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Why Have an Organizational Impediment Removal System?

> “Work smarter; not harder”

But how exactly do you do this? It turns out there are a lot of ways to do this, but one of the best ways is to focus on removing things that slow the delivery of value down - impediments - across all the entire organization.

To understand why, consider that when people map out how they deliver value to their customers (a process called “Value Stream Mapping”) they find that their process efficiency is very poor. Process efficiency is calculated by dividing the value-added time associated with a process by the total lead time of the process.

> Process Efficiency = Value-Added-Time / Lead Time

When you learn that process efficiency for IT systems is typically below 15% (that’s right; only 15% value added work!) you can see that if we focus on removing the 85% of waste time, we can speed up delivery to our customers dramatically.

Impediments are defined as “anything that will slow the delivery of value down.” Impediments are part of the overall system of delivery. They are often the result of “that’s just how things get done ‘round here“:

- Some are localized in nature and the Team can work them because they have the information and ability. For example, perhaps a Team has identified a “blocker” (the way work management tools often refer to impediments) whereby they need an approval to have access to a server, and there is a good relationship between the Team members and the person who provides access.
- Some are more systematic and will need a group of people from multiple domains to address. For example, perhaps there is a complicated process to release the solution to the customer which came about as a result of fears of bringing the system down.

Irrespective, it is the role of management to help Teams to deliver value by removing impediments. To do this they need to ensure that there is an impediment system in place aimed at working and removing impediments that have been identified by the organization.

FAQ, SSA, Impediment, Removal, Organization

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