



The Symptomatic Diagnostic for Rightshifting Effectiveness

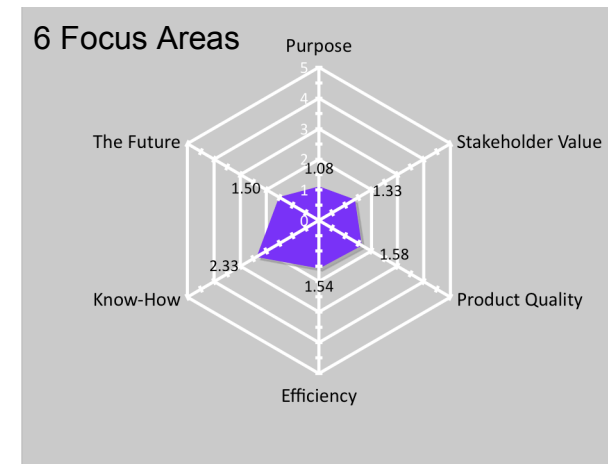
How to deliver real results in a challenging world

Look – Ask – Model – Decide - Act

The Symptomatic Diagnostic is a short investigation by a specialist in software-intensive business systems improvement. It looks objectively, from the outside in, at how effective your business is at achieving its own business goals. It will tell you in general terms where your organisation is against a 5-point scale of effectiveness, and indicate where the priorities lie.

A more detailed study should then be conducted to collect all the necessary evidence on which build a roadmap for improvement. The Symptomatic Diagnostic can be combined with a traditional benchmark of performance and/or capability assessment to give a comprehensive baseline.

Transforming the Business-IT Relationship



to

Step 1: Look at the symptoms:

Does your organization have a shared corporate focus on the vital few things that matter?

- Are your executive, creative and customer-facing teams pulling in the same direction?
- Does your organization have the capability to deliver the results it needs to survive and grow?
- Do your business initiatives achieve their strategic goals?
- Do you deliver what you promise your customers?

How does your organization score on the four essential ingredients of effectiveness?

- Is there effective leadership at all levels?
- Are decisions always based on evidence?

- Are support and operational services organized to deliver maximum value?
- Is there an optimal match between technical solutions and your business needs and circumstances?

How predictable is process performance?

- Do your projects comply with budgets and schedules?
- How predictable are the outcomes of business projects?
- How is know-how captured and shared?

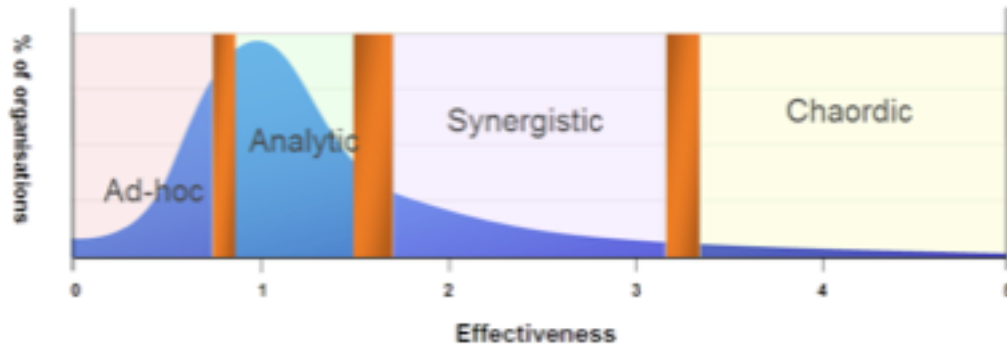
How sustainable is your business?

- Can your business flex and respond to changing market conditions?
- Can your business exploit technological developments effectively?
- Can your business attract and retain key expertise?
- How effectively does your organization manage and grow its knowledge capital.



The Four Mindsets of Rightshifting

The Rightshifting Network has researched the relationship between organisational behaviour patterns and levels of effectiveness.



The various points along the effectiveness scale are characterised as

Ad Hoc - Analytic - Synergistic - Chaordic.

Change becomes most painful and difficult for the organisation at the transition points between one organisational culture and another. External expertise will be needed to help change agents envision the future state, and guide the organisation through the transition.

1. Ad Hoc: Organisations achieving effectiveness levels of 0 - 1

Left-drifted organisations typically display a chaotic, ad hoc approach to work. If you are working in this kind of organisation, life is probably extremely hectic. There will be a continual series of crisis to be dealt with, preventing any strategic focus on improvement. There is likely to be little process discipline. Project results, costs and timescales will be unpredictable. Opportunities for adding value are rarely recognised and never exploited. Know-how is personal, serendipitous and unreliable. Measurement - if present - is imposed top-down and contributes little to effective performance management. There may well be an endemic blame culture. All in all, severely left-drifted organisations display neither a happy nor creative working environment. There is a tendency to feel that “things have always been this way, and always will be.” The biggest challenge facing the change agent is engaging enough key stakeholders with the will to change to get a Rightshifting initiative off the ground.

2. Analytic: Organisations achieving effectiveness levels of 1 - 2

Such organisations have recognised that the way work is done has some bearing on costs and the quality of results, but there is no overview of effectiveness, or of value delivered. A mechanistic, top-down approach is taken to organisational structure. Middle-managers are seen as the owners of the way the work is done, channelling executive intent, allocating work and reporting on progress within a command-and-control style regime. Organisations in the analytic mindset typically subscribe to received management wisdom and rarely question the status quo with good evidence. Work is likely to be carried out in functional silos, none of which communicate effectively with each other. There may be a plethora of metrics, but no concept of measuring value (it is usually seen as “too hard to measure”).



Analytic organisations may have engaged in an improvement programme based on one of the recognised models, and achieved some success with it. However, the success is likely to have been localised optimisation which is not demonstrably followed through into business results or customer value. The issue facing the change agent is to communicate the limitations of a top-down, process-oriented approach and create a compelling vision of a future state. Finding budget for improvements - even those which save vastly more than they cost - may require engagement from a large number of stakeholders, due to the rigid organizational structure and lack of devolved responsibility.

3. Synergistic: Organisations achieving effectiveness levels of 2 -3

Synergistic organisations display Lean and Agile characteristics. These include: respect for people; an organic, emergent, complex-adaptive-system view of organisational structure; and an organisation-wide focus on learning, flow of value, and effectiveness. Middle managers are experienced people who see their role as removing obstacles which might prevent the team achieving the business goals. The Synergistic (aka Holistic) mindset recognises that individual tasks within an organisation are co-dependent and must be integrated effectively to achieve the purpose of the business.

The change agent in a Synergistic organisation will be on a continual mission to share experience with other pioneers, learn better ways of doing things, and widen the horizon further.

4. Chaordic. Organisations achieving effectiveness levels of >4

The chaordic organisation will attempt to operate balanced at the knife-edge of maximum effectiveness, on the optimal cusp between orderly working and chaotic collapse. Visionary entrepreneurial leadership, a highly skilled workforce capable of coping with rapid organisational change and a rapid, evidence-based decision-making process characterise the management structure. Creativity is nurtured by an endemic learning culture.

The chaordic organisation responds rapidly to opportunities and threats, because the business allows its people to develop their skills and talents. It requires its people to take responsibility for delivering results, and enables them to do so.

SMS Transition Coaching

The transition points between mindsets are typically the most painful parts of the Rightshifting journey. Old behaviours have to be unlearned. New and unfamiliar ways of working have to be introduced. Multiple stakeholders need to be convinced that clinging to the old ways will not suffice to take the company forwards. An external change agent with experience of the "future state" is an essential catalyst for moving from one stage of organisational evolution to the next.

If your organisation is at a transition point, your SMS Rightshifting coach will help you envisage the view beyond that point and work out how to get there.