

S 2 I NEWS

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S2I News is a bi-monthly publication of Strategies 2 Innovate, Inc. Our 2006 series is devoted to leaders of small and rapidly growing business. Our theme will focus on how they can streamline their business processes and make their operations run more smoothly and cost efficiently, thereby generating more profits.

Strategies 2 Innovate, Inc.

We work with leaders of small businesses to accelerate the task of growing their business through innovation. Our approach focuses on business process improvement based on our Innovation Pentagon™ model. Read about us and visit our **knowledge portal** at the web address below, or call us toll-free at 1-877-978-8242.

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What To Consider When Mapping A Business Processes

Here are 7 issues everyone should consider before mapping a particular business process⁶⁵:

- ◆ **The Application of the Map**
- ◆ **Deciding Which Process to Map**
- ◆ **The Type of Process Map**
- ◆ **Mapping Symbols and Conventions**
- ◆ **Collecting Information for the Map**
- ◆ **Interpreting the Map**
- ◆ **Improving the Process**

Let's now look at them one-by-one.

1. The Application of the Map

There are 7 main reasons why you might want to map a particular process. These are:

- **Cost Reduction.** You want to examine the process and see how the overall cost of the process might be reduced.

- **Cycle Time Reduction.** You want to see how the total time for implementing a process might be reduced. This could be important, for example, in achieving faster delivery times for your customers.

- **Defect Reduction.** If you are having quality problems with your process, then defect reduction of some form may be needed. This could include ensuring the full process is

is completed and ensuring the process is carried out correctly.

- **Benchmarking.** You want to examine your production process in order to compare it with the best-in-class practices.

- **Re-engineering.** You already know you want to change (re-engineer) your processes and you want to produce a "before" map of your process.

- **Measurement Systems Design.** You want to design a system for measuring performance of your process. This might include measurement of customer satisfaction.

- **Horizontal Management.** You want to identify the who, what, where, and when of your process so that proper responsibilities and accountabilities are assigned.

2. Deciding Which Process to Map

When deciding which process to map, it is important to prioritise your energies on those processes that form part of your organization's core competencies. If you do this, you will ensure you focus on processes that have a significant impact on delivering customer-perceived value. For more information about core competencies, see our website section on core competencies and our archive of past newsletters.

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LARRY VAN DEN BERGHE, Ph.D.

Larry van den Berghe is the President of Strategies 2 Innovate, Inc. He has 20 years international experience in the aerospace and information and communications technology industries in England, Australia, Singapore and Canada. He has been an active manager and contributor in R&D and new product development in electronics, VLSI and software. He holds two US patents, one UK patent and has a number of publications. He is a Chartered Engineer (UK) and a Fellow of the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

Larry is also an adjunct professor for the Management of Technology @Distance graduate program at the University of Waterloo and a past faculty member with the Technical University of British Columbia. He has developed courses in new product development, strategic management of innovation and technology, entrepreneurship and knowledge management. His recent research on core competencies examined the adoption of emerging technologies for product innovation within the Canadian information and communication technology industry.

He holds a Ph.D. in Management Sciences (Management of Technology) from the University of Waterloo, an M.Sc. in Microelectronics (with Distinction) from Middlesex University, London, U.K. and a B.Appl.Sc. in Applied Physics from Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia. Larry has served as Chairman, Board of Directors and is a Competent Toastmaster/Competent Leader with the Toastmasters International organization.

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3. The Type of Process Map

There are three main types of process maps you can use. These are:

- Flow Charts.
- Relational Maps.
- Cross-functional Maps.

Flow Charts. A flow chart provides a graphical representation of the process in step-by-step detail. I like using flowcharts and use them often. They can be simple or quite complex. The value of information in a flow chart can be increased when a wide range of symbols are used. This helps you to spot areas of waste, delays and other non-value-added steps in the process.

In particular, when departmental boundary conditions are added to flow charts, they become very useful tools for analysis cross-functional processes, instead of using cross-functional maps.

Relational Maps. These are aerial or high-level views of processes showing inputs and outputs and connections between departments or divisions. In particular, relational maps show:

- What the organization produces, that is, its products and services – the inputs and outputs shown by arrows.

- How work flows through functional boundaries – the connections between the arrows and the boxes.

- Internal or external supplier-customer relationships used to provide or receive products and services – the relationship between the functions represented by the boxes. See 65 page 25

Stay tuned for our next issue where we will examine cross-functional maps and the remaining four issues to consider when mapping a business process.

See you then!

Larry van den Berghe

For more information and for references to the literature as identified by superscripts notations (e.g. ¹) please visit our innovation strategy knowledge portal www.strategies2innovate.com and follow the links to “Knowledge References.”

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