Selecting and Understanding the Value Stream

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Assignment 2.3

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This week required reading chapters five through eight of The DevOps Handbook is all about selecting and understanding the right value stream for your application and business. In this paper we will go over some of the choices of value streams you have and help you understand the work in our value stream, making it visible and expanding it across the organization.

Choosing the right value stream is one of the most important decision you will have to make. Depending on which value stream you choose will dictate the difficulty of our transformation as well as who will be involved, how we need to organize into teams and the optimum way to enable the teams and individuals in them. First lets define what a value stream is; a value stream is represent the series of steps that an organization uses to build solutions that provide continuous flow of value to a customer.

First, we need to identify the teams supporting out value stream. No one person knows all the work that must be performed in order to create value for the customer, therefore it is important to identify the supporting teams after selecting a candidate application or service for our DevOps initiative. Some of these teams might include product owner, development, QA, Operations, infosec, release managers and technology executive or value stream manager. The next step would be to gain a solid understanding of how work if performed, documented in the form of a value stream map. Once this is complete you will want to create a dedicated transformation team, this will help prevent a conflict with ongoing business operations.

Next we will talk about increasing the visibility of work. In order to be able to know if we are making progress toward your goal, it’s essential that everyone in the organization knows the current state of work. There are many ways to make the current state visible, however it is crucial that we display the most up to date information and we consistently revise what you measure to make sure it’s helping you to understand progress toward our current target conditions.

This process is very important to the value stream process and can determine whether you succeed. The value stream is a valuable tool that every organization should utilize and re-evaluate the value stream as goals change. This process can be repeated as many times to continue to bring value to customers and applied to different aspects of the organization. To add to the process you get greater outcomes by integrating operations into the daily work of development such as creating shared services to increase developer productivity, embed ops engineers into our service teams, assign an ops liaison to each service team and make relevant ops work visible on shared Kanban boards.

References

Kim, G., Debois, P., Willis, J., Humble, J., & Allspaw, J. (2017). The DevOps handbook: How to create world-class agility, reliability, and security in technology organizations. Portland, OR: IT Revolution Press, LLC