

## How To Streamline your Business Process for Growth

Find yourself “putting out fires”? Struggling to systemize your business? Want to clear up the bottlenecks? If you answered yes to any of these questions, your business could probably benefit from a customized process-flow makeover.

“Many of my clients have felt that doing things the ‘way we’ve always done them’ just isn’t working any more,” explained Kathy Hetrick, president and owner of Strategic Focus Ltd. “Although business owners want their business to grow, many of the old systems and processes that worked in the past, now cause tension, mistakes and disruptions among the employees.”

According to Hetrick, every business is unique and requires its own specific process map to address its specific needs. She insists the key is to get the employees to “own” the new process. This can only be achieved by allowing them to be intricately involved in creating the new systems and processes in a workshop environment.

She offers these guidelines when creating the process map:

- Include key individuals in the session and respect their opinions
- Identify all the steps in delivering the work
- Separate the on-going activities from the steps in the process
- Pinpoint the decision areas in the process
- Develop checklists for areas where problems most often occur

“Although many business owners embrace the concepts described in management books like **The Goal** by Eliyahu Goldratt, **Good to Great** by Jim Collins, or **The E-Myth Manager** by Michael Gerber, they often have trouble applying the concepts to their own business.” explained Hetrick.

Developing a process map in a workshop or seminar environment is a tool that delivers many benefits. It defines workflow, identifies problem areas and speeds up new employee training. It also helps employees to gain an appreciation of all the roles required to deliver a job and takes personality conflicts out of the equation. When productivity and profits increase while on-going crisis problems decrease, everybody wins.

*Kathy Hetrick has been facilitating process mapping workshops and seminars for more than ten years. She founded her company, Strategic Focus, in 1997 to provide business owners with tools to improve their business systems and processes. Headquartered in Northeast Ohio, her firm has helped a wide variety of clients such as First Energy, Kent State University, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and smaller organizations from construction to service firms such as accounting and marketing to help improve their systems. For more information, visit the company website at [www.StrategicFocusLTD.com](http://www.StrategicFocusLTD.com) or call 330- 587-1911.*