



Why You Should Be Passionate About Processes

Full disclosure, we know processes aren't exciting. Let's get that out of the way at the start. Processes don't sound that exciting, and you might not even be aware of exactly what they are or how they work. The idea of 'processes' might not have the *millennial-engagement* traction of words like '*blue-sky thinking*' or the allure of fun workplace tasks like re-branding or team building; but in the real world, they are far, far more important. A company, of any size, that ignores the role of processes, does so at immense risk to their daily performance and future development.

Why are processes so important?

Every company has the same ultimate goals; to achieve their objectives in the most efficient way. That might include conquering the market, making the best version of something or saving an endangered species, but in every case the concept is the same – reach your goals in the most cost and labour effective way possible. Performing at the highest possible level centres on utilising your assets correctly, and connectedly. This is where processes come in, they are the glue that joins all of your assets together to make them work in the most efficient and productive way. If you imagine your company as an engine, you need to make sure that every part is working to the best of its ability for the overall machine to function at its greatest capacity. If your radiator overheats in your car, your engine won't be able to run; and it is the same with your company.

When a customer comes into a restaurant and orders a meal, there are potentially several cogs that are involved in satisfying that customer and their needs. For example, they might need to be seated by a host and given a menu, the waiter will need to assist them and take their order, the kitchen will then need to prepare that order correctly and there might even be a cashier who has to take the correct payment for the order. Let's not forget to mention the more backstage elements such as ensuring the kitchen has the right food to fulfil the order, the equipment provided is in good working order to make the order, the staff are trained to meet their responsibilities and that the venue has working lights and appropriate amenities. When you actually think about it, that is an awful lot of cogs that need to turn in unison. If one of them breaks down, there is huge potential for the system to falter resulting in, at best, a very dissatisfied customer, if not something far worse.

It is the same for service-based organisations and manufacturing companies. Client services need to understand the connection between business development, account managers, perhaps designers or

deliverers, and finance teams. Factories need to ensure smooth alignment between equipment capabilities, employee training, output measurements and target accommodation.

The common thread between these situations is processes. Literally defined as *'a systematic series of actions directed to some end'*, processes are a cross-functional output of your strategy that connects and unites every element of your business towards its end goal. Processes help you to define your organisational structure and how its resources can work together most effectively.

Here are essential benefits that result from effective processes:

A stable framework for every eventuality

Processes are the framework around which your business is able to function at its best. It is only through adopting efficient and productive processes that you are able to understand how each element of your business is connected to each other and how their integration will fuel greater performance. Through processes you can lay out the way in which your organisation can operate most efficiently and effectively. You are able to determine the best course of action and make sure you are utilising all of your resources, from employees to equipment, in the most productive way for your future growth and objectives. Since processes are a result of your strategy, they will also allow for adaptation and flexibility in times of expansion. Your company is far more likely to be able to handle necessary production increases, or escalations in consumer demand, if you have the right processes in place. Evolution is a natural part of business, and your processes should reflect that.

Personal responsibility = engaged employees

Processes are vital to showing what each individual in an organisation is responsible for and their ownership of your output. If implemented and communicated properly, processes ensure that everyone is accountable for their actions and their output. When employees understand their role, particularly in terms of how it impacts the organisation as a whole, they are far more likely to feel engaged and motivated. Even the smallest roles can be crucial to the overall success of a company; as the saying goes, you are only as strong as your weakest link.

A roadmap for momentum

Processes are your reference point to identify issues in order to resolve them. If your car engine starts smoking or stops working, the mechanic will need to find out what went wrong in order to fix it. Since there are schematics for how an engine should function, they know where to look and what to test to find the source of the issue. That is exactly how you can use your processes in your organisation. When something goes wrong, you should be able to quickly ascertain where in the process chain the breakdown or mistake occurred, enabling you to take swift action to fix it and prevent it from happening again. You wouldn't like it if your mechanic took weeks to fix your car, would you? Well, your customers won't be satisfied with delayed action to rectify the issue that affected them. The most effective processes will not only help your day to day activities to run more smoothly, but they will exist in a flux state in which improvements and tweaks can be made in order to accommodate whatever the aims of the business are. You can upgrade or replace parts of your engine to make it

work to a higher standard, without compromising the overall machine; just as you can with the best processes.

Fuelling successful productivity

From targets to invoicing, client servicing to employee capabilities, processes go right across your whole organisation. They are the schematic to how your engine performs. By determining the best methodologies by which your business functions and setting the boundaries and responsibilities of each employee and department, you can ensure that your organisation operates at the highest level. Processes give your company a structure that optimises its output and an agility to allow for new accommodations and future expansion. Without effective processes, your organisation will never run as efficiently as it could and you won't be able to meet the challenges you face on a secure footing. With processes, your brand will have the foundations to achieve maximum productivity, the highest quality service and the best performance levels. That way, your company can exceed its objectives, every time.

If you would like to get expert advice on aligning your company's strategy to business processes and performance that will continually drive improvements and profitability, get in touch with Identify Action at <https://identifyaction.com/> or via email on action@identifyaction.com.

Identify Action is a strong, talented team, whose members have been part of the UAE's explosive economic development since 1991. We are of different nationalities and backgrounds, and together have experience of a wide range of regional and multinational industries, at both shop floor and management level.

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