

processfix

Spring newsletter 2019

Welcome

Longevity. Along with its definition of a long life, longevity can also be defined as long continuance, permanence or durability. When you are looking for longevity in process improvement it is important to consider every angle: how you can change ways of thinking so it becomes your culture; how you can understand your customer needs and keep up with their evolving requirements; and how you can embed the skills so that they are accessible to all.

In this edition of our newsletter we hear from Alan Jones, Business Technology Director at Janssen, whose experience includes leading the UK arm of a major process improvement programme that ran across the whole of the Johnson & Johnson network. Then Jeanette Strachan, Registrar and Secretary at the University of Hull describes their approach to developing a governance structure that enables each Processfix workshop to be prioritised and aligned to their strategic priorities.

And in our spotlight this edition, Chris Shelley, Director of Student and Academic Services at the University of Greenwich, shares with us how and why they are developing a team of facilitators to identify and make changes that focus on student wellbeing and their overall experience.

NEWSFLASH!

London, UK – March 2019

Google inspires transformation of staff on-boarding process at University College London



17 years of process excellence at Johnson & Johnson

Alan Jones, Business Technology Director at Janssen, part of the Johnson & Johnson family of companies, has significant experience in embedding process improvement into an organisation, including being the lead on the Process Excellence programme at Janssen which started in 2002.



“When Johnson & Johnson (J&J) launched the Process Excellence programme, the aim was to effectively deploy the six-sigma methodologies that were being used with great impact at General Electric and other multi-national organisations. My involvement included mapping out key processes and leading a programme of process improvement projects.” We asked Alan whether the programme was still running today, and he explained that after several years, it had achieved its main objectives. “The programme kick-started the momentum around process improvement: establishing a common language within the company and training people in certain techniques and skills so that it became embedded in our culture and a part of the way we operate.”

Janssen recently held a Processfix workshop to help them with a business critical project. “We still talk about Process Excellence and refer back to it as it brought in a lot of useful techniques that we still use today. But like many things,

unless you are doing it all the time, you will never be an expert. The recent Processfix workshop helped to refresh our thinking. Over time you don't realise how many parts you may have forgotten and how much more powerful the approach is when applied in a systematic manner!”

“we need to be clear where the value is for our customers”

“Another good thing about doing a workshop with Processfix is it gets you over a lot of hurdles. Their approach to running workshops is extremely refined. And they offer insight into other industries and situations where similar issues are being faced, which gets you away from defending your process and helps you think. You also bring together all the key stakeholders, who then work together to achieve a solution. In considering what have been the key factors behind

the longevity of process improvement at J&J, Alan explained: “processes aren't glamorous, but they do make a massive impact on productivity and the morale of an organisation. Having a common language is important; it is easy to get confused in discussions without that common understanding. The other thing that helps is a metrics culture; if, as a business, you routinely seek to have something that informs you if you are doing well, then that will drive you to investigate areas that are not doing well, to understand why not and what to do about it. In an industry such as ours, we need to be clear where the value is for our customers and measure that. Often it is qualitative in terms of customer satisfaction, but also quantitative in terms of delivery and budgets.”

And when we asked Alan about barriers to the longevity of process improvement, he commented: “a lot of the barriers to change are about asking yourself to change. And then everyone has their own ideas of what might need fixing. You have to fight off the desire to jump to solutions; not only in process improvement, but also when looking at new business opportunities. It is so tempting to jump past the step of ensuring what the customer actually wants or needs, but you need to come up with a rationale before putting solutions together. As the American business leader Peter Drucker said: ‘there is nothing so useless as doing efficiently that which should never be done at all.’”

If you are interested in speaking to Alan about any of the above, please contact him via email: ajones6@its.jnj.com.

University of Hull embark on a Processfix journey

The University of Hull undertook its first Processfix workshop in early 2018. Since that initial exercise, the Processfix methodology has been adopted as a cornerstone of the University's improvement approach. Jeannette Strachan, University Registrar and Secretary, explains how the University's Processfix journey has developed.



Jeannette first shared the background to Hull's Processfix story: "the Higher Education landscape is increasingly challenging and it is evident that all institutions need to be agile to optimise their competitive position in the marketplace. The Vice Chancellor consulted widely and identified a number of areas where processes could be holding us back. One of these was timetabling and that's when we first turned to Processfix for support, resulting in a much-streamlined process that enables us to deliver far more consistently for our staff and students."

"Following the success of that initial workshop, we set about applying the methodology more widely across the institution. That's when we brought in Processfix to train 14 of our own staff to be Processfix facilitators. This has enabled us to run a number of workshops internally across faculties and service areas, involving scores of staff in the Processfix approach."

However, it is not always straightforward to manage such a large volume of improvement work dispersed across the University. Jeannette explained how developing a robust governance structure is vital: "we needed a way of prioritising all of the proposed projects and aligning them with the University's strategic priorities. This is being taken forward by a small group of senior managers who were asked to come together and form the Hull Improvement Team, a.k.a. 'HIT!'"

"HIT is developing a structure for identifying the scale and scope of Processfix workshops; we reflect this in a Processfix Triangle. At the top level we have a very small number of large, transformational reviews, where we engage Processfix to come in and facilitate workshops. Then we have a larger number of cross-institutional projects where our trained facilitators will lead sessions. Moving further down the triangle, there is a yet larger volume of fixes on processes contained within individual service areas or

"we needed a way of prioritising all of the proposed projects and aligning them with the University's strategic priorities"

faculties; this is where it is crucial to have a good spread of facilitators across the University, so they can run these in their own areas. Finally, we envisage the techniques being used regularly by staff all over the University to deliver "mini-fixes" that improve their own work, or that of their team."

"The governance provided by HIT links the University Leadership Team and the improvement work taking place on the ground. It gives us the ability to direct the facilitators to areas identified as priorities, whilst facilitating an efficient reporting line to feedback on progress."

The team at Hull is about to embark on the next stage of their Processfix journey.

"The approach has been so well-received that we are about to welcome Processfix back to train another group of 15 facilitators. This will allow us to extend the reach of the facilitator team so that all major areas of the University are covered and will enable us to redouble our efforts on process improvement. We are optimistic that the structures we have put in place will stand us in good stead to manage this and we are really excited to see the results!"

If you are interested in finding out more about Hull's experience with Processfix, please contact the Business Improvement and Assurance Manager, Benita Boyes, via: b.boyes@hull.ac.uk.

In the spotlight: Chris Shelley, Director of Student and Academic Services, University of Greenwich

Chris's career focus has always had the student at the front of his mind. He joined the University of Greenwich in 2017 from King's College London, where he had led various cross-institutional functions and processes that had a major impact on the student experience. Prior to that, he spent six years at the National Union of Students, supporting and developing students' unions as they registered as charities.

How did you initially become involved in process improvement work?

Whilst I was at King's, I was the sponsor for the first Processfix workshop there: the registration process for incoming students. Following that experience, King's developed an internal process review team, with individuals having Processfix training so that they could support colleagues across the institution. During that time, I became fully engaged with process improvement, and on moving to Greenwich recognised the benefits that might be gained from a similar approach.

Who or what is the key focus of your process improvement work now?

We have drawn up a list of all the processes we are involved in delivering; just in my directorate that runs into three figures! Of course, there's not always a student at the end of every process, as much of what we do is around supporting staff, but in the end,

“Our aim is to embed strategies for long term process improvement”

the better we do that, the better the impact on the student experience in the long term; so I would say that students are always our focus

We felt that the process that needed the most attention was, as at King's, the student registration process. We set up a Processfix workshop, invited the relevant people from across the institution and proceeded from there. We were fortunate that along with myself, several colleagues had also been on Processfix facilitation training during previous roles at other institutions.

Because of this, having introduced the concept to Greenwich, we have now started straight away to work on some smaller internal processes.

What was the motivator to train further facilitators internally?

Greenwich is a very process driven university; a lot of people seem to be waiting for someone to come in to help them, even to give them permission to review their processes. Our aim is to embed strategies for long term process improvement.

As well as the ongoing work in my directorate, the Information Library Service directorate have simultaneously been undertaking process improvement exercises and want to increase their role in this, to improve and embed this as part of the culture of the institution.

Together, the Director of ILS and I, sat down to discuss how to take this forward and how to define what we are offering at Greenwich. We decided to bring Processfix in to train up a team of facilitators. There is a new initiative across Greenwich called 'One University', which aims to



build consistency in the tools used and ways to prioritise the various improvement projects. Our facilitators will sit within this pool of resources.

How have things been going so far?

People's willingness to engage is great. But it is difficult for everyone to clear their diaries for a three-day workshop. What helps is to pick a process that is widely recognised to be flawed, or one that impacts many people in different areas. Then people find a way to take part in the initial workshop and become engaged in driving the solutions.

The first major process that we reviewed here, the registration process, is still a work in progress. Many of the initial amendments have been made to the online process for students and this will be followed by changes to the process when they arrive on campus. We saw students complete more of the process online than last year and the benefits will become clear when the next cohort arrive in September.

Other processes we've reviewed include admissions,

which sits across several different functions. The admissions team itself is within my area and one of the outcomes of that review is a plan to move much more of the whole process within our directorate, thereby delivering a more efficient and coherent process.

What is the long-term challenge?

We need to see what we can do this year, with the colleagues who have been trained already, then build from there. After that, we may well need to train further facilitators; there will inevitably be staff turnover, but we also need to scale our ambition to be realistic. If every member of staff we have trained facilitated three workshops per year, we will start to see the culture of process improvement embed in to the organisation. Our longer-term challenge is more about building the right infrastructure and governance around 'One University' and ensuring everyone sees the benefit of process reviews.

If you're interested in speaking to Chris about any of the above, please contact him via: c.j.shelley@greenwich.ac.uk

About us

Organisations rely on processes to get things done. Often these simply evolve over time and become inefficient ways of working. Processfix bring powerful, proven and behaviour-changing techniques to bear in a professionally facilitated environment.

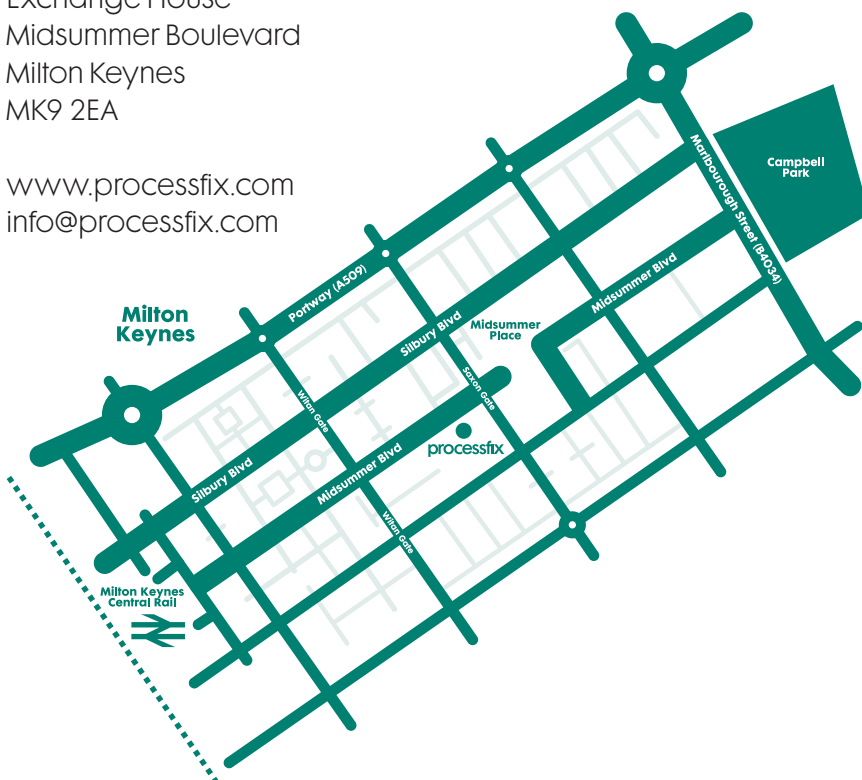
We focus on engaging your teams in their own improvement, empowering them to re-evaluate the way they do things and to develop new and improved ways of working that transform performance and deliver immediate results.

Whether you require Rapid Improvement Workshop facilitation, training, project leadership or an organisational wide process improvement programme. Processfix specialise in facilitating your team, delivering immediate benefits and instilling continuous improvement across your organisation.

If you would like to find out how Processfix can benefit your organisation, please contact us at:

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