or against the organisation. Setting examples is a way to influence them, for instance by openly discussing how learning from mistakes contributes to better results.

During this phase, it may be useful to have coaches, facilitators or (internal) consultants available to help work unit owners and teams to get started. Another option is to offer training modules. The implementation may further include a stimulation program for 'quick hits' or ideas. Depending on the size of the organisation, a communication plan may be useful too, to ensure two way communication between top management and the organisation during the implementation.

Phase 4: Evaluate

Management systems, like the one implemented, have their own mechanism for evaluating: the management control cycle and the auditing function. Both ensure a steady stream of evaluation about both output and competence to top

management. The evaluation of the implementation project, therefore, does not include output measurement or an audit, but merely checks if these functions are in place in the management system and perform as they should.

Conclusions

Implementing IT service management process models can be tricky since a scalable models cannot predict organisational structures in detail. This chapter argues that there is a blind spot in the building blocks that organisations are composed from: 'departments', 'project teams' and similar. The 'department', in particular, is less adapted for current complex business environments. Newer building blocks are being developed, such as 'self directed work teams', but these are often not compatible with the hierarchical structures.

An effort has been made to close the gap between model and practice. From one side of the gap, an IT service management process model was used: Integrated Service Management (ISM). ISM was not used as a blueprint for the organisational structure, but as a checklist and as a model for assigning process co-ordination tasks in a management team. From the other side of the gap, a model for self directed work teams was used: Recursive Process Management (RPM). RPM has been designed to connect self-directed work teams to normal hierarchical structures and to enable immediate results as well as a customised learning curve towards self-management.

The theoretical work on joint implementation of ISM and RPM started in 1998. The first implementations were not finished when this text was written and bottom line results are, therefore, not available yet. The combination of ISM and RPM, on the other hand, has turned out to provide a sound implementation framework. It has made it much easier to develop flexible organisational structures and creates conditions to unify the often disjunctive functions of control and quality assurance. It has also helped to speed up the initial phases of projects and has contributed to consensus and ownership.

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