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The Motorola Consulting and Training organization provides solution sets drawn from SIX SIGMA® methodologies and programs which result in sustainable business performance improvement.

“Citibank’s PC Support Unit Cuts Defects With CTR”

“Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty through People and Quality” is the vision at Citibank, the international financial corporation of Citigroup. While customer satisfaction was good, it wasn’t great, according to Deema Murad, Process Improvement Manager at Citibank N.A. Bahrain, located in the capital city of Al-Manamah.

At this Middle East office, it was estimated approximately \$400,000 annually would be lost if just 10 percent of employees were unable to work due to computer downtime. Cycle Time Reduction (CTR) was used to make the Personal Computer Support Unit more efficient. As one example, the time needed to approve purchases was cut in half.

Citibank started in 1997 to introduce Motorola University’s SIX SIGMA® quality initiative along with the CTR methodology to all of its 97,000 employees worldwide. SIX SIGMA® and CTR complement each other: using SIX SIGMA® to reduce errors & defects also reduces cycle time. Reducing cycle time eliminates errors & defects

thereby moving the company toward SIX SIGMA® quality.

The PC Support Unit, which serves all of Bahrain’s 185 employees, has many responsibilities, including:

- Personal computer support calls, including hardware and software problems, user assistance and training, and password reset/release.
- Purchasing, from request and research to ordering and processing of deliveries and invoices.
- LAN maintenance of network hardware and system and application software.

These activities are performed by 2.5 employees, who take care of approximately 300 personal computers.

The three service providers together with Technology Management and customers (users) were selected for the team, and all received a basic training session on CTR and cross-functional process mapping (CFPM), called “Introducing Citibank Quality.” Two facilitators trained by MU led the group. Seven other customer-users were invited to sessions to give additional feedback.

Developed by MU’s Consulting and Training Services, CTR — defined as the total time that transpires



At Citibank N.A. Bahrain, Cycle Time Reduction was used to make the Personal Computer Support unit more efficient. Errors decreased from a high of 500,000 to less than 18,000...a 3,000% decrease over two years.

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Cycle Time Reduction Initiative

“One in a Series”

Cross Functional Process Mapping makes the CTR process successful and is one of the tools in the SIX SIGMA® quality initiative.





The results obtained through the MU initiative were significant, resulting in time savings of up to several weeks.



“By reducing cycle time, we reduce costs, increase quality and improve customer service.” Deema Murad, process improvement manager, Citibank N.A. Bahrain



Cycle Time Reduction Initiative

between a customer’s request and fulfillment — focuses on the importance of meeting customer expectations. The CFPM tool involves developing “maps” of process flows by describing the functions involved in each step of a particular process. Maps are developed for both the way things are being done (the *as is* map) and the way things should be done (the *should be* map).

Using SIX SIGMA® methodology, tracking of the Unit’s errors/defects began in December 1997. Four to six months of observation showed the defect rate ranging from 290,043 to 517,241, said Murad.

The CTR *as is* sessions ran from June 4 to July 16, and identified more than 70 issues, including problems in purchasing, software installation, password changes and prioritizing calls for assistance. Afterwards, the *as is* map was displayed for staff review, and everyone was encouraged to give input and list additional issues not covered.

About five months later, the team returned for a *should be* mapping session. The team detailed each step in the improved version of the process, creating a list of action items that identified what needed to be changed in order to move from the *as is* to the *should be* state. Twenty-six action items needed for improvement were identified, and most were implemented through 1998. Final implementation is scheduled by the fourth quarter of 1999.

The largest problems — those accounting for the majority of errors as detected by SIX SIGMA® — were a lack of resources (personnel and spare parts), lack of technical skills among staff members, users not following procedures to request assistance from PC Support, and vendors who lacked sufficient inventory to meet the Unit’s needs. These issues were the first tackled using the CTR methodology, as they would have the biggest impact on the functions of the entire Unit.

“Cycle Time Reduction has become a key area of opportunity for organizations that are under increasing pressure to get more done with fewer resources in order to remain competitive,” said Murad. “By reducing cycle time, we can reduce costs, increase quality and improve customer service.”

The results obtained using CFPM on the overall CTR were significant. In the area of purchasing, the goals included reducing time required for management approvals, payment processing and technology changes. For example, the team cut purchase approval time in half (from one month to 15 days) by designating the financial controller to approve purchases on behalf of the country corporate officer. The controller also approves requests twice a month instead of once a month.

In another area, a process was created to ensure that everyone is aware of the impact of change prior to actual implementation, explained Raul Vacarizas, PC Support Manager. If a user requests

a new computer with Windows NT, as an example, PC Support checks the user’s current hardware and software profile, looking at the applications run and peripherals used. This profile determines whether these upgrades will continue to work on the new platform. If a component will not work, the Unit will advise the user of its findings and recommend alternative solutions. Before CTR, a complete analysis of the impact of changes was not done, resulting in unnecessary delays due to the need for subsequent requests for additional software and/or assistance. The time saved ranged from hours to weeks.

The team’s goal was a seven-fold reduction in defects by December 1999. It started in 1997 with a defect per million opportunity (DPMO) rate of 343,750; then it climbed to 517,541 in April 1998. By December 1998, the rate was down to 38,700, and dropped to 17,857 DPMO by Aug. 31, 1999.

“We not only achieved our targets but are also ahead of our goals,” added Vacarizas. “Quality consciousness has been one big reason for the improvement we’ve seen. Previously, staffers were not concentrating too much on priorities and deadlines. The additional awareness raised by the training and sessions caused defects to go down.”

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