processfix

Welcome

Change; it's ingrained into our culture and our language: "it's time for a change", "a change is better than a rest", "a change for the better", "a change for the worse". Change will always exist, but it is how your organisation approaches and manages change that can have a significant impact on your success.

In this edition of the Processfix newsletter, Pat Watson, Head of UK/EU Admissions at Anglia Ruskin University, shows us how a positive and proactive approach to changes imposed on the Higher Education sector, such as paperless admissions, helps them to be implemented as efficiently as possible.

We then speak with Tim Hawley, Customer Experience Manager at Capital One, whose approach has evolved from seeking not only the traditional functional responses from process improvement, but also adding an additional layer: identifying and improving emotional responses through process improvement.

And in the spotlight at the University of Cambridge, Deputy Librarian, Sue Mehrer, shares with us how the library's services and usage patterns have evolved over the past 10 years, and what they are doing to ensure that they are prepared for future, as yet undefined, but definitely anticipated, changes.

NEWSFLASH!

Sheffield, UK — September 2013
Sherwin Williams, makers of Ronseal®, launch training programme for European facilitators

Preparing for paperless admissions

Pat Watson, Head of UK/EU Admissions at Anglia Ruskin University, shares how they have changed their internal processes following the UCAS decision to stop the provision of paper copy application forms.

Pat has been working in admissions at Anglia Ruskin for the past 13 years. In that time she has seen how the changes in the Higher Education ('HE') sector, such as increased competition and increases in student numbers, have made it even more important that "...we work as efficiently as possible. Changes are constantly imposed on us, but our resources remain limited. It is up to us to ensure that our processes are as efficient as possible." She also believes in embracing change: "a few years ago, we would think about how best to improve a process, do so and then move on. Now, we decide what to do, do it, then continue to review it. I think this is the same for everyone

"We have had so much change that we have had to get to the point where we welcome it"

in HE generally, but particularly in admissions. We have had so much change that we have had to get to the point where we welcome it, so that we feel more in control of it!"

And the move to a paperless system has provided yet another opportunity to welcome change. At a practical level, Anglia Ruskin has two campuses: Cambridge and Chelmsford. This had always caused issues with the paper system. Not only would UCAS only deliver the paper copies to one address, which increased the administrative workload in sorting the applications and sending them to the right campus, but also, for some interviewing courses, the sheer volume of paperwork associated with the interview process meant that the team used suitcases to transfer papers to the interview venues!

We asked Pat how they had approached the UCAS change at Anglia Ruskin. "When the changes to the admissions system were announced about 4 years ago, the Admissions team started to discuss this immediately. We knew at the start that we would need involvement from IT Services, as we'd only receive electronic records, so we would need to find ways of processing the information and supporting our Admissions Officers to manage their workload. We have been fortunate to have senior management support, enabling us to work closely with our IT Services colleagues to find efficient ways of managing huge volumes of data."

"The Processfix workshop was a real catalyst. We knew what we wanted and needed to do, but the workshop gave real momentum to the AIR ('Admissions Improvement and Redesign')

Project and since then it's grown and grown. Initially, the scope was full-time undergraduate application processing only. But since the workshop, we've extended this to embrace international, part-time and post-graduate applications. We already have some deliverables from the project in place, such as viewing the UCAS application in SITS; we are also developing an applicant portal, which will improve our service to applicants and help us to automate processes. Previously, paper applications would move from file to file; now we're working on an online 'live list', which identifies to an Admissions Officer which applications they're working on, their status, next steps etc."

"The Processfix workshop was a real catalyst"

Anglia Ruskin have already piloted their new approach to interviews within the faculty of Arts, Law and Social Sciences in the last year. Their interview process has become completely electronic: interviewers have an iPad or a laptop on which they can look at forms and questions, and they provide their feedback electronically as well. For other faculties, there is still some paper involved, for example where processes involve a lot of testing and/or group interviews. "We are still working with the faculties on how to make interview systems paperless. They all realise it's the direction we need to go in, but at the same time, there are practical complications to do with availability of iPads or laptops. We need to support them, and our Admissions Officers are involved in these discussions as well."

Pat concluded by saying: "we are on a journey; we're a way along it, but there's still a lot to do. I would say that the most important thing is to make sure all applicants receive a good professional service. You need to make sure that all essential steps such as viewing applications easily on screen are in place, and crucially, to support Admissions Officers to manage their workloads proactively."

The changing face of continuous improvement in Capital One

Tim Hawley is the Customer Experience Manager at the financial services organisation, Capital One, where his career has evolved from the traditional focus on functional process management in IT, through to the engineering of processes that customers really like.

Tim started by explaining the importance of process management within Capital One as a business imperative. "Process management is a core discipline at Capital One; recognised and valued for its role in helping our growth and overall management. We offer our teams a base level of understanding of process definition, then give them the opportunity to extend their knowledge through more formal training. The objective is to ensure that all of our teams

"Process management is a core discipline at Capital One"

are able to understand and define their processes. Our Process Excellence team are also on hand to offer support and training to those who require

"I moved from a role focused on pushing an agenda for process excellence: defining a problem, proposing a solution and then confirming the results. I wanted to get closer to our customers and understand how we interact with them. At first, I thought that there was a distinct difference in the disciplines. However, now nearly 2 years into the role, I am clear that the two are not mutually exclusive. Traditionally in process management we think about the outcomes relating to time, cost, and quality; we still need to think of these, but now we've got an overlaid customer experience. We need to engineer not just functional processes, but also those that may elicit an emotional response.

"It feels like there's a reboot going on in the process world"

Our objective is to maximise any positive thoughts and feelings and minimise any negative connotations. For Capital One customers, this involves: function (can I use the application form/my account?), effort (how hard was it to do?) and importantly, emotion (was it a positive experience, did I feel good about it?). It is that

"I wanted to get closer to our customers & understand how we interact with them"

help at any time. As part of this, Processfix are running a series of workshops to give teams throughout our organisation the chance either to refresh or to engage with the concepts of process management."

Tim leads the Process Excellence team, but in 2011, his role expanded and he became involved in the management of customer experience. Since then, he has significantly shifted his thinking about the differences between the two disciplines.

emotional response that will help us to build a long term relationship with our customers."

At Capital One, there has been a mind shift in getting people to think that the customer may actually enjoy the experience with the business and that may result in business benefits. But now that Tim has lived through this, he believes that an emotional layer could be applied to all processes. "It feels like there's a reboot going on in the process world. You may have got to the point where

you feel that your processes are very efficient and well defined. You may have a very low error rate. But there's a new dimension. Your processes could be great in achieving your business objectives, but they could also be very mundane and give very little satisfaction to those involved in their delivery or completion.

"If every process was viewed as a customer facing process, we'd be trying to make it as easy and enjoyable as possible"

Take a mandatory process such as completing a time sheet or an expense form: how much enjoyment does anyone get from these tasks? Imagine how much quicker and more accurate their completion could be if they were engineered to be enjoyable. There would be business benefits as well as employee satisfaction benefits; all from taking a different view of the approach to continuous

improvement of your processes." Tim summarised by saying: "if every process was viewed as a customer facing process, we'd be trying to make it as easy and enjoyable as possible. It's been an interesting evolution, to move thinking not just from engineering functional process, but adding in the emotional layer."

If you would like to talk to Tim about his work at Capital One, please contact him on 0115 843 3062 or email tim.hawley@capitalone.com.

Cambridge University Library is one of the world's most important repositories of the written word. This edition's spotlight falls on Sue Mehrer, who joined Cambridge University Library in 2006 and was appointed Deputy University Librarian in 2010.

What have been the most noticeable changes in the University Library over the past decade?

The digital environment in which we now all work and live has, of course, significantly influenced the way libraries provide services. However, we still track physical usage, for example: how many printed items are borrowed every year; and usage has not changed as much as you might expect. In the sciences, online journals have been available for quite a long time, so students and academic staff in science subjects are less likely to visit libraries on a regular basis to carry out their research. But for the arts, humanities, and social sciences, print is still very important. The library, as a space, is also still valued by both students and academic staff, providing the right environment for study and research as well as accessing specialist support.

"There is a distinct difference between anticipating that there will be change, and anticipating what exactly that change will look like"

Increasingly, however, we are providing key services and resources electronically. Although many library users now no longer need to visit the library in person, they still use our services through our library catalogue, accessing the online journals, databases and the institutional repository, all of

which we manage and provide. And we are not only acquiring electronic information resources, we are also digitising special collections and archives from our own collections and making them freely available online.

How do you anticipate the changing needs of your users?

There is a distinct difference between anticipating that there will be change, and anticipating what exactly that change will look like. The way the academic community is using library services is changing rapidly and new challenges, for example in relation to supporting Open Access publishing and Research Data Management, will all have an impact on the way library services will develop.

Here at the University Library we want to make sure that we work closely with students and academics to understand what these future needs will be. We have therefore just embarked on a two year research programme based on User Centre Service Design, to ensure that what we do next is based on a thorough understanding of how students, researchers and academics carry out their academic work so that we can develop services that fit their needs.
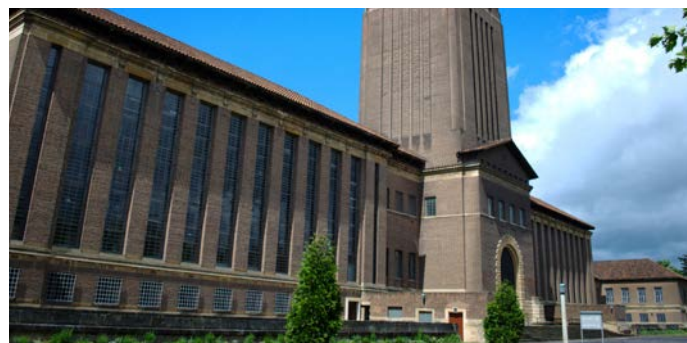
"We really want to learn and understand and have evidence of what our users do"

It is not a survey based programme, but has been likened to anthropological research. A team of people is evaluating what a researcher / student / academic member of staff has to do to fulfil his or her role. Where does the library service come in? How does the user want to use the library service? We really want to learn and understand and have evidence of what our users do, what they need and then use that knowledge to design our services.

Secondly, and just as importantly, we are looking at what is happening now. We're always looking strategically and globally at trends but we can't remain static as we wait for the 'big insights'. We have to look at what we do all of the time and

find ways to do it better. Not only will that make us more efficient and effective today, it will help us to release resources to invest in new services as they arise.

"Standing still is not an option."

How are you introducing new models of working into your service?

That's one of the reasons why we've engaged with the Processfix approach, alongside evaluating changes in library practices and our User Centre Service Design research. We are looking at our workflows so that we can identify the changes we need to make in our processes and the skills we need to learn.

And the changes we are implementing now are not only focused on improving our current offering, they are also invaluable at introducing a new kind of thinking into our culture. We are getting staff at all levels and at all times to think critically about everything we do, to evaluate how we could make things work better and improve services for our users. Standing still is not an option.

It is our responsibility to prepare for a different future, because one thing is certain: things are going to change and will keep on changing.

About us

Organisations rely on processes to get things done. Often these simply evolve over time and become inefficient ways of working. Processfix bring powerful, proven and behaviour–changing techniques to bear in a professionally facilitated environment.
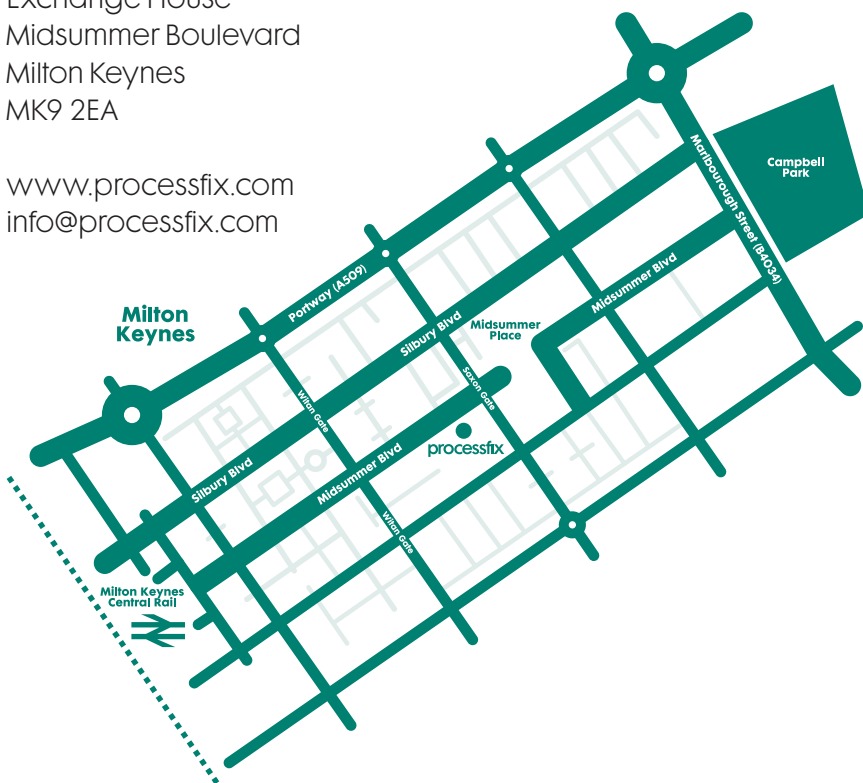
We focus on engaging your teams in their own improvement, empowering them to re–evaluate the way they do things and to develop new and improved ways of working that transform performance and deliver immediate results.

Whether you require Rapid Improvement Workshop facilitation, training, project leadership or an organisational wide process improvement programme. Processfix specialise in facilitating your team, delivering immediate benefits and instilling continuous improvement across your organisation.

And Finally...

University of Southampton move to paperless admissions in just three months. Read how they did it in the next newsletter...

If you would like to find out how Processfix can benefit your organisation, please contact us at:

Processfix Limited
Exchange House
Midsummer Boulevard
Milton Keynes
MK9 2EA

www.processfix.com
info@processfix.com

Book on–line for the next Processfix masterclass at www.processfix.com

**Next masterclass
27th February 2014
Price £495 per person
Book on–line at
www.processfix.com**

**T   +44 (0) 1908 255 993
F   +44 (0) 1908 255 700**

Printed on recycled paper.