University of Mississippi

eGrove

1996

AICPA News & Views Extra

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)

Continuous Process Improvement Update

As part of our move into a team-based work environment, Barry Melancon said in his November 9th memo that we would all play an important role in analyzing how work is currently done, and we would have a strong voice in defining how our work should be redesigned to achieve our new goals and objectives. To help us upgrade our work processes, the Institute formed a Continuous Process Improvement Team and has engaged the consulting services of Carol Bocchino from CBA, Inc. to train and oversee the Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) initiative.

The CPI Team has been hard at work since early November. They first looked at the production process. Other functions identified for review within the next five months are product development, conference planning, human resources, member services and accounting.

What follows is a review of the objectives and structure of the Continuous Process Improvement Team, a report on progress thus far, a description of the next steps and the announcement of the new help line.

OBJECTIVES & STRUCTURE

Continuous Process Improvement (CPI) involves analyzing, redesigning and implementing changes that (1) simplify our work flow, (2) achieve the most effective and efficient production and delivery methods to provide our members and customers with high-quality services, products and support, (3) eliminate duplication and bottlenecks, and (4) fill gaps and voids to ensure that no important steps are overlooked. To accomplish these goals, the CPI team is sub-divided into three groups: the Process Improvement Project (PIP), Steering and Facilitation teams. Each of these teams play an integral role in the process:

- The **Process Improvement Project (PIP) Team** is comprised of representatives from all the areas that directly or indirectly impact the process under review. These individuals perform the day-to-day work and know more than anyone about the current work process. They are also responsible for analysis of the current process (referred to as the "IS" map), design of the desired process (referred to as the "SHOULD" map) and creation of the implementation plan.
- The **Steering Team** consists of decision makers from the process under review, and they will endorse the changes that support improved processes.
- The **Facilitation Team**, comprised of members from Internal Audit/Quality Assurance and Human Resources, is responsible for training and guiding team members through the AICPA's performance improvement efforts.

PROGRESS REPORT

The CPI Team recognized that each day-to-day work team at the AICPA receives products or services, much like a customer, from another team or provides products and services, much like a supplier, to other teams. Based on this concept, as the first step in the data collection effort of the production process, a "Customer-Supplier Relationship Map" was compiled. This document records the work that moves from one work group to another.

After the Customer-Supplier relationships were defined, production work team representatives assessed the products and services (which they referred to as "outputs") they receive from supplier work groups. For these outputs, several factors were determined.

- ▸ First, the team identified what impact the outputs had on quality, timeliness, productivity and cost.
- ▸ Second, they compared the actual and desired level of performance and then determined what organizational issues needed to be addressed.
- ▸ Lastly, they looked at some likely causes for the gaps between desired and actual performance.

It was determined that the organizational causes of the gaps fall into the five general categories of (1) Policies and Procedures, (2) Technology, (3) Knowledge and Skills, (4) Communication/Interface Across Work Teams, and (5) Staffing.

The next step was to document the various phases within the production process and to plot the elements of work performed in each of the phases. This tool assisted in developing the "IS" map - a flowchart of how the production process is currently being performed. Each area reviewed the "IS" map and identified any situations in which there was a gap or missing link in the process. The identification of the gaps will lead to the next step which is to look at how we can work better.

NEXT STEPS

Listed below are the names of the facilitation team members who will be working with the product development, conference planning, human resources and member services groups. Carol Bocchino, our consultant, will oversee all of these processes.

Facilitation Team Members

Susan Anderson (Conference Planning)	Pat Duane (Member Services)
Edie Yaffe (Conference Planning)	David Ray (Member Services)
Jerry Ciccalese (Human Resources)	Gae Barbano (Product Development)
Margarita Womelsdorf (Human Resources)	George Durk (Product Development)
	Jim Freebody (Product Development)

Each of these groups will work through the development of the "IS" map before work starts on designing the desired process - the "SHOULD" map. The PIP and steering team members for these four processes have been contacted and training efforts are underway. As soon as the rosters are finalized, the names of the team members will be published in an upcoming issue of *News & Views*. In the meantime, Team AICPA members who would like to learn more about Continuous Process Improvement can view a 24-minute video in the NJ and NY cafeterias on Friday, February 23rd. In DC, arrangements will be made and announced.

HELP LINE

Those with questions about a particular process or continuous process improvement in general can contact any member of the facilitation team by calling the special Continuous Process Improvement Help Line on x3212. One of the facilitation team members will return their call within 24 hours.