



Due to the expected wave towards popularization of BPMS in the coming years, this paper aims to clarify some important facts about Business process management, which in turn will help companies before investing widely in a system that may be lacking any value.

Preface

In 2003, Gartner, the leading business research and advisory company, correctly anticipated that the market for Business process management suites (BPMS) would generate more than \$1 billion by 2007. ¹Additionally, in 2020, Gartner announced that the size of the BPMS market in 2019 had reached \$2.8 billion. However, interestingly, Gartner estimates this market to reach \$2.9 billion by 2024, a mere increase of \$0.1 billion in 5 years, due to economic turbulence resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This illustrates that, albeit small, there is still expected to be an increase in this valuable market.

This estimation has been explained by Gartner who states that, although there is a clear shift toward demand for BPMS, the market itself has taken a financial knock during this turbulent time. It is agreed, however, that BPMS certainly has the agility to enable companies to respond rapidly in such crises. Holtz expert team totally agrees with the ‘*tread lightly, adapt quickly*’ reflective approach. Indeed, it is our belief that the chaos caused by COVID-19 has uncovered how important business processes and business rules are in such situations. In reflection, this in turn should undoubtedly encourage business leaders on the path toward improvement initiatives. Mention of this can be seen in our previous section: [What can we expect after COVID-19?](#)

In contrast, despite positive reviews of BPM, ²Gartner, in a separate article, emphasized that treating BPM as a technology will not necessarily help a company succeed; in fact, without careful planning, it could potentially do quite the opposite.

Accordingly, due to the expected wave towards popularization of BPMS in the coming years, the purpose of this paper is to clarify some important facts. The highlighting of certain details about BPM is considered essential for business leaders. Equipped with such knowledge, companies will then be well informed before considering investing widely in a system that may be lacking any value.

Technology is an enabler

Undoubtedly, technology has succeeded in making our lives easier. It has also gone far in improving business operations effectively. Hence, technology is considered an enabler either in life or in business. To clarify, we can take a look at the picture below.



In the above picture, monkeys have fully occupied the car even though they gain no benefit from that other than the freedom to jump and lounge on the vehicle! The main benefit to be gained from a car is the use of it for transportation, which obviously elude monkeys because of their inability to drive.

However, while people can certainly obtain the main benefit from knowing how to drive, they can, in fact, transport themselves and others without cars as has always been the case. Accordingly, we can say that, above all, the purpose for cars has been to *facilitate* transportation.

Similarly, the same concept can be applied to technology. Technology in business has been developed to facilitate the implementation of existing professional concepts, which is the case with BPMS. In fact, technological expertise has itself advanced to enable smooth execution of Business process management. Therefore, while it is true that BPM experts can obtain the promising value of BPM without IT help, it is still recognized that purchasing the best BPMS in the world without technological knowhow would add little or no value to a company.

Processes are assets

It is known that an organization is comprised of a variety of valuable material assets such as capital from buildings, and digital machines as well as technological skills and other capabilities of employees. Subsequently, such valued proficiencies interact with each other to meet the purpose of the organization efficiently.

These days, it is fortunate that most organizations recognize the value of such assets and thus work hard to preserve them. For example, it is common to hear of a company working effortlessly to maintain buildings by assigning a multi-million-dollar contract to a skilled maintenance company. Additionally, it is often acceptable, if not expected, for business executives of leading firms to pay millions to upgrade their existing digital systems or even to purchase new ones in order to keep up with technology changes.

Undoubtedly, maintaining such resources is very important to an organization. However, conserving the resources alone will not fully achieve the organization purpose. The main goal could not be accomplished without valuable interaction among the available resources. Systematic collaboration must take place in order to achieve the company purpose and the only way for this effective interaction is through business processes.



Accordingly, before investing in BPMS, business leaders would do better to recognize business processes as valuable resources that need to be maintained and improved over time as is done with other capabilities.

Comprehensive view

One of the greatest successes attained through process initiative was the introduction of the assembly line, mentioned earlier in a previous section called Process Miracles.

To summarize, we can say that, at the time, Henry Ford had a clear purpose for this innovative idea which was to reduce business costs. Through his natural creativity, he was then able to imagine a holistic view of his manufacture. Subsequently, he

was capable of organizing his visionary ideas comprehensively and effectively to achieve his purpose. As a result of such an inventive idea, Ford revolutionized the whole industry.

Undeniably, having a well-defined purpose was vital in the Ford story although it is our belief that the ability to imagine the holistic view was the critical success factor. While envisioning how best a solution could be reached, a related purpose might be refined or improved, since the visionary perspective will show how all resources collaborate to produce the ultimate output.

Similarly, BPM emphasizes defining and managing business processes on a large scale where all defined processes work on individual processes while reinforcing one another.



Therefore, it is highly recommended to have a comprehensive view in place before investing in a system which may add no additional value to an organization due to the existence of silo mentality, which, incidentally, is contrary to the Business process management system.

Management discipline

The business process management system is designed to involve whole-team collaboration; thus, it is not a methodology or framework that can be implemented in one department or as a single business process. It is instead defined by the association of business process management professionals. To clarify, it is ⁴management discipline which assumes that organizational objectives can best be achieved through focused management of the organization's business processes. Thus, it is a discipline used to define the practices and rules that guide an organization toward achieving its strategic goals.

Based on this knowledge, it is not necessary to choose any given methodology, framework, or tools in order to adopt BPM. Rather, by adopting the principles of BPM, an organization can create its own methodology and framework. However, although it is an unnecessary resource, use of an existing methodology or framework while implementing BPM practices can be very useful since it can facilitate the operation.



Therefore, before purchasing a new system based on the anticipated value that could be gained by adopting BPM, business leaders need to understand that such potential value will not arise through the installation of BPMS alone. It is clear that

this could only happen through the adoption of a discipline that requires collaborative participation from the entire organization.

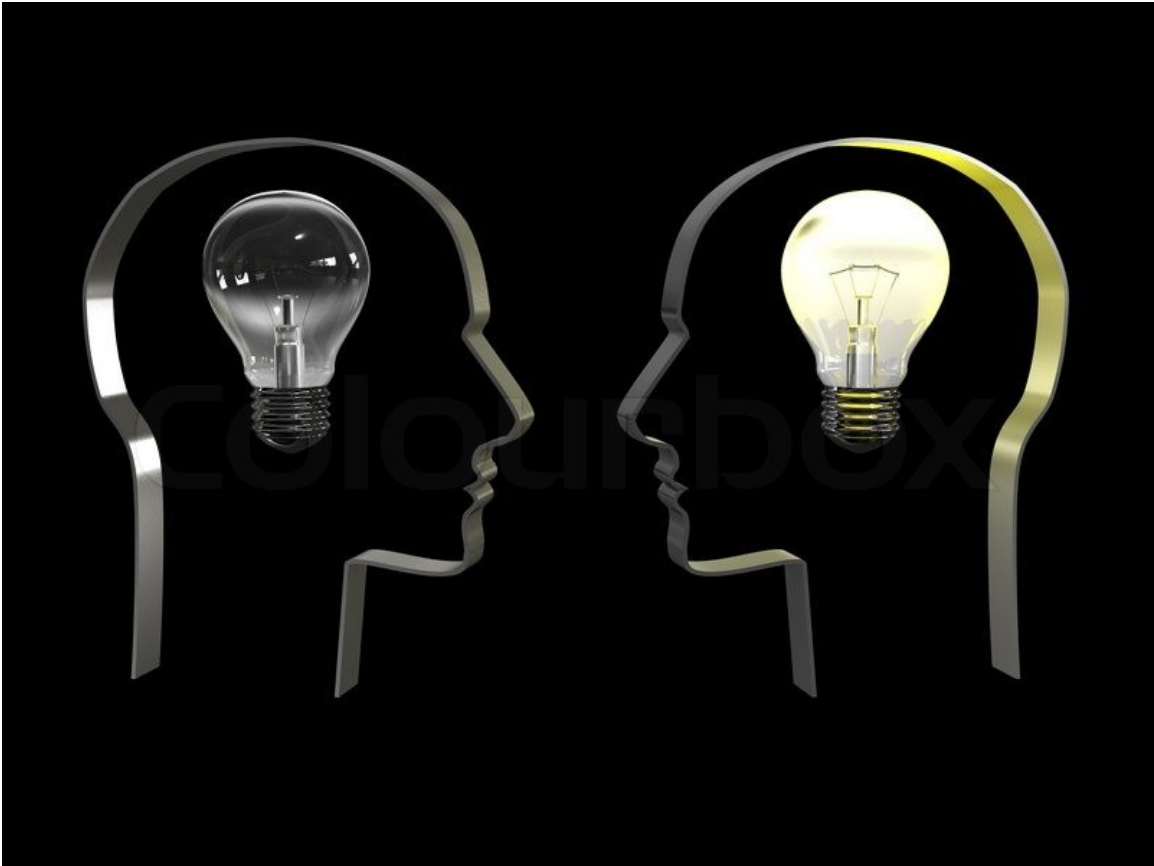
Conclusion

This paper does not dispute the value of technology; on the contrary, we all agree it has improved every aspect of our lives. The fact being discussed here is that the successful implementation of BPM with the aid of technology will, unquestionably, create unbelievable results. The most illustrative example for such a case is the Wells Fargo Bank story, previously discussed in the section entitled [*Process Miracles*](#).

The main purpose of this paper is to highlight the need for sufficient understanding of BPM before investing in any methodology or tools. Additionally, a further aim is to clarify the detail that successful implementation of BPM will indeed positively affect the culture of an organization since it can enable the shift from silo thinking to a process centric organization.

Finally, before investing in any tools, it is highly recommended to recognize the clear role business processes play inside an organization and to organize those business processes holistically where processes reinforce each other while working toward the defined purpose.

Furthermore, the most important thing to realize is that it is uncommon for the best business processes to be defined from the first initiation; therefore, business processes must be treated as assets that require regular maintenance and improvement to be most effective.



References

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- [Five Reasons Why BPM Isn't Just About Technology](#)
- 3-4 CBOK version 3