

Implementation of Best Practices Using Process Mapping, Documentation and Training



Financial Services

The Client

A Fortune 100 financial services company approached TBD Consulting requesting development of process maps and procedures for their new prepaid credit and gift card business. The client was familiar with TBD Consulting's reputation and had used the company's consulting services in the past to create learning plans, process map and document procedures, design blended training and customize the TBD Online Reference System for another division.

The prepaid credit card division had evolved organically from the paper-based traveler's check operation. Revenues for prepaid cards were in the millions per year and projected to grow by 500% within the next few years. Documented procedures and training were needed to support the growth.

The Issues

Through an initial assessment and subsequent meetings with client management and subject matter experts, TBD Consulting uncovered the following issues:

- Insufficient internal resources were available to support the upcoming growth. Reorganization both within the division and with off-shore vendors would be necessary to accommodate future sales volume. For areas most significantly impacted by seasonal volume, it was critical to work with existing employees to develop the tools to support outsourcing in time to train vendor staff before the holidays and before those internal employees were reassigned.
- Vendor personnel taking on processes did not have in-house subject matter experts experienced in the processes to provide on-the-job, side-by-side training or oversight and support on the floor.
- The client did not have a procedure guide, either in a paper or searchable online format.
- Frequently only one person knew how to perform tasks critical to the operation of the business. In one department, temporary employees held that exclusive knowledge. This situation put the organization at risk and compromised the ability to be nimble in the reorganization of tasks.
- In many cases, the procedures in use did not represent best practice because they were developed "on the fly" by the front-line employees performing the task without due consideration for larger organizational initiatives or interfacing departments.
- System infrastructure, including access to needed systems and shared drives, was not consistently in place.
- In most departments, significant variability in processes was permissible. Each person developed his/her own way of completing a task. This made it difficult to train a new employee to use the best practice and made quality assessments a challenge. Furthermore, without consistent processes, employees inefficiently developed their own tools and forms to support their unique way of performing a process.

- Off-shore vendors did not have professional trainers available to deliver training. Instead, they planned to use senior front-line employees. Furthermore, technical infrastructure was not available to use practice activities without impacting the overall system.

The Solution

TBD Consulting's first phase of the solution was to **capture high-level, user-focused process maps** documenting how work is performed. During the first step in that phase, TBD worked with management and subject matter experts to brainstorm a list of all tasks performed in a given area. In some cases, these lists were the first systematic assessment of the tasks performed by one group that management had seen. Management then used this information to analyze whether the current organizational structure aligned with the tasks performed.

The second step in the process mapping solution was to meet with the subject matter experts who performed the tasks to capture the high-level steps in the process. These meetings gave TBD an opportunity to translate an often variable, intuitive approach into a systematic, best practice that reconciled the best from multiple subject matter experts. TBD Consulting assigned a difficulty, importance and frequency (DIF) rating to each map that would later be used to develop training for selected processes.

Management then reviewed the maps to ensure the process, as defined by the front-line employees, integrated with the organization's high-level priorities and the operation of facing departments. TBD made adjustments as needed.

The next phase of TBD Consulting's solution was to **create step-by-step procedures** that any employee qualified to do the work could use to perform the task with a minimum of intervention from management or co-workers (in some cases, after initial training). The final documents detailed specific keystrokes and their results in the system while explaining the reason for the actions. TBD created the procedures in a format that can be easily converted into a searchable online reference system with logical links between related documents.

During the documentation process, TBD personnel identified areas where access to systems or shared drives was insufficient to perform the procedure using the best practice. Management resolved those issues. TBD also identified the best forms and tools and integrated them into the procedures while ensuring they were available to all representatives.

The final phase of TBD Consulting's solution was to **create blended training** for the off-shore vendors who would be taking on selected functions. Because experienced subject matter experts would be unavailable on-site after training, it was important to teach representatives to rely on the written procedures for their answers. To accomplish that goal, the training systematically presented each of the procedures, any background information required to understand the procedure, and a demonstration of the steps in the system. TBD used the DIFT ratings assigned during the process mapping phase to prioritize and establish the quantity of training time required for each procedure.

Because a training environment was not available for demonstrations and practice activities, TBD had to be resourceful in providing a solution which gave the representatives critical hands-on practice. TBD chose to use Captivate® to create ePractice activities, interactive e-learning modules that replicated how the system would work when the representatives returned to the floor. Participants used the procedures to guide them through successful completion of the ePractices.

Because trainers were front-line employees rather than experienced instructors, TBD wrote detailed facilitator guides with specific instructions on how to use the materials and “scripts” for the best way to present the content. Train-the-trainer sessions taught the trainers to use the materials and explained the adult-learning theory behind the structure of the materials. Prospective instructors presented sections of the material in the train-the-trainer sessions to allow them to practice in a safe environment. TBD evaluated the presentations and provided guidance for improvement. They also made available the results of the evaluations to the client.

The Business Impact

Although confidentiality considerations restrict the ability to present specific metrics, the organization recognized tangible results from the documentation and training of best practices.

- The division eliminated the risk associated with only one or very few people knowing how to perform a specific task. The written procedures have facilitated reorganization within the division and the outsourcing of functions to off-shore vendors. TBD’s client was able to outsource two high-volume functions in time for the holidays. Quality review of the work after receiving TBD’s training showed a performance level consistent with in-house resources.
- By identifying and refining best practices and ensuring the availability of consistent tools and resources, TBD’s client was able to make operations more efficient thereby expanding their ability to handle growing sales volume. Management will also use the maps as a baseline to plan future process improvements including automation and inter-departmental re-engineering.
- The written procedure “cements in” the best practice. Management can now point to the procedures as the standard for quality performance. The procedures provide a basis of accountability for both internal and vendor resources. This streamlines the ability to train new employees in the best practice and to monitor and evaluate the experienced employees.

For details on TBD Consulting’s complete range of services, call our corporate office to speak to a performance consultant or visit us at www.tbdconsulting.com.