



A newsletter of ideas, comment, and dialogue for those who care about improving the performance of their organization.

**TSI Info Source**

[www.transforming.com](http://www.transforming.com)

312-738-8930

Volume III, Issue 9

October 2004

## Welcome...

...to our third (but very short) issue of *TSI Info Source* this year. As we wrap up our recent office move, I am reminded, yet again, how critical well thought out processes are to maintain the image, efficiency and profitability of an organization. As many of you have probably experienced, moving an office is a difficult task that is often made into a frustrating nightmare with improbable odds for seamless transition. Why? Well in my humble opinion, (and speaking from recent experience) this is largely due to service providers like the USPS and SBC that continually struggle to execute their core business processes in a way that satisfies customers increasing, yet still basic, expectations.

While these service providers (and I'll use that term loosely during this newsletter) tend to be a bit extreme in their lack of delivery, I think there are a few salient points we can still learn from. We'll get into those later in the newsletter.

This issue of *TSI Info Source* includes:

- **Service Delivery – Mastering the Basics**
- **Save the Date** – TSI's next training workshops are as follows. See page 3 for more details.
  - ▶ **Business Process Improvement (BPI) – NIU Hoffman Estates, IL – October 26-27, 2004**
  - ▶ **Strategic Planning (SP) for J-Curve Growth - NIU Hoffman Estates, IL - November 9-10, 2004**

We hope that this information is of value to you and others in your organization. Further, we hope that you would consider TSI for any of your 2004/5 projects. We can make a significant difference on your project and would like to be a resource to you. There is a good chance that we have done a project similar to the one you are embarking upon – please call 312-738-8930 x202 to talk about your specific needs and how we might help you.

Any feedback for us? Please send us an e-mail at [tsiinfosource@transforming.com](mailto:tsiinfosource@transforming.com)

- The Editors

### ***Mastering the Basics of Service Delivery*** (by Dan Feely – [dfeely@transforming.com](mailto:dfeely@transforming.com))

*This white paper addresses some of the issues that continually haunt organizations and prevents them from keeping customers (happy).*

...See Service Basics page 2



## TSI Info Source – October 2004

### **Service Basics**

When you think about it, there are but a handful of variables that the operational function of a service firm needs to manage. If the service organization can manage these elements well, then they are on their way to customer loyalty/intimacy and who knows what the next term will be.

Provided below is just a short list of items to consider and see how your organization compares.

- 1. Create an easy way for customers to engage your services** – if you ever want to have some fun waste a few minutes, try finding the phone number you need to call to get phone service installed. Better yet, try doing a Google search to find that information out. And if you're really daring, try looking it up in the phone book. If you are lucky and patient, you may find a number or two. Then when you call it, you will be surprised to learn that you've entered the wrong "channel" and how many times you are routed to another call center, asked to enter your 10 digits and then asked by the CSR to give it verbally. Now, our local telephony provider may be a bit extreme, but there is probably a lesson for us all to learn - How easy is it for our prospective customers to find a live body and to find the one phone number or e-mail to call. Then, find out how responsive someone on your side of the table is in returning that inquiry.
- 2. Create an easy way for customers to modify or adjust their services** – during the natural lifecycle of doing business, there is a high likelihood that a customer may want something different relative to what he/she originally ordered (I know this sounds crazy ☺). When that happens, what type of burden do you place on a customer to know their job, account, customer, order, SSN, FEIN number in order to begin making the change? Many service providers are famous (on the wrong end of the list) at requiring more info than a D&B has on the organization just to make a small change. Don't do that to your customers.
- 3. Don't let small problems become big ones** – Math professors forgive me, but I think there is a formula that goes something like (small problem x number of times you need to call to fix it) x (amount of time you are in queue x number of times you get routed x number of times you are asked the same question x quality of music while waiting on hold)<sup>2</sup> = size of problem now. Enough said.
- 4. When a customer wants to leave, let him** – During our training workshops we discuss Feed-forward communication loops and feedback loops. I'm all for feedback. But when a service provider has performed poorly they generally know it (or should if they review previous complaints). It seems obvious that further wasting a soon to be ex-customer's time only worsens that organization's reputation.
- 5. Expectation Management 101 - Under commit and over deliver** – say what you'll do, do what you say, give advance warning when an act of God prevents punctual delivery and don't ever deviate.
- 6. Using a script and using your brain are not mutually exclusive** – anytime we call customer service, or receive a call, the CSR is generally following a script. This generally makes sense for consistency and driving the call to resolution. However, when a customer has repetitive problems, it may make sense for the CSR to call "an audible". One service provider that we've come to know always ended their problem calls with "what can we do to make this better". On paper, this sounds like a good question and certainly has its place. But when a service provider fails to deliver and live to its commitments repeatedly, one begs wondering, why this organization hasn't asked itself the question "what should we have done in the first place to keep the customer from calling back over and over".

Lastly, when you are on the customer side of these transactions, be patient and be careful what promises you may need to keep when asking higher powers for assistance – or you may end up like me having to name your next child "dial tone".



People. Process. Progress.™

---

## TSI Info Source – October 2004

### Upcoming Training Workshops – October and November, 2004 - Act NOW!

TSI's upcoming Training Workshops are currently scheduled for the following locations and dates:

- **Business Process Improvement (BPI)** – NIU Hoffman Estates, IL – October 26-27, 2004
- **Strategic Planning (SP) for J-Curve Growth** - NIU Hoffman Estates, IL - November 9-10, 2004

Seminar fee: \$750 per person per workshop or \$1300 for both.

You are invited to attend one or both of these workshops. **Our latest workshop in May sold out in record time, so you will want to sign up ASAP.** Also, I would encourage you to forward this to others you know who might benefit from the training. We anticipate these workshops will be met with equal interest. Please see below for more detailed information on each of these training workshops.

Both of these workshops are action-oriented that teach valuable tools and techniques to give you a completely different perspective regarding how to define strategy and improve the efficiency of an organization including its people, processes and use of technology. The workshop leaders have also led similar workshops on behalf of University of Chicago, University of California-Berkeley and other leading universities.

Also, both of these will take place at **NIU Hoffman Estates- 5555 Trillium Blvd. Hoffman Estates, IL 60192** (very easy access from O'Hare Airport, I-90, and 355. Thanks in advance for your consideration and please forward this to any people who might benefit from a useful workshop like this.

Would you like to know more about these workshops? Go to - [www.transforming.com/processtraining.html](http://www.transforming.com/processtraining.html)

#### Registration Details:

To register to this class, you may reply to this e-mail and indicate the name or names of individuals that will attend the workshop along with the billing address and we will send an invoice to you) **or** click here to register online: <http://www.transforming.com/trainingregistration.html>

---

#### **Who Should Attend?**

- Senior Executives, Directors and Managers
- Process Managers and Team Leaders
- Members of Process Improvement, Quality or Financial/ERP/HRMS/CRM teams
- Department Directors and Managers
- Business and Process Analysts, Program Managers
- Strategy and Process Enthusiasts
- Consultants.

**See next page for each workshop's learning objectives.**



## **TSI Info Source – October 2004**

### **Learning Objectives:**

#### ***In the Strategic Planning Workshop - You will learn how to:***

- Design a strategic plan around core competencies and processes, rather than just markets and industries
- Capitalize on trends and discontinuities to guide future, strategic direction
- Create catalytic mechanisms to reinforce the strategic plan
- Avoid the 10 most common pitfalls - why strategic plans don't get executed
- Build and manage an innovation pipeline to create new markets and protect organizations from decreasing share in mature markets
- Identify and address 7 factors to make strategy everyone's job.

#### ***In the Business Process Improvement Workshop - You will learn how to:***

- Use the latest and most practical approaches to dramatically improve your processes;
- Define and analyze processes to identify and eliminate activities that do not add value;
- Engage a cross functional team and implement sustainable process changes;
- Quantify the benefits of process changes and create compelling “win-win” scenarios management can't resist;
- Define process metrics to measure the performance of the process while creating alignment across departments and business units;
- Design processes where none exist today;
- Follow and adapt a proven approach to garner support within your organization and make improvements within 30 days;



People. Process. Progress.™

---

## TSI Info Source – October 2004

### HOT LINKS (or, more places we like to surf)

- TSI Newsletter Archives – <http://www.transforming.com/archives.html> - check this page out for copies of past articles and other information.
- Quick MBA - <http://www.quickmba.com/> - need access to industry standard definitions of buzz words and other terms/concepts? Here is a site that might provide some answers.

## About TSI

TSI - Transforming Solutions Inc. - [www.transforming.com](http://www.transforming.com) helps organizations dramatically improve their organization by collaboratively and cost-effectively analyzing and improving how people, processes and technology are used within the organization.

### Chicago

845 West Fulton Market Place  
Suite 206  
Chicago, Illinois 60607

Telephone: 312.738-8930

### Denver

2925 Oakshire Court  
Highlands Ranch, CO 80126

e-mail: [info@transforming.com](mailto:info@transforming.com)

Or visit us at [www.transforming.com](http://www.transforming.com)