Down Under

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Highly Effective Process Winners

*The recent BP Trends survey on the State of BPM highlighted that nearly half of the managers and organizations never or rarely document processes, use process metrics, or properly manage processes. Why is this the case? What are the intrinsic root-causes for this poor showing? We thought we would look at these questions from a different perspective and use the analogy of body, heart, mind, and spirit introduced by Stephen R. Covey in his book, **The 8th Habit, from Effectiveness to Greatness.***

State of BPM

The 2010 BPTrends State of BPM Survey shows, in the table below, that only about 20% of managers perform key process documentation, improvement, and management tasks at least most of the time.
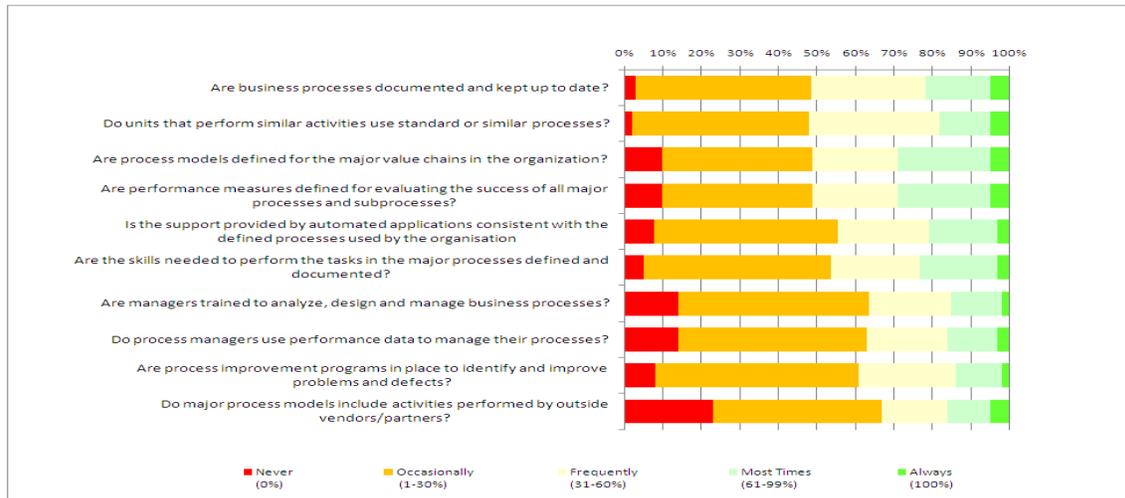
Given that BPM has been around in one form or another for many years, this is very disappointing. Historically, you may put this down to lack of education of the importance of business processes, both within the formal education system and in internal business training. But this has started to change over recent years, and we would all hope for better.

We are sure that all of us who are passionate about the importance and benefits of working on business processes have all tried many ways of sharing this enthusiasm with other managers and organizations. It is challenging, as we all know. So, we thought we would try again with a different approach.

Many managers and executives know of Stephen Covey's book on *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and his follow-up book on the 8th habit (*The 8th Habit, from Effectiveness to Greatness)*. It is this 8th habit from which we wish to draw an analogy to examine what you need to be successful in BPM. Covey suggests that you need mind, heart, body, and spirit.

Steve Covey's Intrinsic Model

- *Mind* = Vision

  When the mind is fully developed, we gain vision, the ability to discern the highest potential in people, institutions, causes, and enterprises. Vision is about setting the direction and "dream" for the organization. If you do not know where you are going, how do you know when you have arrived? But a vision is of no use unless you have people "on-board." The first challenge is to ensure sufficient key managers and staff are "on-board." Perhaps the best way to ensure this is to engage with the managers and staff early and have them engaged in the creation of the vision. Let them feel they have been fully engaged and own it. They are far more likely to "make it happen" if they feel they own it.

- *Heart* = Passion

  When we develop a wise heart we will feel the passionate fire of conviction, the flame that sustains the discipline needed to achieve the vision. This can only occur if we have ownership and engagement with the vision and it flows from the Mind.

  Passion flows from finding and using our own unique voice to accomplish great things. It comes from having a team environment, where team really stands for Together Everyone Achieves More. As we all know there is no "I" in team and when this is really implemented well, it will minimize the impact of organizational and individual politics.

- *Body* = Discipline

  We need discipline to transform the vision into reality. Discipline comes by combining vision and commitment. It comes from ensuring managers and staff have the discipline and commitment to ensure the vision is turned into effective execution. Execution is everything! Without it, all you have is a nice dream (vision). You need to make stuff happen!

- *Spirit* = Conscience

  Developing our mental identity will lead us toward knowing the right fork in the road, toward an inward moral compass that will guide us. This is about really feeling individually responsible for making the vision happen in reality. It is about having ROAR - Respect, Ownership, Accountability, and Responsibility.

Challenges and possible approaches

Common Challenges	Possible Approaches
Mind = Vision • People don't fully **understand** the potential of business processes • People are **conditioned** to accept the status quo • People chase **short-term** monetary benefits (linked to KPIs and the associated rewards)	• Challenge current thinking; ask *"why not?"* • Benchmark process and financial performance with the best in your industry • Set higher, more balanced and sustainable (mid-term) targets; do not become comfortable; always ensure the goals are challenging and uncomfortable
Heart = Passion • People **promoted** for the wrong reasons (Peter Principle) • People **worn out** from failed BPM initiatives • Managers and executives too **risk adverse**	• Ability and willingness to improve and manage business processes must be key criteria in management promotions • Provide special coaching and mentoring programs to keep the passion burning • KPIs are established to ensure the realization of business benefits
Body = Discipline: • People can get away with just paying **lip-service** to business process improvement • Achieving results requires more than just talking and fancy PowerPoint slides – It requires actual work • Inconsistent **reward & recognition** framework across hierarchical levels	• Only reward if benefits are actually realized – not just intended or set-up • Focus on the benefits of working on business processes and ask everyone else to do the same. Remember, it is only in the dictionary that benefits precede costs and work • Create reward frameworks that start from organization objectives, and consistently and visibly link to the objectives for each individual
Spirit = Conscious • **Leadership** insufficiently committed to process improvement and the management of business processes • Lack of **accountability** leads to incorrect behavior • Lack of **support** as well as communication of successes	• Make business process principles part of organizational values • Introduce process stewardship (ownership) of key business processes and hold the process stewards accountable • Provide training and coaching for the process stewards

Conclusion

Simplistically, you could suggest that the 8th habit of Covey relates to *finding your voice and helping others find theirs*. We would suggest that, from a BPM perspective, this relates to building process networks and communities, and sharing successes and challenges.

We suggest that all process professionals go beyond the comfortable circles of process converts and show the benefits of working on business processes to the more sceptical circles.

Footnote:

The original book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* is a must read for process professionals as it outlines critical success factors, namely:

- Be Proactive
- Begin with the End in Mind
- Put First Things First
- Think Win-Win
- Seek First to Understand, then to be understood
- Synergize
- Sharpen the Saw

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