

Leaning Internal Processes.

Organization.

A Multidisciplinary, multi-location, research & technology organization.

Assignment Category.



Services & platforms



Renewable energy

Automotive



Large Industry

Aerospace & defence



Cross-functional engineering

Manufacturing



Mechatronics & IoT



Alliances

Modelling & Simulation Software



Materials & Surfaces



Engineering



Negotiations



Initial Assignment.

There is a lack of satisfaction from both the researchers and engineers as well as from the customers. The relationship is conflictual and there is a reciprocal lack of trust.

Collecting and Definition of the Definitive Assignment.

We were granted freedom to start collecting information through the organization. The main issues to be addressed were:

- No ownership, micromanagement. Duplicating activities
- No strategic direction
- Lack of common language and communication channels disturbed by too many players

From now onwards all actions of the assignment will be referred to the three above points.

Sources of Conflict.

- Different micro projects with no critical mass. Different business units supporting similar projects because their business is different. Many personal relationships (technologist-business) leading to personal deals. Individual factories willing to keep their private links to technologist.
- 420 activities for a team of 80 people. No technology strategy ever developed.
- Technology, engineering, product dev and marketing speaking different languages and assuming that ONLY they generate the corporate profit value.

Organizational Elements of the Assignment.

- a) Set looser boundaries within which people can operate at their discretion. Define strict “hand-shake” points where developments are transferred. Create project structures where technologist and receivers work together and are conjunctly evaluated. Avoid the excess of intervention from management by having unique “entry points” into the project. Same applies for the communication. Appropriate escalation mechanisms set as part of the structure. The structure was called the submarine.
- b) Rationalization by functions from 420 to 10 activities and then to 4 strategic intends. All multi-divisional .
- c) Deployment of Design for Six Sigma (DfSS) and visualization tools in a common language between producers and receivers.

Managerial Aspects of the Assignment.

- a) Managers evaluated by respect of the structure and acting as mentors of project leaders.
- b) Multi-divisional pool financing for projects and cross functional evaluation committees.
- c) Technologist temporarily assigned near customer and manufacturing.

Technical Aspects of the Assignment.

- a) None.
- b) Rationalization and focus on function-related technologies
- c) Graphical tools and common language

Action Planning, Alignment and Integration.

Simplified and continuous application. Elimination of the end-of-pipe assessment of projects. No surprises. High trust

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation.

The execution of projects was left to either the project leaders or the submarine crew. Clear conditions at the shake hand point. Higher IP productivity, faster and clever software development. Budgets, equipment and team grew by 300%.

Transfer and Disengagement.

We move authority to where knowledge was created. Transfer was actually the assignment.

Learning Points.

People give their best when there is ownership, transparency and simple structures.