processfix

Welcome

Continuous improvement is universally defined as an ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes. What will be individual to your organisation, however, is whether you are seeking incremental improvements over time, a breakthrough improvement all at once, or a combination of the two.

Whatever the objective within your organisation or individual department, defining your goals and being clear as to how to proceed will all contribute to successful delivery of the right outcomes.

In this edition of the Processfix newsletter, David King, Head of Service Excellence at the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), shares with us how he is supporting his teams through the changes necessary for the FSCS to develop and mature as an organisation.

We then talk to Fiona Greig, Content Development and Support Manager of the Charles Seal Hayne Library at Plymouth University, about the ongoing programme of improvements under way at this thriving institution.

Finally, our spotlight introduces Melanie Rimmer, Project Manager at Goldsmiths University, who is hard at work leading an institution-wide programme of process improvements. Our articles this month demonstrate that a successful programme of process improvement will become part of your organisational culture. We hope they will give you some insight into how others are achieving their goals, and inspire you to take that first, perhaps second or third, step towards making continuous improvement 'business as usual'.

NEWSFLASH!

Nottingham, UK – February 2013
Capital One, voted in Fortune's 100 Best Companies to Work For 2012, embed continuous improvement with Processfix

Establishing the concept of continuous improvement at the Financial Services Compensation Scheme

David King is Head of Service Excellence at the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS), where there is a long term strategy to make this relatively young organisation more 'process mature'. David talked to us about how the FSCS have worked with Processfix to support process review and to expose the FSCS teams to a different way of thinking, by helping people to challenge each other and themselves around how they apply tools and deliver continuous improvement.
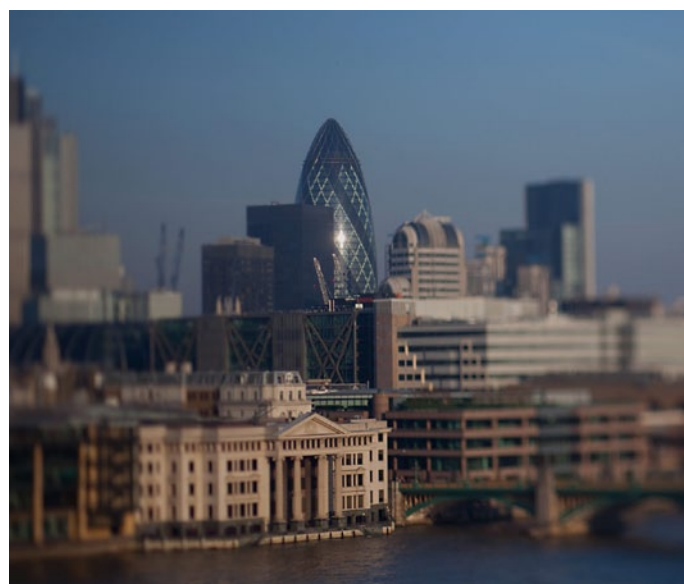
"Since joining the FSCS two years ago, I have been developing a co-ordinated communications and training plan to take people through a 'change journey'. We want our teams to think about what they are doing and to challenge themselves as to whether or not this is the best, or even right way, to approach things."

David went on: "People tend to behave in certain ways because they've always done so. They probably can't explain why. So we've built our plan on Kurt Lewin's change model. This is essentially a really simple concept of 'unfreeze; learn or change; freeze'. But I don't think it really matters which model you adopt; what is important is consistency in the approach you adopt and the message you send out. The model just gives you a route against which you can plan your journey."

Processfix were appointed to help the teams with the relearning phase of the change model. "I've known Processfix for a long time and I like the way they think. They don't have a rigid view that the approach and use of tools is more important than delivering outcomes. What they do is to help people to build their confidence in using a bunch of techniques in a planned and co-ordinated way so that they can solve problems and improve processes. The fact that the workshop was very 'hands-on' ensured that the participants were able to practice skills and feel that they were operating in the 'real world', rather than undertaking a theoretical exercise."

"what is important is consistency in the approach you adopt and the message you send out"

David was pleased to share with us some of the other benefits of the workshop: "It felt so real that a couple of our senior managers nearly came to blows when one made an error in the workshop processes! It really generated a 'we're all in this together' feeling and we've now got lasting anecdotes to share amongst ourselves of what happened on the day. All of this helps to reinforce the key learnings from the Processfix workshop."

"It really generated a 'we're all in this together' feeling"

Since the workshop, David has developed and run two internal courses around process measurement. The aim has been to introduce the teams to 'thinking differently' about the results they see; to explore 'why is this so' rather than have an immediate overreaction if things aren't going as well as they are expected to.

Improving space, service and systems at the Charles Seal Hayne Library

At the University of Plymouth, Fiona Greig, Content Development and Support Manager of the Charles Seal Hayne Library explains how their improvements are helping the library, originally designed for a population of 3,000 and now dealing with over 20,000 students in total, effectively deliver services to up to 8,000 users a day.

"There have always been small pockets within the University focused on continuous improvement, but since the launch of 'Plymouth 2015' last year, that has started to spread across the campus. By 2015, our target is to have a new and improved approach to how we operate so that we can concentrate on the outcomes

"we needed positive outcomes to our shelving processes, but we also wanted help to change mindsets"

of the student experience and research excellence. All areas are to be reviewed and revised and the University has grown a professional project management office."

Within the library, Fiona had recently completed a programme of improvement in the Acquisition Unit, which had run over the last 4 years and has resulted in significant improvements. As part of an overall restructure last summer, shelving came under Fiona's remit and she was able to flag it to the University as one of the potential transformational projects. As a result, the team received the funding to work with Processfix, who went down to Plymouth in September 2012.

"We wanted to bring Processfix in for two reasons" explained Fiona: "Of course, we needed positive outcomes to our shelving processes, but we also wanted help to change mindsets. With the shelving, we knew that sometimes it took on average 55 hours to reshelve a book, but we

didn't have any real analytics, so I dread to think what it was like in the busy periods! Following on from the workshop though, we have been able to reduce this to an average of 4 hours; a considerable achievement. And when it comes to changing our mindset, the workshop has triggered considerable research into how we resource and deliver the right service to our students.

Fiona explains further: "At the start, we didn't know the volume of work, but we did know that for most things, one to two-thirds of the activity the team undertook was hidden, and not measured. A key outcome of the Processfix workshop was to think about how we resource the team and to discover the real usage of our stock. Previously we had made decisions on what was kept on shelf or relegated to store based on it being taken out of the library, rather than used. We found that one third of our stock was never taken out, but was being used quite often. We had stashes of places where books were sitting.

Students seeking a particular book were sent to search these at least twice before the counter staff were able to take the next step in the "missing book" process. Getting rid of these stashes, we've already been able to make a huge difference to the student experience. I'm pleased to say that we have been able to create 42 new study spaces. The students were able to come back after Christmas to see new tables and power cables replacing the book stashes; a very quick and visible win for us."

Based on her experience, we asked Fiona what she would recommend to anyone looking to improve on their current processes. "Well, it is definitely hard. You have

And that's an individual decision. Only you will know what will work for your organisation."

She also added that sometimes it may be better to delay in order to have sufficient data to review. "Our test analysis run was in August, our quietest time, so we have had to extrapolate a lot. But this has proven to miss out between 24% and 62% of business, depending on the day.

But it has all been worth it. You need imagination; it will be tough, but the end user will benefit, and for us, that's what it's all about. Now we're planning a new back office library system, where our analytics will be much better and automated, to

"we've already been able to make a huge difference to the student experience."

to remove empathy for the humans involved and that's what's tough. You have to make the decision as to whether to make processes less optimal, but keep the people happy, or deal with the people factor as best you can once the process has been redesigned.

...continued from page 1

"It is a challenge." David explained: "One definition of insanity is: *Doing what you've always done, but expecting different results.* It's amazing how often you see that, but people are always resistant to change. In my role, I know that I will be taking people out of their comfort zones and into areas of scepticism, perhaps even fear. The challenge as the designers and implementers of change is to find

get a real view of activity and plan how much and what kind of resource is really needed."

If you would like to talk to Fiona about her experience, please contact her on: Fiona.Greig@plymouth.ac.uk

out how to support these people through change. The Processfix approach is one which enables us to give our people the opportunity to try and practice their skills without holding them to account."

If you would like to talk to David about how the FSCS have been building management's confidence and capabilities to deliver continuous improvement, please contact him on: DavidN.King@fscs.org.uk.

Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Melanie Rimmer, as Project Manager of 'Goldsmiths 2015', the strategic programme which is driving change at Goldsmiths, has oversight and co-ordination responsibilities, and is leading the institution-wide programme of process review.

Challenged with the delivery of greater effectiveness and service provision across the institution, the process review programme kicked off in 2012 with a Processfix facilitated 'Champions Workshop' in April. Processfix had been selected their partner to help get process review and change off the ground quickly, whilst also helping to establish a different way of thinking in the longer term.

What was the idea behind the Champions Workshop last year?

Having selected Processfix, we needed our senior managers to understand the approach, to appreciate how their people would be encouraged to think about process review and to be confident to 'sell it' to their own teams. Getting the senior managers to collectively have ownership of the programme was going to be important to success, as was support for it right from the top of the institution, which was demonstrated by the fact that our Warden opened the Workshop.

How have you rolled the programme out since then?

Once the senior managers were on-board with the overall approach, Processfix ran three one-day 'Taster Days', taking about 40 people through their process review simulation. This had two main outcomes: widening awareness of the approach and giving more people a 'heads-up' on what to expect when their specific area came under review; but it also prompted some of those who attended to start thinking about their own processes with a view to change and improvement.

Since then, we have had six workshops facilitated by Processfix, across admissions (both undergraduate and postgraduate), assessment (where we won't see results until the yearly cycle is complete), new staff starters (which we hope will deliver some quicker wins), the procurement process (which was planned to fit in with the upgrading of our finance system) and the estate maintenance requests process. So, you can see that we've really made this an institution-wide programme!

So, almost a year in, where do you feel the programme is at the moment?

Well, we really went for it with the initial workshop programme.

> **"it also prompted some of those who attended to start thinking about their own processes with a view to change and improvement"**

In the Autumn term we did four; one each month. And in January we undertook facilitator training to establish a team of 15 people who are committed to the approach. So, we've decided now is the time to pause to give ourselves time to consolidate what we've done so far.

As part of this, we're giving the newly trained facilitators the opportunity to build up their skills by running half day and one day workshops addressing smaller processes. We're also focusing on implementing the changes coming out of the reviews so far and ensuring that we achieve the anticipated benefits.

What have been the most significant changes you've seen since starting the programme with Processfix?

The thing that has most struck me has been the enthusiasm that people have shown for the programme once they've realised that this is about them being given the time and space to improve their own processes. People are contacting me now to ask if they can do a workshop in their area. I didn't quite believe that would happen, so it's been a great relief! The other thing that's struck me has been how important the workshops are for simply getting people from different parts of the institution in a room together talking constructively about their joint

> **"Our facilitators will be key to embedding the continual improvement approach into our culture"**

process; in some cases this is the first time people have actually met in person. So the reviews are as much about communicating and understanding across sections as anything else.

What's the main challenge you face now?

Maintaining the momentum generated so far and building our in-house capabilities. Our facilitators will be key to embedding the continual improvement approach into our culture and making process review part of 'business as usual' at Goldsmiths.

If you would be interested in talking to Melanie to find out more about her work with the process review programme at Goldsmiths, please email her on m.rimmer@gold.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.
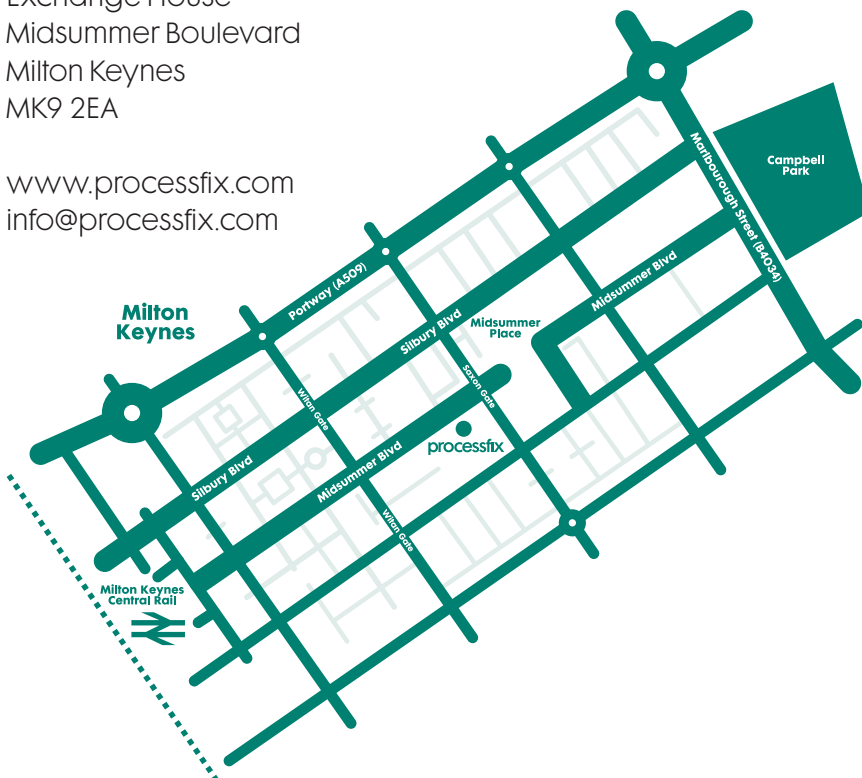
We focus on engaging your teams in their own improvement, empowering them to re—evaluate the way they do things and to develop new and improved ways of working that transform performance and deliver immediate results.

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.

And Finally...

Following their success at last years Times Higher Education Awards, Anglia Ruskin University shift their attention to paperless admissions. Read how they get on in the autumn newsletter.

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

Processfix Limited
Exchange House
Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 2EA

www.processfix.com
info@processfix.com

Book on—line for the next Processfix masterclass at
www.processfix.com

**Next masterclass
13th June 2013
Price £495 per person
Book on—line at
www.processfix.com**

**T   +44 (0) 1908 255 993
F   +44 (0) 1908 255 700**

Printed on recycled paper.