Utilizing the Power of Continuous Process Improvement in Technical Services

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Project Goals

Examine the efficiency of work processes in the Technical Services Department, with the goal of reducing the turnaround time by 50% or more for three specific processes:

1. Monographs from “order to shelving”
2. Implementing serials title changes
3. Handling of journal issues from “receipt to binding”
Who We Are

UMass Medical School

- Mass.’ only public medical school
- Currently ranked third in primary care education among U.S. medical schools by U.S. News & World Report
- 800+ students
- School of Medicine, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Graduate School of Nursing
- Clinical partner: UMass Memorial Health Care

Lamar Soutter Library

- NLM Regional Medical Library for New England Region
- Over 80,000 volumes
- Journal subscriptions: 1430 print, 3200 electronic
- 8 FTE in Technical Services
- Special collections: rare books, government documents, consumer health materials, early childhood and pediatric resources
- Selective depository library in the Federal Depository Library Program
Timeline

July 2003  CPI team formed
January 2004  Recommendations submitted
February 2004- July 2004  Pilot project
August 2004  Final report to be submitted
Project Management

- 2 teams: books and journals
- Both chaired by Associate Director for Technical Services
- Weekly meetings
- Timed current workflows
- Spreadsheets and flowcharts
- Report and recommendations for pilot submitted to management team
Continuous Process Improvement

- Many different methods and approaches
- How can we do things better?
- Uses “small steps” improvements
- Eliminate activities that have no value
- 80/20 rule: often said that processes account for 80% of problems while people account for 20%

Continuous Process Improvement

- Presentation to library staff from university’s human resources department about one approach: value-added flow analysis
- Video from American Management Association: “Time: The Next Dimension of Quality”
Value-Added Flow Analysis

1. Imagine yourself as the actual thing in process
2. Identify steps in the process
3. Determine if the steps add value:
   - The customer cares about it and recognizes it is important and correct (important to note that for Technical Services, customers are library staff and patrons)
   - The step physically changes the thing in process (moving/copying doesn’t count)
   - The step is done right the first time
### Value-Added Flow Analysis

#### Example: Copy cataloging a book from NLM copy in CatME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locate record in Acquisitions file and move to personal file</td>
<td>1 minute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Review cataloging</td>
<td>3.5 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Write call number in back of book and attach barcode</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Click Produce, Export, Labels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batch menu – Local Processing – Export, Print Labels</td>
<td>2 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal 1: Monographs from “Order to Shelving”

Analysis revealed:

- Approval books are held for review yet not being reviewed
- Extra step to suppress items ordered but not yet cataloged in OPAC
- Duplicative work, e.g., more than one person reviewing records
Goal 1: Monographs from “Order to Shelving”

Major recommendations:

- Reduce review period for approval books from 30 to 5 days
- Do not suppress “on order” records in OPAC
- Develop a “cataloging on demand” service for newly received books with guaranteed 48-hour turnaround
- Eliminate duplicative processes
Goal 2: Implementing Serials Title Changes

Analysis revealed:

- Not enough communication among staff
- Much duplication of effort
- Process taking much longer than necessary
- Staff and patrons relying on printed holdings list that is often outdated or inaccurate
Alerted by invoices, publishers, subs. agent, Serials

Alerted by journal issue, vendor, publisher, subs. agent, staff

Send to Cataloging

Title change?

YES

Edit records in CatME for old & new titles

NO

Edit existing bib in Voyager & inform Serials

Title Change Processes Prior to Pilot Project

Edit records in Voyager & inform Serials

Assign barcode & Princeton file to new title

Inform Systems of new online title – updates database & provides URL

Add appropriate fields to records

Online?

YES

Inform Serials of bib# for new record

Inform Binding and Preservation

NO

Import records into Voyager & add/update MFHDs

Any bound vols.?

YES

Binding updates ABLE

NO

Finished

Inform Binding and Preservation

Update OCLC Union List, SERHOLD, & printed list

Set up P.O., set up checkin, close old title, make screen prints and distribute

Stacks Maintenance finds space & shelves
Goal 2: Implementing Serials Title Changes

Major recommendations:

- Develop e-mail or electronic tracking system to be used by staff when title change is identified
- Test a goal of 10 working days for in-house systems to be updated
- Encourage staff and patrons to search OPAC for serials information
  - Discontinue manual updating of printed holdings list (print annually only)
  - Provide more training and documentation
Title changes are discovered by many different areas in the library. When a title change is suspected, it is sent to Cataloging. Cataloging verifies that a title change has taken place and simultaneously notifies six other areas of the library. Those areas do their part of the process and notify Cataloging when they are done.
Goal 3: Journals from “Receipt to Binding”

Analysis revealed:

- Longest delay in process is time spent waiting to be bound (lack of sufficient funds in budget)
- Tattle taping each issue is costly and time-consuming, and tapes are then replaced in the binding process
- Policy to stamp each bound volume with library name on three edges is time-consuming and redundant
- Generally online issues of titles appear in advance of print copies, but analysis inconclusive
Goal 3:
Journals from “Receipt to Binding”

Major recommendations:

- Discontinue keeping daily check-in statistics manually
- Develop priority list for binding
- Estimate binding costs for calendar year and submit in budget request
- Rubber stamp library name on top edge only of bound volumes
- Tattle taping a good insurance policy, but investigate reliability of less expensive tattle tape
Pilot Project

- In progress now (February-July 2004)
- At conclusion, processes will need to be re-timed
- Freezing of book budget has prevented us from adequately testing book recommendations
Conclusions

- Value-added flow analysis is a useful tool for continuous process improvement
- We anticipate project goals will be achieved
- Technical Services better able to serve its internal and external customers
- Technical Services staff will have more time available for other projects: image database, rare books cataloging, digitization of Clara Barton letters
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