

Concepts...



"Concepts" is published by Parvidya Design Partners to raise as many questions as it answers. It is driven by the belief that the industry, its products and its services are ever evolving. The ideas reflect the challenges faced in the continuous journey of innovation and improvement.

Everything is a process:

Do you wish your business was more coordinated? Do you believe your quality or accuracy could be improved? How is it that you had some situational event defined yet no one got the memo when the real situation occurred? Are you in a recurring cycle of backlogs, clean-ups and stabilization initiatives? Why can't your group flexibly embrace new products or changes in the industry? These are some of the symptoms of process failure.

Everything, like *always* and *never*, is a word that should be used sparingly. However, businesses require organization in order to succeed and, therefore, within this limited universe, 'everything' should be a process. How do you ensure that the processes deliver quality results?

The successful completion of a process delivering the required quality 'result' does not necessarily reveal the design and controls, which ensure its quality. By analogy, the work of an artist or an athlete does not reveal the training and preparation that came before the performance. Similarly, you were probably not aware of the checks and balances, that your PC's operating system ran to ensure it continued to function smoothly as you downloaded this newsletter from an e-mail, which you accessed remotely.

Summarized below are some suggested actions, which should help ensure that your processes work well:

- a) **Definition & communication of purpose:** This is an essential first step, which is weakened by two common traits: (i) a belief that this encapsulates the design (ii) not separating the process definition from its building.
- b) **Design:** Often weakened by cursory attention, 'design' allows you to document, test and model your process before you commit resources or technology to its running. If you can not document it thoroughly, how do you know a process will work the way you want it to?
- c) **Controls, Measures and Analysis:** Unless a process has a means of preventing errors, they will happen. When errors do occur, will the process be self-correcting and will you learn from the errors? How do you measure your process? Without any measures you have no understanding of performance. Without analysis, you just have numbers with no perspective of relevance.
- d) **Active management:** There is a great deal of activity that ensures any effortlessly smooth or accurate process occurs. Without oversight, a process may be slow to fail at first, but it will rapidly degrade thereafter.

- e) **Adaptation and change:** Without preparing for adaptation or change, its inevitable occurrence will either conflict with a current process or force exception processes, which are inherently harder to control.
- f) **Functions, Responsibilities and Back-Ups:** This is a simple definition of people's roles. Just by completing this exercise any gaps, weaknesses or confusion in the process will be revealed. Maintaining this list can ensure a process's integrity and continuity.
- g) **Contingency and Disaster Recovery:** These plans are essential elements in today's environment, but the value will be lost if not regularly reviewed, tested and updated.

Finally, define how you manage your processes. Consistency and quality will be driven by documenting and managing the way, which you design, control and run your business.

Parvidya Design Partners would be pleased to discuss the realization of these concepts with you further.



"...to make an important decision, press 5... for a management crisis needing your intervention, press 6..."

January, 2004

This document is presented for information purposes only and in no way should be construed as advice or legal opinion. The contents remain the sole property of Parvidya Design Partners. You may discuss these ideas with Parvidya Design Partners by contacting the e-mail address listed below: