



Management Concepts Series – 2010

* *Common-Sense Guidelines for Successful Organizations* *

	Management Concept #12 <i>Process and Outcome</i> <i>Don't be seduced!</i>
<p>Active Management Pillar Applicability</p> 	<p><i>“We have an excellent process for that.”</i> <i>“We’re dedicated to Repeatable and Predictable Processes.”</i> <i>“The process works.”</i> <i>“We need to do some process reengineering.”</i></p> <p>Processes are seductive. But if you hear any of the above statements (or any statement that puts process at the front of the discussion), you should feel beads of sweat popping out on your forehead.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Processes are only meaningful in the context of enabling an outcome.</i></p> <p>Repeat that over and over until the discussion of a process out of context of an outcome becomes anathema to you. Without that connection, your team is simply following the cookbook. No matter how good your process framework is, if the process becomes the thing, you are likely to fail.</p> <p>Don't get me wrong; I'm a process zealot. Repeatable operational processes are necessary for most businesses to succeed. This is especially true for businesses that have passed the first inflection point of 60 – 80 people. Strong processes are the foundation of quality, manageability, and predictability. They are the enabler of successful outcomes. But, orphan processes, those not directly connected to results and outcomes, are simply activity generators. Activity equals investment. Don't invest without return.</p> <p>The Simple Process Test:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Was it built to achieve a measurable and desired outcome?2. Is it repeatable and predictable?3. Is it doable?4. How will it be managed and integrated into operations?5. Is it cost-effective?6. Is there an iterative feedback loop to verify outcomes and provide a basis for improvements?

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To live, to manage, to find the road. . .

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Process and Outcome

Processes can be seductive. They provide a warm and comfortable sanctuary that can be highly beneficial to your organization and, if not managed well, can spin out on and on with their own inertia. Process is the lifeblood of the bureaucracy. Mind, I have nothing against bureaucracies in general. They allow organizations to keep operating through changes in leadership and staff turn-over. But the balance of bureaucratic process, effective operations, and excellence is a management challenge.

Things to Think About When Creating and Managing Processes

❖ Connection to Outcomes

- Discussed above

❖ Enablers of Dull Wits:

- Process and Procedure can rapidly become “rules” which can rapidly harden into concrete.
- Watch for over dependence on process or procedure manuals. We need our staff to have the ability to make logical (and occasionally) illogical leaps. Sometimes people should be required to figure out the most sensible thing to do in a given situation
- Processes that are internalized have great deal of inertia and are often difficult to change.

❖ The Tar Pit:

- Once you have a set of “Procedures” you are committed to the effort and process of keeping them up to date. Once they become stale, they are (at best) irrelevant and a lost investment or (much worse) dangerous.
- The process and procedure library cannot be permitted to grow past the point of usability. Weed out, rationalize, and reduce.

To Recap:

- 1. Repeatable processes are necessary for most organizations*
- 2. Connect all processes and procedures to outcomes.*
- 3. Don't “over-procedure.” It causes dulling of the senses and is difficult to manage.*
- 4. Commit to the care and feeding of your processes and procedures.*

❖ *About Agovia Consulting*

Agovia is your partner in crafting common-sense plans, execution governance, and management practices that are laser-focused and, by design, create your results and your success. We help you solve your problems today and help assure your success tomorrow through management practices built on outcomes, results, and achievement.

Managing to Success

Success requires the alignment and coordination of many factors. Enterprises must be competent at, not only the elements of their core mission, they must also have the ability to create and maintain the infrastructure that surrounds and supports that mission.

What We Do

Agovia is a management consulting firm. It's what we do. Picture us a management fitness coach. We help you develop and strengthen the skills you need to succeed. We have provided consultation and solutions to multiple industries including: Information Technology, Insurance, Universities, and Homeless Services. We bring you the support, advice, and driving facilitation that allow you to stop "planning" and start getting results.

Services

- ❖ **Positioning for the Win**
- ❖ **Identity Development (Mission & Vision)**
- ❖ **Team Effectiveness Coaching**
- ❖ **Strategic and Tactical Planning**
- ❖ **Planning and Governance Training**
- ❖ **Organization Turn-Around**
- ❖ **Retreat Facilitation**
- ❖ **Runaway Project Services**
- ❖ **Problem Solving – A Cultural Effective Approach**
- ❖ **Conflict Mediation**
- ❖ **Team/Function Start-Up**

Trust yourself

Experience tells us that most of the time you do know what you are doing. You are the expert in your core domain area. The challenges businesses often encounter are nuts & bolts issues: organization, clear vision, discipline, management infrastructure, and communication. Sometimes you just need a catalyst.

We can help.

We listen.

We pay attention.

We work with you

