

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION MANAGEMENT

Individual Report



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF DENMARK

Company Case study



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1 Introduction

In the group presentation, we recognized that company **Maersk Decom** suffers in the multiple perspectives of the *Fishbone* diagram, this reciprocates me to believe that there could be multiple causes for an effect. In a hindsight, “*the fish head*” is determined as an effect for a problem statement which signifies an ***Unsatisfied Tender Process*** and the potential causes, sub-causes defines the “*fishbone structure*” as shown in the figure 3.

The respective company case study revolves around the **Maersk Decom** and its tender process. It was observed that the company has no specific work basis based on an innovation tool. After our first round of interview with the current *Project Manager*, it was quite clear that the internal departments and respective resources in the company were aware of lacking efficiency in the tender process, however, they were reluctant to the change or making advancements using particular models.

We thought of it as our duty and a great opportunity to help showcase the company, few insights with the help of the *Cause-and-Effect* Diagram from our curriculum [5]. The respective diagram helps us identify the main and sub-ordinate causes for the effect, as the effect was quite evident in the area of managing the tender process.

2 Discussion & Recommendation

2.1 Identifying Problem Statement using Fish-bone

After recognizing the main effect, we brainstormed into the left side of the diagram and came to understand that the causes lie in four main perspectives ***People, Governance, Tools, & Resources***. However, to understand in-depth we assessed the model and came to know from the input from different interviews that there are several 2nd and 3rd degree causes to the *fishbones*. The schematic of such analysis is illustrated in fig 3.

The following sections of the report examines how well the overall company is performing and suggest possible improvements for managing company’s internal competencies. For this purpose, two innovation tools are showcased, namely the **Service blueprint** and **Potential problem analysis (PPA)** for analyzing the company’s current state, scaling down the problem and offering recommendations as an improvement which might help formulate by providing a useful framework for ongoing performance management of a service.

Governance being the most important perspective, have different causes and sub-causes which lead to the important factors, possibly, the root causes of inefficient way of handling the tender process. The individual reflection section of the report discusses about how this perspective could be handled better and if done, could help the company achieve efficiency in handling tenders, be effective by maintaining the customer satisfaction and accomplish internal deadlines.

2.2 Scaling down the problem statement using Service Blueprint

Innovation usually occurs when the uncertainty around any given idea or strategy is reduced so that it can be implemented. I as an individual is supposed to suggest the company with the possible recommendations and help them map their present state to be more efficient and effective. This section deals with showcasing some important facts from the findings and analysis from the Fishbone diagram for below particular perspective.

2.2.1 Governance - An important perspective

Good governance is at the heart of any successful business. An organization needs to achieve its objectives and drive improvement, as well maintain legal and ethical standing in the eyes of internal & external stakeholders, regulators, and the wider community.

“The governance of any organization affects its appetite for risk and ability to innovate”

- Dr. Robert Kay [7]

I believe, **Governance** could be one of the most important perspectives for an organization to make sure the flow or processing of information in the internal departments is lean. It is quite evident from the presentation and the analysis of the *fishbone* that there are plethora of sub-ordinate causes leading to the main perspective as mapped in the (fig

3). The most influential causes can be identified such as – *unclear selection methodology & service feedback, unclear scope clarification , no standard format , and failing to meet internal deadline.*

The respective curriculum encouraged and helped me inherit the understanding of different innovation tools, however, the **service blueprint** is one of the innovation tools which helps organization govern the processes appropriately.

2.2.2 Service Blueprint & it's applicability

The service process can be viewed as a chain or constellation of activities that allow the service to function effectively [6]. **Service blueprinting** is a flexible approach that helps with the challenges of service process design and analysis. It is a powerful technique that can facilitate the detailed refinement of a single step in the customer process as well as the creation of a comprehensive, visual overview of an entire service process. An unimpaired service with a positive outcome is more likely to result in favourable service quality which influences customer loyalty [3]. Components of a typical **service blueprint** could be standardized per need, however, conventional features & template model are unveiled below;

- Customer actions
- Visible contact employee actions
- Invisible contact employee actions
- Support processes

Customer actions include all of the steps that customers take as part of the service delivery process. The actions of **visible contact employees** that occur as part of a face-to-face encounter are depicted as **onstage contact actions**. The next significant component of the blueprint is the **invisible contact employee actions**, everything that appears above the line of visibility is seen by the customer, while everything below it is invisible. Another critical component of the blueprint is **support processes** separated from contact employees by the **internal line of interaction** as shown in (fig 1). The activities are carried out by the individuals within the company who are not **front-line employees** but that need to happen for the service to be delivered by maintaining deadlines and following the project schedule.

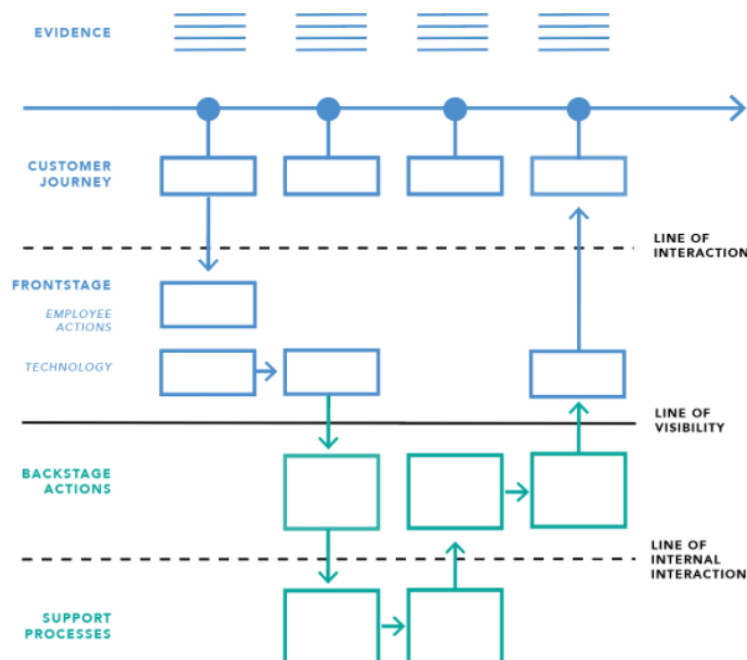


Figure 1: Service Blueprint [4]

2.2.3 Reflection on the model

This section encourages and makes a clear hypothesis based on the applicability of the corresponding tool to the company case and maps the current circumstances of the company with the insights from the interviews.

In regard to the case study, it is quite noticeable from the interviews with the *Senior Commercial Manager* and *Supply Chain Manager* that the company has regular communications and round of feedback from the consumers, i.e they seem to perform well when it comes to the **customer actions**. After further analyzing the situation and a round of interview with the *Senior Tender Manager* and *Project Control Manager*, it was deduced that the **front-stage employees** are as well responsible for maintaining coherency between the customers, however, they seem to have few conflicts between different departments i.e with the **invisible contact employees**. It is however perceptible to analyze that there are some issues in the **backstage actions**. After having few last rounds of interview with the *Project Manager* and *Sustainability Lead* it was quite clear that the *issue lies* somewhere in the **support process** and the **backstage actions** preferably in between the *Line of Internal Interactions*. Nevertheless, it would be a good suggestion to improve the transparency between internal departments which might help the corresponding employees to perform their tasks by prior decided internal deadlines with a clear goal and strategy, performing optimum tender selection methodology as decided by the governing body with a clear scope, leading to effective and efficient service feedback from the customer. Thus, if the above proposition is considered, it could help the organization mitigate the respective causes from the **Governance** perspective as explored in the Fish-bone model.

2.3 Robustness Check of the Service Blueprint

The corresponding section discusses the legitimacy of the tool – **service blueprint**. It is however, just a recommendation for an organization to map their important sub-ordinate causes for a major effect and alleviate them using certain innovation tools. The respective tool, if not implemented righteously might result in setting wrong expectations from the internal and external stakeholders. In general, problems can be identified in areas like; *setting the scope & expectations, navigating organizational ethics, motivating the stakeholders to contribute equally, determining method and process ownership, maintaining the consistency & scope innovation*.

It can be observed that lack of organizational understanding and support is at the core of many of such cons. In conclusion, it would be wise to build a cross-disciplinary voluntary team for the support where this department can take care of the respective duties. This underutilized step will make it easier to gather internal research, foster trust, prosper communication on tough decisions, and provide the stakeholders with sound and necessary information. Therefore, **service blueprints** can be a powerful tool if produced and practiced wisely.

In order to attenuate such eminent potential problems, it could be a good practice to execute **Potential Problem Analysis (PPA)**. PPA helps with implementation of innovation by trying to think through what might happen and develop contingency plans to deal with such possible problems [9].

2.4 Potential Problem Analysis (PPA)

A **potential problem analysis** is a systematic method for determining what could go wrong in a plan. The problem causes are rated according to their likelihood of occurrence and the severity of their consequences. The process helps to create a smooth, streamlined implementation process [8].

2.4.1 Application in brief

Identify broad aspects of the plan that may be prone to failure as done in section 2.3. Later, identify **potential problems** that could occur and record them in the first column. Identify **potential causes** and record them in the second column. Rate the likelihood and the severity of its **occurrence**. For each cause, practice **sensitivity analysis** to prevent the likelihood of cause will occur. Rate the **degree of impact** with the preventive action in place using the scale *high, medium, or low*. Lastly, **develop a contingency plan** to minimize the consequences of causes with unacceptable residual risk, should the preventive action fail to work. Schematic of such potential application of the PPA matrix is showcased below in (fig 2). It is not mandatory to follow certain steps, as the method to achieve a provisional PPA matrix can be revised and is versatile.

Potential Problems	Possible Causes	Occurance	Degree of Impact	Preventive Actions	Contingency Plan
Scoping expectations	Unclear scope	Most often	High	Determination of scope and expectations	-
Method and process ownership	Unclear leadership	Often	Medium	Determining Agile methods and processes	-
Inconsistency in performance	Discrepancy in regulating tasks	Least Often	Low	Motivating inconsistent resources	-

Figure 2: Potential Problem Analysis Matrix

2.4.2 Reflection on the model

The (fig 2) is depicted based on personal belief and some insights from the interviews as showcased in section 2.2.3. Analyzing the applied PPA matrix, it can be summarized that the company can leverage the tool by proper implementation of the features from the matrix. The respective model or the process can be constructed by the cross-disciplinary voluntary team as discussed in section 2.3 to make sure the flow of information between the multiple departments is lean and transparent without risks. However, the drawback of the corresponding innovation tool is that it helps identify and addresses only transparent problems, whereas, is excellent in addressing causes in between service processes, evaluate risk, most importantly helps keep preventive actions and contingency plans separate.

3 Conclusion

To conclude, the *Fishbone* helped reveal the multiple causes to the effect when considered the effect to be *Unsatisfying Tender process*, *Service Blueprint* helped scale down the problem to the severe problem statement making strong case against **Governance** as the main perspective to look into, whereas, if the application of the *service blueprint* goes wrong, implementation of *potential problem analysis* is suggested to determine the occurrence of the obstacles and help draw the procedure to deal with such prospective problems. The easiness of comprehension and execution makes the application of corresponding innovation tools consume lesser time. Having an overview of obstacles within project processes and identifying opportunities for improvements concurrently, is a combination of two innovation tools that are highly appropriate for the application and a wise recommendation to the organization's current stature.

In general, any tool can be employed for managing innovation, as the respective tool would be a colossal assist in achieving concrete results. On the other hand, *know-how* of the tool is equally important. Success is determined by the conjuncture of the innovation tool and the motivated group of resources, that are both essential for managing such innovation. It is an assured fact that any organization lacking innovation becomes fragile over time, and barely survives in the long-run. To stay on the bleeding edge, managing innovation is crucial and a requisite. Today's technological improvements only endorse competition and challenge the corresponding organization's capability of processing efficiently and effectively. Any company disregard of the strength can benefit from the innovation tool, as long as the company can integrate its position in the market, its innovation strategy with the tool, and determine external and internal risks & uncertainties that are relevant to the marketplace.

Depending upon the information acquired by the innovation tools, **Maersk Decom**, can perform establishing a cross-functional voluntary team to monitor distinct internal departments, help foster trust, prosper communication on tough decisions, and provide the stakeholders with appropriate information by respecting the timeline. The organization is however keen on publishing results with being *moderately effective* with the *lack in efficiency*. The application of the corresponding innovation tools increases the organization's adaptability and shows a new perspective on the action as depicted in the *innovation framework* (fig 4). This involves application of corresponding tools or processes to the company's current situation as recalled in [1]. If the corresponding hypothesis is acknowledged and concerned supposition is considered, it might help the organization thrive in the market over surviving. In time, the main reason behind the company's consideration to manage innovation might respond in satisfying customer needs, create services, balance and monitor the tender processes end-to-end with agility and stand apart from the competition by enhancing strategic core competencies.

A Appendix

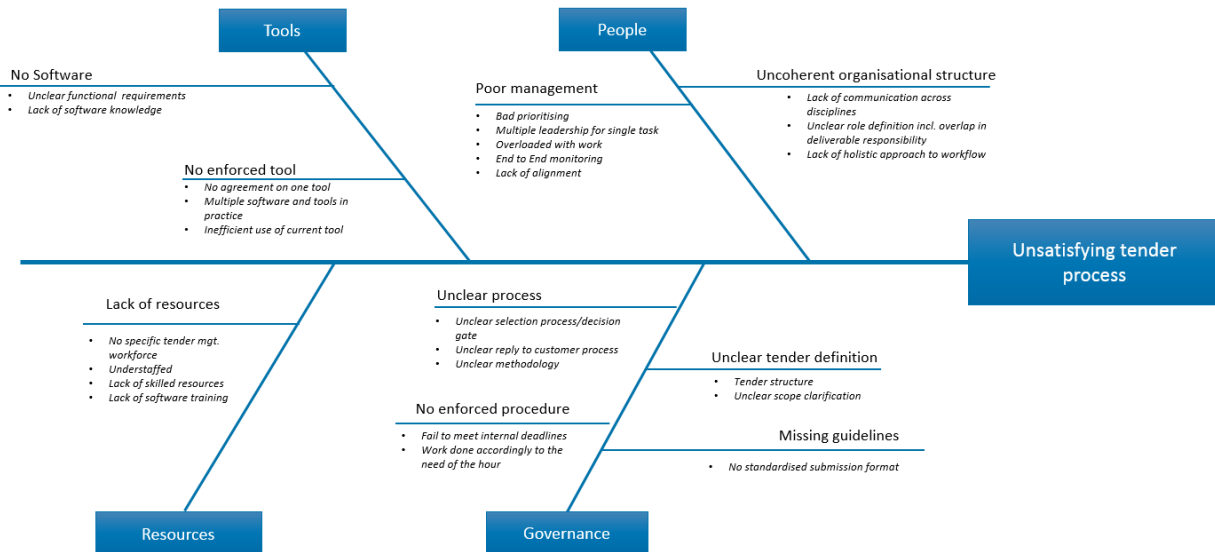


Figure 3: Company Case Study - Fishbone analysis [2]

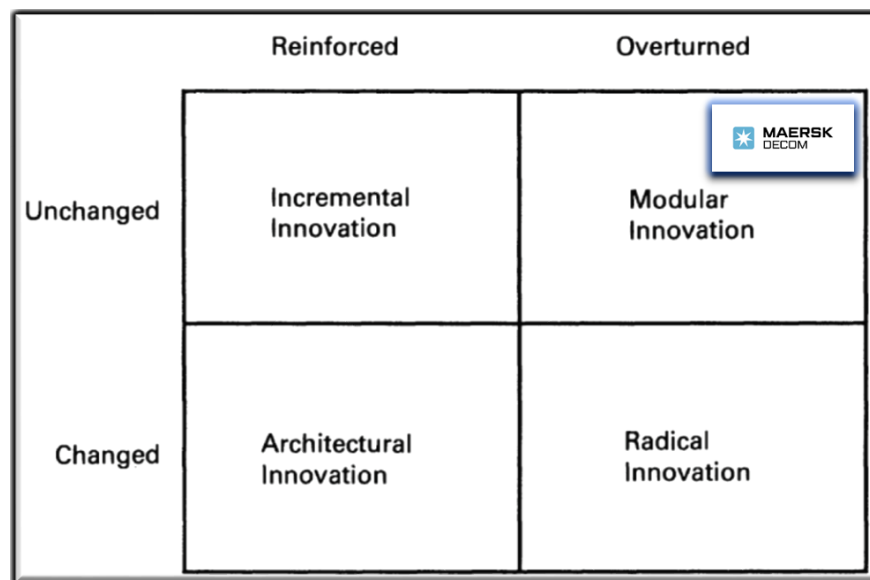


Figure 4: Innovation Framework [1]

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