"WE ALL KNOW THE BASICS, SO WHY DON'T WE JUST DO THAT?"

Root Cause Analysis and Process Mapping for Legal Improvement

Monday, April 12, 2021
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HOW DO YOU PREVENTING YOURSELF AND OTHERS FROM SIMPLY 'SOLUTIONING' BEFORE DOING YOUR DIAGNOSTICS

To prevent yourself and others from simply 'solutioning' before doing your diagnostic homework is fairly difficult to accomplish. The first thing that should be done is to take a step back and map out the current processes and capture the physical checklists. What needs to be done? What are the solutions for these needs? *"A checklist is super helpful. A process for the process, so to speak."*

"Also important [is] not to take a sledgehammer to the process if the problem surfaced in the midst of a deadline. Band-aid, meet deadline, then process map."

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT APPLYING REQUIREMENTS GATHERING AND PROCESS MAPPING IN LEGAL?

"Capturing requirements (even if high level) allows you to capture the client asks before you go away and identify different solutions that meet that requirement."

"What's unique is that most everyone feels like what they do is unique, and can't be boxed in to a process."

AVOIDING THE "SHINY KEYS" SYNDROME OF BUYING TECHNOLOGY BEFORE YOU'VE DONE YOUR HOMEWORK

Some don't find this to be a problem by testing before spending any money. Others find it's very difficult to avoid.

"We've all seen this so many times and we've all seen it fail. It's not hard to understand that a process will improve things. What is harder is implementing a process in a law firm."

TESTING A PROCESS YOU'VE MAPPED

A good process is to test, track and develop along the way.

"Setting a "burn in" period where you're live, but very attentive to how things are working. Then really doing an analysis at the end of that time, adjusting if needed, another burn-in if needed. It's a cycle; periodic check ins can help make sure it continues to work."

WHEN IS IT ENOUGH TO SOLVE FOR THE SYMPTOMS OF AN ISSUE, RATHER THAN UNCOVER THE ROOT CAUSES?

This is a tough question, as there are other factors at play. The biggest factor is cost. It may just be more sensible to solve the symptoms of an issue rather than to uncover the root cause in some cases.

"When the efficiency gains are small or limited to low volume/infrequent work, solving the symptoms can add more ROI than diving into the root cause."

FINAL THOUGHT: ARE THERE OCCASIONS WHEN EXISTING RESOURCES CAN SOLVE THE PROCESS CHALLENGE, BEFORE SEEKING A TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION?

"Hopefully always! I see new technology as a last resort. The more tech you add to the mix, [the more] you risk making things unnecessarily complex. Who supports it, who uses it, who pays for it, etc.?"

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"...New tech is a long haul."