Process mapping framework for small business consultants: A Case study approach

Nicole Kmicinski

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.rit.edu/theses

Recommended Citation


This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Thesis/Dissertation Collections at RIT Scholar Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses by an authorized administrator of RIT Scholar Works. For more information, please contact ritscholarworks@rit.edu.
M.S. Service Management
Presentation of Thesis/Project Findings

Name: Nicole R. (Lamb) Kmiicinski, R.D.    SS#  Date: 6/15/01

Title of Research: PROCESS MAPPING FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONSULTANTS: A CASE STUDY APPROACH

Specific Recommendations: (use other side if necessary)

Thesis Committee: (1) Dr. James Jacobs, Jr. (Chairperson)

(2) ____________________________

OR (3) ____________________________

Faculty Advisor: ____________________________

Number of Credits Approved: 5

Date       Committee Chairperson’s Signature

Date       Committee Signature

Note: This form will not be signed by the Department Chairperson until all corrections, as suggested in the specific recommendations (above) are completed.

cc. Department Student Record File – Original
M.S. Service Management
Statement Granting or Denying Permission to Reproduce Thesis/Graduate Project

The Author of a thesis or project should complete one of the following statements and include this statement as the page following the title page.

Title of Thesis/project: PROCESS MAPPING FRAMEWORK FOR SMALL BUSINESS CONSULTING: A CASE STUDY APPROACH

I, Nicole L. Kmicinski, hereby [grant/deny] permission to the Wallace Memorial Library of R.I.T., to reproduce the document titled above in whole or part. Any reproduction will not be for commercial use or profit.

OR

I, ______________________ , prefer to be contacted each time a request for reproduction is made. I can be reached at the following address:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Date 11/5/01 Signature ________________________________

FORM K
PROCESS MAPPING FRAMEWORK FOR
SMALL BUSINESS CONSULTANTS:
A CASE STUDY APPROACH

by
Nicole R. (Lamb) Kmiecinski, RD

A thesis submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management
at
Rochester Institute of Technology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
of
Master of Science
Abstract

Objective To develop a Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants and to evaluate its effectiveness on a case study organization.

Design Current literature was reviewed to establish protocol for the framework. The framework was followed to test its efficacy.

Subject Weight No More, Inc., of Lyndonville, NY, was selected as the case study small business.

Results The developed framework proved useful for gathering information, maintaining consistency, and assimilating research into well-versed findings for the case study organization.

Applications Small business consultants now have a guiding framework which promotes use of strong customer service skills, consistency, organization, and evaluation of processes to begin investigating their clients' small businesses.

Acknowledgements

This completed thesis represents a huge accomplishment in my life. Thank-you to the professors of R.I.T.'s School of Food, Hotel and Travel Management, especially Dr. Frances Domoy, Dr. Jim Jacobs, and Dr. Richard Marecki, for their guidance and assistance in completing this thesis.

A special thank-you goes to my husband, Greg, for his unyielding encouragement and love. Kameron, thank you for the motivation! I will forever appreciate the following people's support and friendship: my Mom - Kathleen Lamb, my sisters - Karen (Lamb) Taylor, Ellen Lamb, Loran Lamb, Joanna (Lamb) Richards, Sally Kmicinski, Diana Hager, Jennifer Suozzi, and Laura Armstrong.

Thank-you very much to Lea Anne Werder for granting me permission to complete the study on her organization, Weight No More, Inc., and for her help and friendship.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table of Contents</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter One</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTION</strong></td>
<td>5 - 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Statement of Problem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Hypothesis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Review of Literature</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Methodology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Significance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Future Considerations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assumptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Thesis Format</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LITERATURE REVIEW</strong></td>
<td>11-33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Introduction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Service Management Trends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Small Business Trends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process Management and Small Business</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process Management and Small Business Consultants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Implementing Process Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Designing a Process Management Framework for Small Business Consultants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Three</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>METHODOLOGY</strong></td>
<td>34 - 53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Framework Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The Case Study Organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Testing the Framework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collection of Data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Case Study Analysis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Recommendations to Client</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presenting Findings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Four</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ANALYSIS</strong></td>
<td>54 - 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Framework Objectives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Analysis of Case Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chapter Five</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td>58 - 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References</strong></td>
<td>61-65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appendix</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>66-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C</td>
<td>77-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
List of Tables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table One</td>
<td>Process-oriented vs. Results-oriented (Traditional) Management</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Two</td>
<td>Difference in Values between Process and Traditional Management</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table Three</td>
<td>Sample Findings as Presented to Weight No More, Inc.</td>
<td>51-52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table of Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figure One</td>
<td>Weight No More, Inc.'s Procurement Process</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure Two</td>
<td>Weight No More, Inc.'s Preparation Process</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure Three</td>
<td>Weight No More, Inc.'s Distribution Process</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Imagine, if you will, the following hypothetical scenario: Joe A. Consultant decided to leave his job of fifteen years with a large corporation to become a consultant. He left because he wanted to work one-on-one with customers and provide excellent customer service without the cost of the large corporation name. He focused in on small business owners as his potential market. Joe's problem was that the only business guidelines he had were from working with the corporation. While he knew he did not want to do business the same way as the corporation, there really were not other guidelines for him to follow.

Joe could be any small business consultant working individual or for a small practice. As, these new consultants leave the big business world to begin teaching other organizations their expertise, the fundamentals of customer service can be lost on them.

The customer service fundamentals of consistency, organization, communication, accuracy, dependability and honesty are musts in the competitive consultancy world.

It can be confusing for a consultant first starting out to just dive in and begin taking on clients without some sort of guide or framework to guide them through the basics of setting up appointments, keeping track of schedules, record keeping, and much more. These seemingly minor duties can cause even the most organized or most intelligent consultants some major headaches. If not completed on time, accurately, and consistently, they can result in the consultant not obtaining repeat business, and future
references, or worse: they could be the unfortunate beneficiary of negative word of mouth.

The small business consultant generally looks at one of two major topics for their customers: financial concerns or business concerns. This thesis will focus on the business concerns by providing future consultants with a useable framework to assist their clients in the application process management.

The process management paradigm is one first made "famous" by large corporations. It has proven so successful that small businesses need to learn the basics of this customer-driven management style to compete with their larger counter-parts.

Consultants urging their small business clients to merge towards process management will need to show the way. This leadership begins with leading by example. Small business consultants may need a framework to help them to maintain a professional, customer-driven practice while following the process management approach.

**Statement of Problem**

As consultants work to help owners instill service-oriented management through their small businesses, they need to have their own system planned in advance and well thought out.

This thesis research shows how a process mapping framework for small business consultants can be developed. The developed framework could provide future small business consultants a usable tool to begin their practice.
A first, crucial step in business consulting is to establish how the organization is currently functioning. It would be costly and ineffective to a small business if principles of service management were simply recommended. Each small business is a separate, individual entity. These establishments have unique systems created by their owners. The systems were created out of ease, necessity, practicality, based on the systems of former places of employment, or, perhaps, "it is just the way it has always been done".

Thus, the small business consultant needs to be aware that there is not just one set of recommendations that will help all small businesses improve. To begin implementing a new business strategy into a small business, its current operations first need to be fully studied.

Specifically the problem is: how can a small business consultant research the current operations of a small business prior to leading the client to a more customer-driven, process-oriented approach?

**Purpose**

The ultimate purpose of this study is to provide a tool for small business consultants to begin internal research investigations of their clients' companies while maintaining a professional, customer-driven practice.

**Hypothesis**

It is the belief of the researcher that a general framework for internally investigating small businesses' current operations can be developed by researching current literature to determine the needs that the framework must satisfy. To test the
hypothesis, this research will also use the framework created to consult with a case study organization.

The null hypothesis would be that more research is necessary in order to establish additional proof of efficacy or to reduce the probability of failure.

**Review of Literature**

The key topics researched were trends in small business consulting, process mapping, and process management. The journals were found using computer searches through the Rochester Institute of Technology’s Wallace Memorial Library and Internet searches through the World Wide Web. The texts used were those from the Service Management Master’s Degree curriculum through the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York.

The researcher was looking for the most up-to-date information about how to make small business consulting a better service.

**Methodology**

Once the key concepts were determined through the literature search, the next step is to develop the framework. The completed tool will be titled, the *Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants*. To test the framework for validity, the researcher used it to investigate an existing small business.

Analysis of both the framework design and the case study results will complete the research.
Significance

The significance of this research is the development of a usable, dynamic tool which will aid in the enhancement of the small business consulting profession.

Future Considerations

It is the recommendation of the author that small business consultants research all modes of consulting before settling on just one. Perhaps benchmarking other frameworks, manuals or worksheets used by consultants would be a good course.

To discover whether this framework is reliable and useful, another study to poll current consultants' concurring opinion about the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants could be accomplished.

Still another possible course would be to continue to use the framework on additional case studies for more feedback and valid confirmation of its usefulness.

Long range consequences that could enhance the application of this tool would be additional use and publicity of its usefulness. Consequences that could deter its application could include the developments of other such tools or technologies that would make this tool obsolete.

Assumptions

It is not the goal of this thesis to prove whether the case study organization's processes are completely bottlenecked or flowing smoothly. Weight No More, Inc. is simply being used as a case study to analyze the process through which the research is completed and presented, so that a systematic framework can be analyzed to help small
business consultants function more efficiently and with greater attention to customer service and professionalism. Therefore, no bias due to the prior relationship of the researcher and the small business owner were of issue.

It will be assumed that all operations and processes reported by Weight No More, Inc. and presented in this thesis were complete, accurate and truthful.

**Thesis Format**

Following this introductory chapter is a review of current literature in Chapter Two. This review focused on the topics of process management, small business consulting, and process mapping.

The research methodology, Chapter Three, follows the Literature Review. In this chapter, the process of developing the *Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants* is detailed. There is also an examination about how the case study was carried out. Results from this study were reviewed.

Chapter Four is the analysis phase of this thesis. The framework's objectives are restated and analyzed to discover whether the primary and design goals were accomplished. The case study results are also be dissected in Chapter Four.

The final chapter provides a summary and conclusion of the research, results and analysis of this thesis.
Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Futurists concur: small businesses are the future. People everywhere are leaving the corporate world to run their own companies. These small business owners need guidance and information. Small business consultants are being called upon to lead entrepreneurs through a process of developing quality organizations that provide excellent service, while ensuring longevity and profitability.

Service Management Trends

American corporate management has (finally) learned to respect the need to measure and continually monitor the organizations on all levels and in every process. There is a myriad of literature to back up this notion. A majority of these articles focus directly on the large corporations. Xerox, Motorola and IBM were among the first American companies to initiate this process-oriented approach.

This approach has begun to filter to small businesses. Small businesses operations are much tighter and processes are generally less involved than their larger counterparts. Thus, owners utilizing the process management approach are able to thoroughly research their company’s processes to determine the most feasible and pragmatic decisions concerning the future of their business.

Traditional Management Model

Stoner and Werner (1994) believe that the traditional management paradigm began
in the early part of the 20th century. This management model has been widely associated with the military and the manufacturing industry. Traditional management is generally a hierarchical system with the few people at the top making a majority of decisions that affect the numerous people working at the lowest levels of the organizational pyramid. Employees work "up the ladder"; taking on more responsibility and control with each move.

The focus of a traditional manager is always on results. If a desired result is not achieved, individuals are punished and reprimanded. Decisions are made based on whims, experience, secret agendas, experts' opinions, intuitions, hopes and dreams. This results-oriented thinking tends to implement costly quick fixes that offer dramatic, instantaneous benefits, which often last for only a short period. The company is then left without any positive changes and the costs of the failed decisions still in place (Johnston, 1989).

This traditional management structure is inefficient for managing product and service systems due to the span of management boundaries and functions that most processes usually have to serve. The main function of the process is lost as conflict rises over which of the boundaries the process is occurring. The results involve communication problems and inefficient, ineffective processes (Melan, 1995).

Companies operating under traditional management principles can be compared to people who starve themselves for two weeks, or pay a lot of money for a special weight loss pill lose weight. These people may achieve the desired result, but within a month they usually gain the weight they lost back. They often revert to their old ways and do not try to improve their lifestyle.
The desired result for most traditional management is higher profits. Thus, they try to squeeze profits out of their organization by spending money on expensive theories or technologies without taking the time to discover the best process for achieving the desired result (Johnston, 1989). Individuals working within such organizations have a valid fear of change because when change in their organization does occur, it is usually abrupt, volatile and huge.

**Shifting From Traditional Management to Modern Management Practices**

You can call it a "paradigm shift" or a change in values, but the tale remains the same. Organizations are slowly learning that the traditional management practices, which have consumed America for decades, are becoming passé. A paradigm is an example, model or pattern that presents a widely accepted way of thinking which guides thinking or actions (Adams, 1991). A shifting paradigm occurs when a new way of thinking supersedes the old and becomes the norm.

As the United States has grown from primarily a manufacturing orientation to one where service dominates, traditional management practices have proven to be tedious and unproductive. As a result, America’s products started to lose quality and service declined.

Dr. W. Edwards Deming (1986) recognized this lack of quality back in the 1940’s. After attempting to educate American management in 1942, Deming found that America was not ready to change. Japan, on the other hand, with a reputation for shoddy and cheap products, was ready. They invited Deming to consult with them. Dr. Deming, along with other experts (Ichiro Ishikawa and Joseph Juran), worked with Japanese top management in the early 1950’s. The results of their efforts included the complete
reformation of Japanese management philosophies. Japan’s quality and productivity improved almost instantaneously.

Deming (1986) notes that American industry took a long time to “catch on” after Japan’s transformation because they wanted to solve individual problems instead of concentrating on improving the processes. They wanted a quick fix. There are some likely reasons to explain America’s lag behind the Japanese. Process-oriented management takes time to establish, is consistent, and spreads power away from the individuals at the top management to become a collective team. The power to make decisions and improve processes is redirected to groups of individuals working in the field. Executive management in America had typically been viewed as power-hungry and impatient. American corporations finally did catch-on some forty years later. With several corporate successes well-documented (Albrecht, 1988; Sasser, Hart & Heskett, 1991), small business owners have begun to strive for quality, as well.

The New Paradigm

The process-oriented model has been called a number of names over the years. Total quality management (TQM), just-in-time management, process management, service management, continuous quality improvement (CQI) and strategic management are just a few. For the remainder of this review, I will use the term “process management” to describe the process-oriented management model.

Regardless of its name, however, the values of each of these process-oriented systems are much the same. Johnston (1989) presents a table comparing the traditional approach to management to the newer process management approach (Table 1).
Van Wart (1995) compares the values associated with process management with those typically following an antiquated traditional management style (Table 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Process (Improvement)</th>
<th>Results (Innovative)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effect</td>
<td>Long-term and long-lasting, undramatic</td>
<td>Short-term, dramatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace</td>
<td>Small steps</td>
<td>Big steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Continuous, incremental</td>
<td>Intermittent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Gradual, constant</td>
<td>Abrupt, volatile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involves</td>
<td>Everyone</td>
<td>Champions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approach</td>
<td>Group efforts, systems approach</td>
<td>Individual ideas, efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
<td>Maintain, improve, maximize</td>
<td>Scrap and rebuild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spark</td>
<td>Conventional know-how, state-of-art</td>
<td>New technology, new invention, theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Little investment, great effort to maintain</td>
<td>Large investment, small effort to maintain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effort target</td>
<td>People</td>
<td>Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure</td>
<td>Process or efforts for improved results</td>
<td>Profit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Slow or controlled growth economy</td>
<td>Fast growth economy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Process management “reduces costs, improves quality, increases productivity and provides a systems basis for total quality improvement throughout an organization”. It is a blame-free system for improvement (Melan, 1995).

One further key characteristic that must exist, according to much of the literature proclaiming the virtues of process management, is a system for evaluating results and implementing changes (Martin, 1996; Van Wart, 1995; McNary, 1994; Denton, 1992; Duncan, 1992; Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978).
As management attempts to evolve the corporate culture and work ethic from the traditional model to the updated process management model, the values, listed in Table 2, act as a guideline for this evolution.

Most of the literature on process management discusses and provides guidelines for corporations and large organizations to begin implementing this style. The small business owner is often left to struggle on their own.

Next, we will look at current trends within the small business arena. These trends will be followed by a discussion on implementing the newer process management paradigm into small businesses.

### Small Business Trends

Small businesses are the largest employer in America, representing "over 99% of
all employers" (Small Business Administration, Office for Advocacy, 1998). Even though larger firms employ more people individually, small businesses represent virtually all of the net new jobs in today's society.

It has been estimated that small businesses represent over ninety-five percent of the total number of business organizations in the United States (Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978). However, the U.S. Census Bureau and the Small Business Association (SBA) agree that it is difficult to know the true number of businesses in the United States (Small Business Administration, Office For Advocacy, 1998; U.S. Census Bureau, 1998). While the SBA's Office for Advocacy (1998) believes the figure to be between thirteen and sixteen million firms, the Census Bureau (1998) estimated in the 1992 census that the figure was higher at nineteen million total firms. Both agencies found there to be about five million firms with employees, leaving the remaining eight-plus million firms to be self-employed. Even though the exact statistics are disputable, we can see that multitudes of small businesses operate in this country.

Two of the most interesting characteristics of the small businesses in the United States are that each one is unique and they are owned by an extremely diverse collection of individuals. A few similarities among these firms are the owners' desire to "make it on their own" and that each one is as much at risk for failure as the next.

Small Business Failures

Small businesses have a relatively high rate of failure and are most at risk for failure than any other sized organization. Duncan (1992) reports that within the first five years of inception approximately eighty percent of small businesses will fail. The SBA reported United States Census Bureau data which declared that, "99.9% of business
closures and new employer firms are considered small firms” (Small Business Administration, Office for Advocacy, 1998). The SBA also noted that while there were 885,416 new companies created in 1995, there were also 857,073 firms that failed, went bankrupt or were voluntarily or involuntarily terminated. The survival rate of all firms is estimated at seventy-five percent (Small Business Administration, Office for Advocacy, 1998). If we factored out the large firms from that statistic, it would provide an even lower rate of survival for the small firms currently operating in the United States.

There can be a sundry of reasons why small businesses fail. Some common explanations include: failure to see the “big picture”, lack of education, nepotism, inability to delegate, lack of evaluation, underestimating economic effects, lack of good management, failure to monitor results and failure to take necessary action (Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978).

In an article for Advanced Management Journal, Moustafa H. Abdelsamad and Alexander T. Kindling (1978) suggest that when small business owners fail to see the big picture, they are often guilty of excessive optimism. They believe that everything will work out in the end, but when things go wrong they are unable to cope with the adverse condition.

Lack of education or experience can include hiring poor employees or simply charging into a venture without enough research into the background, market or general business they are attempting to operate.

It is often the case with small business owners who find themselves unable to delegate, that they do not trust their employees to handle day-to-day operations or even routine tasks. They find themselves doing every step of the process, thus neglecting
important managerial tasks, such as planning for the future and evaluating their company's progress. Many small business owners also spend time on the technical aspects of the organization or doing things they enjoy. For example, caterers may spend their time cooking and auto-repair people may spend most of their time fixing cars, because that is their passion and the reason they opened the business in the first place. However, if the managerial side of the business is not tended to properly, it could very well lead to failure. Abdelsamad and Kindling (1978) declare that in order to be effective, “more than half of the owner-manager’s time should be spent planning the course of the business and developing different systems”.

The Michigan Jobs Commission (MJC) is a government program designed to help small businesses maximize strengths and improve weaknesses (Martin, 1996). While consulting with these firms, the MJC have found several common weaknesses of small businesses. Three of these weaknesses are lack of documentation, poor systems and lack of focus (Martin, 1996). These organizational flaws can be corrected by incorporating process management.

Small business owners often need assistance to begin planning and evaluating their companies. Many small businesses continue to be run like family businesses of the past. In other cases, the owner left a larger company and adopted that company’s out-dated managerial process. Entrepreneurs who have sought outside business consulting assistance have typically turned to the government for free advice.

Use of Business Consultation

Today, the management consulting trade is at least a thirteen billion dollar business in the United States of America (Kennedy, 1997). Throughout history, our country’s
leaders and government have typically tried to help small businesses to prosper and realize longevity; as the United States was practically founded on the establishment of small businesses. Prior to 1953, lawyers and accountants were the most likely source for small business owners to seek guidance. Then, in 1953, Congress created the United States Small Business Administration (SBA) (Small Business Administration, 1996). As an independent agency of the federal government, the SBA’s purpose is to “aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation” (Small Business Administration, 1996). While the number of small businesses continues to be in the millions, the SBA is able to accomplish its mission through its field offices located in every state, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The SBA also works in conjunction with various lending, training, and educational programs through the country.

Over the past few years, the SBA has begun to “re-invent” itself by attempting to become a better working agency that operates with less cost (Small Business Administration, 1996). The SBA’s key ingredient to the reinvention appears to be a better dedication to customer service. One of the SBA’s newly adopted principles states, “we will continue to streamline and reinvent processes to make conducting business with the SBA easier for both resource partners and small business owners” (Small Business Administration, 1996).

While the SBA appears to be moving towards a more customer-oriented service focus, small businesses continue to trail large corporate businesses in terms of management style.
SCORE

The Service Corp of Retired Executive Association (SCORE) began operating as a resource partner to the United States Small Business Association in 1964 (SCORE Association, 1998). Since that time, the numerous volunteers working for this non-profit organization have counseled small business owners, free of charge. SCORE's mission is twofold. They aim to educate entrepreneurs and foster "the formation, growth and success of small businesses nationwide" (SCORE Association, 1998).

Independent Consulting Firms

There are also a multitude of independent business consultants and consulting firms which small businesses can turn to for advice. The "for-profit" consulting market is basically an equal thirds combination of large firms, CPA firms and small independents (Kennedy, 1997). Many of these firms house accountants, lawyers and business advisors all in one roof, then market themselves as a provider of extremely individualized advice. These larger consulting firms are often referred to as, "consulting houses" (Kinni, 1994).

Still, most small business owners tend to have a tight hold on extraneous spending and prefer the free governmental advice to the individualized service from the independent consultant provided at a cost. Even so, Kinni (1994) reports that there are multitudes of independent consultants with excellent skills available (at a lower cost than the big firms) due to the recent downsizing trend.

Management consultants, regardless of firm size, are held to several basic guidelines. A consultant's role should always be one of an advisory capacity, rather than a decision making role. Also, a consultant must display objectivity and independence while
working with clients to provide the most useful information for their clients (Kennedy, 1997).

**Process Management and Small Business**

Many small business owners have previously worked in large organizations and have fled primarily due to the traditional management culture. Yet, this culture is all they know and all they have experienced. Small business owners need guidance in order to implement a collective working management model that will invigorate employees and result in effective and productive performance results. Clift (1995), McDonough and Long (1980) and Duncan (1992) concur that it is as important for small businesses to incorporate process management as it is for their larger counterparts.

**Process Management and Small Business Consultants**

It is equally important for the consultant working with the small businesses to adopt a process management system, as it is for their clients. Often the consultant either is (as discussed earlier) a small business owner himself, or works for a field office (e.g. Small Business Administration field office), which may operate on a smaller level. The consultant’s goals may be to help the client implement a quality system. However, if the consultant is not leading by example it could confuse the client or leave him questioning the professionalism of the consultant.

Numerous searches were completed to locate information concerning service techniques or “best” consulting practices of current small business consultants, however, limited information could be found. This leads the researcher to believe that either
consultants or the agencies they work for do not want to publish their trade secrets, or this topic has never fully been studied.

In order to maintain professionalism by retaining the qualities of consistency and organization, a consultant would benefit from a tool that could be used as a guide, reminder, organizer and planner all in one. Also, as noted earlier, it is vital for any business operator to evaluate operations regularly (Martin, 1996; Van Wart, 1995; McNary, 1994; Denton, 1992; Duncan, 1992; Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978). Thus, this tool or framework could also prompt the consultant to evaluate the process after each client and make changes to ensure quality service for future clients.

It is also extremely important that, while allowing the consultant to carry out the process of assessment in a consistent manner, the framework allows for the consultant to provide personalized service.

This thesis is focused primarily on the initial assessment phase when a consultant first begins working with a client. Therefore, the framework to be developed will focus on obtaining information about how current processes in the client’s organization are functioning. Hence, the tool to be designed will be called a Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants.

**Implementing Process Management**

Several authors suggest using the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) criteria as a guideline when developing a quality improvement strategy (Brown, 1991; Stoner & Werner, 1994). The MBNQA is the nation’s highest award given to organizations that provide the highest-quality goods and services in the highest-
quality manner (Stoner and Werner, 1994). Another guide that may prove useful for organizations first adopting a process management system is Dr. Deming's 14 Points. Dr. Deming (1986) developed 14 points for organizations to follow in order to develop into a quality organization.

Regardless of which model is used, consultants need to know one thing - what to do first. This important initial step in developing a quality culture is to assess how the organization is currently operating (Booth, 1995; Van Wart, 1995; Rand, 1994; Denton, 1992; Hubbard, 1992; Kelbaugh, 1991; McDonough & Long, 1980).

It is crucial for consultants to investigate exactly what is occurring within their clients' organizations prior to presenting a plan of action. The ultimate goal should not be a quick transition; rather a continuous process that promotes change to become “internally driven rather than externally forced” (Van Wart, 1995). Once the consultant and the client have studied the internal functions of the business as they are currently operating, the consultant can then promote the use of multiple assessment strategies and tools to help the small business owners continue to track their operations on a regular basis (Van Wart, 1995).

**Designing a Process Management Framework for Small Business Consultants**

Having found that there is little information detailing the current processes used by small business consultants, the researcher determined there is a need for a process, or framework, to be developed. This framework will encompass the principles of process management, while providing the consultant with a step-by-step guide.
Creating a framework for all of a consultant's services would be ideal. However, this research concentrated on one process. That process is the initial assessment of a new client, since, as determined in the literature review, it should be the first service provided.

**Basic Framework Design**

Although a number of different approaches to process improvement exist, there are several common elements that are always included (Benson, 1994). When implementing process management, we need to ensure that all steps, work areas and tools used in a process are clear and simple (Johnston, 1989). Melan (1995) adds that processes should be clear, simple, straightforward and accurate.

One of the four most common weaknesses of small businesses is lack of documentation (Martin, 1996). Complete documentation of all steps in a process is essential for the process to be evaluated and improved over time (Benson, 1994). Documenting well also serves the purpose of keeping accurate records, while maintaining professionalism and consistency. Abdelsamad and Kindling (1978) agree that keeping accurate records is vital to the health of any organization. ISO 9000 is an International Organization for Standardization, which certifies organizations on the basis of quality management principles. The ISO 9000 certification places colossal importance on an organization's ability to document processes (Meyer, 1998).

Prior to any research or investigation into current processes, the first step must be to identify the current customer as well as their individual requirements (Benson, 1994). The framework design should be centered on the complete documentation of all steps in a small business consultant's initial investigation of a new client. The framework
should be clear, simple, and straightforward. It should also strive to provide and access the most accurate data from the clients.

Investigating and Interviewing Principles

Once the consultant has identified her client and the client's requirements, she must now begin to discover an accurate picture of how the company is currently functioning. This step is completed by observing the processes in action and interviewing the process participants (Melan, 1995). The interviewing step should include all key staff and any people involved in the process (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998; Burr, 1990).

Many authors provide examples of questions that consultants can use to gleam information from the process participants. For example, Stevens and Bieber (1977) suggest asking, "What is the purpose and basic function of this department?"

Abdelsamad & Kindling (1978), Benson (1994), and Burr (1990) suggest asking similar questions for prompting thoughtful responses on how the current operation department, or process is functioning as a whole.

Assessment Tools

An internal analysis can be accomplished using a number of assessment tools. There are a variety of basic quality tools consultants can utilize to determine how the operation is functioning. Some of the popular tools include: flow charts, Pareto charts, cause-and-effect diagrams, run charts, control charts, scatter gram, and histograms (Carter, 1992). Benchmarking is a process in which an organization continuously measures its own service, processes, and products against the best practice(s) anywhere in the world (Thompson, 1992; Tutcher, 1994). This thesis encompasses two major

It is a common belief that benchmarking is too costly in terms of time and resources for small businesses. Yet, benchmarking can be a simple process that yields substantial payoffs to the small business owners (Kinni, 1994).

By the nature of benchmarking's definition, it is axiomatic that one of the first areas to analyze in an organization are its current processes. To provide a starting point from which all future decisions and improvements can be compared, organizations have to analyze their current processes. An internal assessment study, or internal benchmarking, allows organizations to do just that. Internal assessments involve researching all the processes within an organization to set a standard from which improvements can be based.

Internal benchmarking occurs when different departments within the same organization measure, compare and share information. The internal assessments allow management to gather information on processes and operational functions, which they may not yet know, but should (Day, 1992).

Flow charts are basically a graphical display of processes using pictures (Burr, 1990). Other terms for flow charts include process map and service blueprint (Mattson, 1994). A service blueprint is typically a flow chart of a possible future action in order to test the idea on paper prior to implementation (Fitsimmons & Fitsimmons, 1994).

Current literature reveals a multitude of benefits to organizations who map their processes regularly. Process maps enable companies to visualize processes (Burr, 1990); find out how the work is being carried out (Stevens & Bieber, 1977); find where obstacles and barriers in processes occur (Denton, 1995); discover the difference between actual
and ideal processes (Cozart, Carlisle and Houdeshell, 1991); examine the flow of materials and labor through the organization; and locate “bottlenecks” or gaps occurring within a process.

**Identifying Core Processes**

As the consultant begins to investigate a client, he will need to define the core processes of that individual organization in order to determine what will be mapped. There are several different opinions about how to define the core processes of an organization. For example, Plowman (1994) suggests separating organizational activities into three categories: core, support and diversionary. Melan (1995), however, suggests using a value chain, which is divided into five primaries and four support processes. This value chain may be extremely helpful for large organizations, as it breaks operations into smaller categories. However, on the smaller scale, Melan's value chain may be too involved.

Regardless of how the consultant defines the processes, there are a few points, which must be kept in mind. Melan (1995) reminds us to keep process mapping “clear, simple, straightforward and accurate”. Ideally, all activities, or each step of the processes, should be analyzed in order to gain a complete assessment of the organization as a whole (Denton, 1992). Thus, the core processes must be able to represent all operational activities occurring throughout the small business. To accomplish this and maintain the goals of remaining clear and simple, the core processes must be broad enough to capture a variety of functions.
Progress Meeting

It is important for the consultant to meet regularly with the owners and employees of the organization they are consulting, to avoid surprises, and to keep clear communication between the two parties (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998).

The Institute of Management Consultants' web page provides tips for working with a management consultant (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998). This resource insists that projects are most effective when worked on by a joint team of consultant and staff. It also notes that the consultant will be most effective when her findings are agreed upon with staff at progress meetings prior to the final report (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998). When the consultant and client agree on the findings before the final report is presented, additional costs to the consultant, in terms of money and re-work, can be reduced or avoided. Progress meetings should be an important step to include in the framework to ensure quality communication between the consultant and clients.

Analysis Phase

Once the process maps and findings are agreed upon with the client, the information can be analyzed for any gaps in service, quality or productivity (Benson, 1994). The framework would not be a complete tool without a step for the consultant to analyze her findings. This is also a step where the consultant's important findings can be summarized (Stevens & Bieber, 1977).

As consultants analyze the information they gather, it is important for them to look beyond what is actually occurring within the businesses and look also for what is lacking. A thorough knowledge of service management principles and strategies would be most
helpful for consultants to be cognizant of what they are researching within their customers' organizations.

Recommendations for Improvements

Once the analysis phase is complete, the consultant can begin to develop a final report for the client. Obviously there are innumerable recommendations that could be made to organizations embarking on a changing management culture, as each individual client will differ immensely.

However, there are some common recommendations to small businesses trying to instill a process management culture into their companies. Van Wart (1995) promotes continual customer, employee and performance assessments when installing process management values. Some examples of customer assessments are customer identification, customer surveys, focus groups, and a system for complaint resolution and tracking. Employee assessments can include employee opinion surveys, employee focus groups and employee perceptions of organizational values (Van Wart, 1995).

To recognize the continually changing needs of customers an organization can take steps to define their customers, study customers' behaviors and gather feedback from customers (Lensel, 1997).

Often times the owner's time may be consumed with the production of the organization. The importance of planning the course of the business and developing different systems should not be overlooked (Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978). Small business owners need to learn to delegate and increase time spent in coordinating, organizing, planning and directing and decreasing sales and production activities
(Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978). It is important for owners to be innovative, willing to adapt and to be constantly planning (NetMarquee, Inc., 1998).

Reinventing management structure to focus on quality typically involves assessing and redefining processes (Van Wart, 1995). Another recommendation common to businesses new to process management is the need to carefully measure, monitor and benchmark their internal quality, operations, products and services on a regular basis (Petrick, 1994).

Presenting Findings and Recommendations

The Institute of Management Consultants (IMC) provides tips for making a winning final report to clients. First, the IMC suggest that there be no surprises in the final report (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998). Surprises to the owner can be embarrassing, or costly to the consultant in terms of re-work or incorrect information.

Next, the Institute recommends presenting the final report in a format usable to the individual company or client. Communication with the client is vital to discover the type of presentation that is preferred. Finally, any confidential issues that were discovered through the investigation should be held for a separate report for the owner's eyes only (Institute of Management Consultants, 1998). These issues could range from employees taking advantage of free time to theft, and the consultant should do his best to use discretion when such issues are discovered.

Self-Evaluation

The importance of evaluating processes and operations has been noted earlier in this review (Martin, 1996; Van Wart, 1995; McNary, 1994; Denton, 1992; Duncan, 1992; Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978). The situation is no different for the small business
consultant. "Ignoring such activity may result in not recognizing problems at an early stage when changes can be made at reasonable costs" (Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978).

Thus, an evaluation phase should be a mandatory step in designing a framework for the small business consultants. It is important to evaluate the framework and the investigation process after every client to ensure high quality work is being produced.

Once the consultant evaluates herself, she then must take steps to implement any changes to be made based on the evaluation.

**Implementing Changes**

It is most effective if changes are made immediately following an evaluation. This saves time and promotes timely improvement. When implementing changes to a process or system, it is important to fully communicate the changes, train the people working with the process or system on the new changes, and document the changes well (Kelbaugh, 1991).

**Maintaining Quality Customer Service**

How will the consultant finish a project with a client? Will he simply present the results and wait for a follow-up phone call, or force the client to end the relationship? It is important for the consultant to discover a professional way to keep in contact with clients after the final reports are provided. Often clients may need time to absorb the findings, or they may get too busy to make a follow-up phone call. To maintain professionalism and quality service, a consultant will want to make the initiative to keep in contact, without being overly aggressive. Again, the importance of documenting and keeping accurate records should not be neglected while finishing an obligation with a client (Abdelsamad & Kindling, 1978, Benson, 1994; Martin, 1996; Meyer, 1998).
**Conclusion**

To provide the best possible service to their clients, small business consultants need to adopt the same process management practices that they would recommend to their customers.

Process management has proven to foster quality among all types of organizations. As small businesses begin to reinvent systems and join the quality revolution, their current processes need to be thoroughly researched. Due to their size, even a small change could have enormous repercussions.

Small businesses often turn to qualified business consultants either through the government or independent firms when decisions beyond their control begin to emerge. The consultants must provide the best possible information for these companies. This information begins with an internal assessment at the deepest roots of the company: processes. They need to find out how each process is currently functioning to provide recommendations that would best suit each individual firm.

A process-mapping framework is needed which encompasses the steps consultants’ need to follow when assessing clients, to provide consistent, professional service with personalized results.

The next chapter, Methodology, reviews the process the research followed to develop and test the **Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants**.
Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to show the steps taken by the researcher to develop and utilize the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants.

Current literature was reviewed to determine what should be included in the framework. The goal was to discover current process management trends that should be included in the framework. It is important that small business consultants follow a process management system, just as they are likely to recommend the same for their clients.

A process mapping framework of fourteen steps was developed. The framework's ultimate purpose is to be used as a tool to assist consultants through the initial assessment and analysis of a small business. It will also be useful for preparing the final report of the initial findings for the client.

The framework was tested on a case study organization, Weight No More, Inc. of Lyndonville, New York. Results from this test are also found in this chapter, as well as an example of how to present a final report to a client.

Framework Development

The information gathered through the review of current literature (Chapter 2) provided the basis for the development of the framework. It was discovered early in the literature search that there was limited information on current practices, or research tools of management consultants. Thus, the primary focus of the research was on the principle characteristics of process management and process mapping, while formatting the information to help develop a usable tool for small business consultants.
Framework Design Objectives

The design goals of the framework were several. The foremost principles followed throughout the formation of this framework were to keep the system clear, simple, straightforward and accurate. The framework was designed with a scripted flow to benefit the consultant. It was planned to lead consultants, step-by-step through the process of consulting without leaving out a step from one client to the next. Thus, consultants who utilize the framework can realize consistency. By allowing consultants to keep accurate records of all interactions with their clients, they can realize benefits from an organized approach and optimal communication with clients. A further design goal for the framework was to encourage adequate documentation for self-review or evaluation by the consultant. A final objective of the thesis is to create a framework general enough to act as a starting point for current and future small business consultants to use on many different types of companies.

The entire blank Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants, consisting of fourteen steps, can be found in Appendix A.

Step One - Client Identification

The purpose of the first step of the framework is to provide the necessary information regarding the current client in a consistent, complete and clear manner. Thus, filing and record-keeping tasks become easier and less time consuming. On the front page, sufficient clearly labeled, space was provided for ease in identification and organization.

Step Two - Scheduling Time with Client
The second step reminds the consultant to schedule interview dates and times with the owner and several key members of the staff. By scheduling in advance, the consultant can maintain a professional report and be assured that the time will be available for her without interruptions. Simply scheduling interviews in advance to maintain the quality of the time with each individual can significantly reduce the consultants' costs in terms of time.

Step Three - Interview & Investigation Phase

This section provides the consultant with room to document the information gleamed during the interviews into the prospective processes. By allowing this space for notes and comments, it assures that the information will all be contained on the one form helping the consultant to remain organized. This will reduce the need to transfer these notes from, say, a work pad or scrap sheet to another form. Step Three also allows the consultant to get an initial idea as to how the operational activities flow and fit in the four processes.

Step Four - Process Mapping First Draft

The consultants' first attempt at the process maps for the clients occurs in the fourth step. By working directly on the same document as the entire client file, it will help prevent paper shuffling and loss of work and time. A key of symbols is provided at the top of each page to remind the consultants which symbols to use. These symbols assist the consultants in maintaining consistency. The symbols used for the key are to be determined by the consultant as the research ensues.
In keeping with the theme of “simple, clear and accurate”, and realizing the small nature of the proposed clientele, this framework was created with the belief that all of a small business’s operations could fit into four main processes.

As discovered in Chapter 2, it is of utmost importance that organizations utilizing process management principles have a system for assessing or evaluating the organization and the processes on a regular basis. Thus, one of the core processes to be mapped is the small business’s current *evaluation process*.

We can also presume that there are identifiable *processes of production and distribution* within any small business. Each small business must produce the goods or develop the services. When demanded by their customers, they must deliver the product or service.

The activities which do not fall into any of these three processes include the “behind the scenes” functions, which allow the other three processes to occur. These functions include administration, personnel, marketing and other general operational tasks. Yet again, due to the size of the clienteles’ organizations, we can feel confident that these pre-production activities can be represented as one process. The framework will term this process the *procurement process*.

**Step Five & Step Six - Progress Meeting & Final Process Maps**

The process mapping for each client does not end with Step Four. First, the consultant must review the proposed maps from the fourth step with the staff directly involved with the activities (Step Five). This step consists of a progress meeting between the consultant and key members from the client organization.
Then, in Step Six, additional revisions take place until one-hundred-percent agreement by staff, owner and consultant is achieved. More space is provided in Step Six to allow for changes in the processes to be made directly on the framework.

**Step Seven - Analysis**

Once everyone involved has agreed that the process maps developed by the consultant are accurate, the consultant uses her expertise to analyze the current client’s operation. The process maps are examined by looking at the flow of materials and labor and how the work at this organization is being carried out. Some of the areas for improvement may revolve around bottlenecks in service, time strains, obstacles and barriers occurring within the organizational system.

**Step Eight - Recommendations**

The consultant reviews the analysis and develops a series of recommendations and suggestions for improvement. The goal of this step is to be prepared with a list of possible solutions for the small business owner after finding subsequent problems. A space is also provided for the consultants to list other services they can offer, which will correspond to the proposed solutions. However, the solutions should be non-bias and should encompass all possible action(s) that the small business owner can take, not just those that correlate well with an additional service that the consultant can provide.

**Step Nine - Preparing Final Report**

Step Nine reminds the consultant to prepare for the presentation of her findings. Cues are listed, such as, mode of presentation and other tips for presenting. The individual consultant can update this section by adding things that worked or did not work in previous presentations with owners and staff.
When presenting the recommendations, it may be an excellent time for the consultant to modestly market himself by providing a list of further services.

**Step Ten - Presenting Final Report**

Step Ten is the action step of presenting the results and recommendations to the clients. The documentation required for this step includes the time and date of the presentation. It may also be helpful for the consultant's records to list how many people attended the meeting and the names of the people present. A further addition is a section to record any comments made by the client or staff after the presentation. There is also a reminder in this section to handout survey cards. The survey cards provide the consultant with feedback to determine whether the information prepared was useful, presentation style was satisfactory, and the consultant engaged in a professional manner at all times. The feedback from this survey would be tallied and analyzed in Step Eleven.

**Step Eleven - Evaluation**

One objective of the framework is to provide adequate records for self-review or evaluation by the consultant. As it was found in the literature review, the evaluation or assessment phase is of utmost importance to a process. Thus, the framework will include this section for the sole purpose of allowing the consultant to evaluate his efforts with the current client.

Step Eleven consists of questions designed to prompt the consultant to analyze the framework, the process within the framework and the consultant's personal work. Space is available for notes and ideas. The feedback gleamed from the survey cards would also be included in this step.

**Step Twelve - Implementation of Changes**
This step is simply a reminder that every evaluation brings about changes that must be implemented. This step instructs the consultant to make the necessary changes and to date and initial the document when the task is complete.

Step Thirteen - Documentation

The purpose of Step Thirteen is to remind the consultant to effectively organize the client's paperwork for easy access in the future, if she has not already done so. Valuable information is found on the framework and it would be a profound loss to the consultant's business and professionalism if the information was lost or misplaced.

Step Fourteen - Follow-Up

This step encourages continuous contact with the client to discover long-term effects of the recommendations provided to the company, and to maintain a valued customer base for return work and future client referrals. There are examples of continuous communication for the consultant, such as: send a handwritten thank-you note or letter to the client for hiring them.

It was now time for the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants to be tested on an actual small business.

It is, however, important to note that the framework developed in this thesis is an example and may be updated to meet the needs of individual consultants as clientele and system requirements vary.
The Case Study Organization

A small business candidate was first sought to act as the case study "client". The only requirement was to find a small business that was accessible to the researcher. The nature of the small business was not a consideration in its selection for the study, as one objective of the thesis is to create a framework general enough to use when serving all types of companies.

The small business chosen as the case study was Weight No More, Inc. of Lyndonville, New York. It was selected because the researcher was previously employed by the company, was familiar with some of the processes, and knew the owner well. Mrs. Lea Anne Werder, nutritionist and entrepreneur, owns this company.

Established in 1994, this company was operating for three years when the study began. Weight No More, Inc. is a weight management program. Customers receive three healthy meals and two snacks, for five days a week. The customers must pick up the pre-cooked food on two separate days and eat it on the recommended day. Mrs. Werder, using the American Heart Association and American Dietetic Association guidelines, plans all of the menus. This small business typically employed two full-time employees and several part-time employees at the time of the study.

The research was completed between May 15, 1997 through March 12, 1998. Weight No More Inc.'s locations in Batavia, New York and Lyndonville, New York were the primary sites for the research. The researcher, who is also the author of this report, completed the test.
Testing the Framework

The goal of the test was to determine whether the framework would be a useful and realistic tool for small business consultants to use in their practice. Any "glitches", as well as, suggestions for changes found during the test are discussed in Chapter Four, Analysis.

The researcher contacted Mrs. Werder to ask for permission to complete the study and report the findings in this thesis. A copy of the signed permission form can be found in Appendix B. The researcher then followed through each step of the framework as designed.

Collection of Data

This section will present the steps taken by the researcher to collect the data.

Appendix C is a display of the completed sample framework, including the notes and drafts of the process maps, used to study Weight No More, Inc.

The researcher first contacted small business owner, Mrs. Lea Anne Werder, to propose the research idea with her. This would be equivalent to a small business consultant proposing services to a prospective client (Step 1 of the framework).

After initial contact was made and documented, the researcher and Mrs. Werder arranged to meet at several equally convenient times (Step 2). At these meetings the researcher interviewed the owner as she described Weight No More, Inc.'s operational processes over the January, 1996 through March, 1997 time span. Various employees and customers were also informally interviewed at these times.
From the interviews and observations of the system in progress, the researcher and owner agreed that there were generally three major at Weight No More, Inc.: procurement, production, and distribution. Typically, an evaluation process would also be considered, however, this specific organization did not yet perform an evaluation phase.

All of the notes and observations by the consultant made during the interviews and visits were documented in Step Three of the framework.

**Mapping Processes**

The researcher developed the first draft of process maps (Step Four) based on the information gathered. The first drafts were reviewed in a progress meeting with the owner who helped edit the maps (Step Five). The researcher adjusted the maps several times between owner reviews (Step Six). The purpose of the adjustments were twofold: the researcher saw small changes that had to be made without needing to discuss them with the owner; and the researcher wanted the maps to be easy to read and understand.

It took over ten drafts to develop the final process maps. These final maps were sent to Mrs. Werder for agreement from her that they were the most accurate representation of operational processes occurring at Weight No More, Inc. during the fifteen month time span of January, 1996 through March, 1997. **Appendix D** displays the final draft of the three processes as one large operation.

Step Seven calls for the consultant to analyze the findings and the process maps.

**Case Study Analysis**

The researcher first looked at each of the three process maps developed to pinpoint any obvious needs for improvement. Then, additional information from the
observations was reviewed to provide a clear representation of improvements that could be made at Weight No More, Inc. to refine operations as a whole. The following is an example of the researcher’s analysis.

Procurement Process

**Figure One** is the final draft of Weight No More, Inc.’s procurement process. During this process, administration functions and steps necessary to allow preparation and distribution to flow smoothly are operationalized.

From this example it is plain to see that in this process alone, the owner “wears many hats” in this company. This is the case with many small businesses. Time and capital restrict additional hiring, so the owner becomes the “chief, cook and bottle washer”. At Weight No More, Inc., the owner is the administrative, marketing, personnel, financial, research and development and operations managers.

The bottleneck represented by the procurement process map is that of the owner’s time. Every square represents one of the owner’s responsibilities.

Production Process

In **Figure Two**, the map for Weight No More Inc.’s production process may seem simplistic and lacking details, yet this process warrants no further amplification. The production process at this company currently flows quite well. However, even though it lacks many steps, it is the biggest consumer of the owner’s and employees’ time. It is evident that the owner takes on even more responsibilities.

Distribution Process

Weight No More, Inc.’s distribution process, as seen in **Figure Three**, represents how education and meals are dispensed to customers of the company.
Figure 3: Weight No More, Inc.'s Distribution Process

Meals & Education distributed to Customers

Meal distribution

Education distribution

Thursday Luncheon

Owner or Staff monitors meal pick-up at Batavia facility

Meals driven to Attica pick-up location by Staff.

Staff monitors Meal pick-up

Staff helps serve

Meals driven to Medina pick-up location by owner or staff.

Owner helps serve

Clients' questions & concerns addressed

Owner signs in new clients; explains system; & gives general weight loss instruction

Educational workshops with guest speakers offered every two weeks

Key:

□ = activity primarily performed by owner.
• = activity primarily performed by staff.
◇ = general heading.
Figure 2: Weight No More, Inc.'s Production Process

Key:
- □ = activity primarily performed by owner.
- ○ = activity primarily performed by staff.
- = go to next process map.

Owner & Cook prepare main portion of meals

Owner & Cook supervise & direct the Staff

Staff portions dry foods and prep.

Staff sets up for Thursday luncheon

Staff cleans kitchen, pans, dishes etc.

Go to Distribution

Owner prepares education material

Owner prepares for education workshop
Figure 1: Weight No More, Inc.'s Procurement Process

- Reviews inventory
  - Plans menus
  - Owner conducts administrative duties
    - Develops advertising
      - Personnel issues
      - Financial & legal issues
        - Professional development and research
          
          - Reviews menus with cooks
          - Plans grocery shopping list
            - Volunteer clips coupons
              - Grocery shops & delivers food to kitchen.
                - Food stored properly
                  - Plans food / supply order list
                    - Orders from distributors
                      - Food delivered to kitchen
                        - Owner or cook receive food & supplies
                          - Go to Production

Key:
- □ = activity primarily performed by owner.
- ○ = activity primarily performed by staff.
- ◇ = go to next process map.
The meals and education delivery are concurrent processes. Once again the owner’s time is spread among some necessary and some unnecessary steps. Some of the unnecessary steps include: helping serve at the Thursday luncheon and monitoring meal pick-up. These two steps could be accomplished by her staff of food service workers.

It is interesting to observe that there is no step in any of the three processes for customers to provide feedback on the meals or the information they were being fed. When this was discovered by the researcher, the owner was questioned about it. The owner’s response was one probably often heard by those new to the service-quality paradigm, “I don’t want to get any negative responses and have to change”. She also believed that customers would come to her if they really wanted something or if they really found a problem.

Additional Observations

Additional observations reveal that Weight No More, Inc. does not perform any self-evaluating. As noted throughout this thesis, an evaluation process is vital to the continued healthy life of any organization. A further observation found that the employee turnover appeared to be relatively high at this organization. However, the turnover rate was not compared to any other organization in this field, or this geographic area.

Through testing the framework, the researcher followed through each step, as designed. The next step in the sample investigation began the process of organizing the findings into well-defined recommendations to the "client" (Step Eight).

Recommendations to Client
The following is an example of how the researcher summarized the recommendations that could be made to the owner of the case study organization. The purpose is to provide an example of the eighth step of the framework. It is important to note here again that the objective of this thesis is not to discover the strengths and weaknesses of Weight No More, Inc. It is to example the use of the developed framework.

Findings

Delegation would be an important service quality lesson to teach a small business owner upon finding an owner who takes on so many duties within the organization. Mrs. Werder's time is a valuable commodity which should be utilized to the maximum. One change that she could implement almost immediately, would be to have her Head Cook be responsible for supervising and preparing all of the meals for the customers. This would allow Mrs. Werder to step out of the kitchen and use the time to monitor the activities and results of processes that take place there.

Even though small business owners know their companies well and are willing to work hard for the success of the organization, the concern lies in the future. How are changes for improvements going to be researched and developed, and who is going to implement them if the owner is tied up with day-to-day operational duties? Small business owners need to devote some of their time on monitoring and analysis of business operations and customer needs in order to make their company truly customer-service oriented. It is the job of the consultant to "shed light" on this matter and help the owner find ways to make this possible.

Mrs. Werder's time may also be better spent talking with her customers more and eliciting feedback from them. Unfortunately, companies across the world are realizing that
customers often leave instead of letting their concerns be known. Also, in a small business setting, word-of-mouth is not only an important advertising tool, it can also be the end of a business if the news is unfavorable.

Obviously, Weight No More, Inc. would be wise to develop a regular evaluation process. The consultant would need to convince the owner of the importance of evaluating her organization on all levels to obtain a clear picture of how the business is actually operating. This knowledge would allow her to improve her company without disrupting service to her customers.

After the recommendations were organized, Step Nine asked the researcher to prepare for the final presentation.

**Presenting Findings**

The owner was contacted to determine the best method to present the results. Since the owner, in this case, is very busy and did not have time for a "sit-down" style of presentation, she preferred reading the final report without a formal presentation.

Thus, the information gathered on operational processes of Weight No More, Inc. during the fifteen month time span of January, 1996 through March, 1997 was compiled in report form to attempt a full representation of current operations. This form of presentation may be typical of that provided for the busy small business owner.

**Table 3** represents the findings and corresponding recommendations for improvement as they were complied for Weight No More, Inc. (Step Ten). The final drafts of the process maps (Appendix D) were included with this final report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding #1</th>
<th>Recommendations #1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| There is no formal process for gathering customer feedback to use for improving organizational performance. This should be an important facet of all businesses as customers offer a tremendous insight into the health and functionality of an organization. Using this information to better operations can only prove beneficial. Yet to ignore customers could prove detrimental, as negative word-of-mouth can be a primary cause of business failure. | - Create formal process for gathering customer feedback.  
- Maintain consistency by gathering feedback on regular basis.  
- Use customer feedback as basis for improvements. Set time aside for analyzing the feedback. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Finding #2</th>
<th>Recommendations #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| There is also no formal business evaluation process occurring at Weight No More, Inc. Even though small business owners know their companies well and are willing to work hard for the success of the organization, the concern lies in the future. How are changes for improvements going to be researched and developed, and who is going to implement them if the owner is tied up with day-to-day operational duties?  
It would be useful to devote some time on monitoring and analysis of business operations and customer needs in order to make your company truly customer-service oriented and to ensure quality service for future customers. | - Create formal business evaluation system to analyze all facets of Weight No More, Inc on regular basis: customer service, costs, flow of materials, flow of employees' time, use of owner's time, etc…  
- Allow time for brainstorming ways to improve Weight No More, Inc. Be creative and have fun with this. Include employees. Accept all ideas, just use the best and most feasible. |
Table 3: Sample Findings as Presented to Weight No More, Inc. - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings #3</th>
<th>Recommendations #3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Mrs. Werder's time is very constrained and is involved with the daily operations. From the previous two findings we can see that Mrs. Werder's time could better be spent soliciting customer feedback and evaluating Weight No More, Inc. on a continuous basis. | • Delegate and train staff to manage daily production and distribution operations.  
• Step out from behind the scenes and talk with your customers. Find out what they like and dislike. Use this valuable information to become even better!  
Concentrate on Weight No More, Inc.'s current processes and plans for the future. Use the time gained from stepping out of the kitchen to investigate ways other organizations are handling similar situations your organization is facing. |

Step Eleven next asks the consultant to self-evaluate the job just accomplished. The researcher completed this step and answered the prompting questions. Although, this step will most likely be more worthwhile over time. As a consultant becomes proficient at using the framework, Step Eleven will provide a valuable space for an immediate review while the facts of a case are still fresh. Here the consultant will be able to change and grow with each completed case - if needed. There were some changes made to the final Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Owners as a result of the self-review in Step Eleven. In the Twelfth step, the researcher made the changes to the framework. One change was the need for additional writing space in Step Three. The third step is the note taking and interviewing phase. Prompting questions were also added to Step Three to
remind the consultant of key questions. Explanations were added to the blank framework at steps to remind the consult what would be going on at these phases.

The last steps involve filing the framework and keeping in touch with the client. These are not relevant to the researcher.

Methodology Summary

A Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants was created after thorough review of current literature to determine optimal design and focus.

The final framework consists of fourteen steps. This tool was created for small business consultants. These professionals can use this step-by-step guide as they initially research a new client's organization.

A current small business was sought; upon which the researcher would test the framework. As the case study organization, Weight No More, Inc.'s, operating processes were researched while using the new framework along every step of the way. Through the framework, the company's processes were mapped, analyzed, discussed and presented to the owner.

The researcher then followed the remaining steps of the framework by self-evaluating the use of the framework. This evaluation brought about several changes which were implemented to create the final draft of the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants as seen in Appendix A.

Chapter Four, Analysis, asks the researcher to analyze the framework. The priority of the next chapter is to discover whether the purpose and the design goals of the framework were actualized.
Chapter Four

ANALYSIS

This chapter analyzes the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants. The objectives set when creating the framework will be reviewed. Analysis will cover whether those objectives were met.

An internal case study was done on a small business to test the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants developed through this thesis. This chapter will also include an analysis of the case study results. Was the use of the case study worthy in determining the usability of the framework?

Framework Objectives

The primary purpose of the thesis was to create a usable tool to assist consultants through the initial assessment and analysis of a new client's small business, and to assist the consultant in preparing for a presentation as she reports the findings to the client.

Design goals for the framework are listed below:

1. Keep the structure and wording clear, simple, and straight-forward.

2. Create a scripted flow, which will guide the consultant step-by-step through the investigative, process mapping, analysis, and presenting phases.

3. Allow ample space and reminders for accurate record-keeping.

4. Encourage thorough documentation for future self-review and evaluation.

5. Provide a general framework for current and future consultants to use on many types of small businesses.
As the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants is analyzed, we first look at the design goals before analyzing whether the primary objective was accomplished.

The researcher found the framework to be simple and clear. The prompting questions are straightforward as they gently remind of important facets of a company that one using the framework will not want to forget.

The step-by-step layout was easy to follow and proceeded in a very natural way. It was rare that the researcher needed to go back in steps unless to refer to notes taken in Step Three.

All of the researcher's notes, from the first contact to the last, were written on the framework. This helped to maintain an organized, professional command of her work. It also ensured that all of the notes would remain together; thus accomplishing the design goals of accurate record-keeping and thorough documentation.

While the framework was only tested on one organization, it may seem as though the framework's goal of being general enough for use with many types of companies cannot be determined. However, looking at the framework, there is no area that stands out nor excludes any type of organization. All organizations (whether providing a service or a product) have a preparation phase, a distribution phase, and an administrative or procurement phase. As has been discussed throughout this thesis, all organizations should have some system of evaluation, as well.

It may seem difficult to prove whether the framework is useful to a broad range of consultants without a full survey to many consultants in the field. There are two steps in
the framework, however, that allow us to show that the framework could work for many individual consultants. These steps are Step Eleven and Step Twelve. The eleventh step asks the consultant how helpful the framework was and prompts for any changes that could be made to improve the framework for their individual needs. Step Twelve then encourages the consultants to make those changes in order to use the framework as an optimal tool for themselves. In other words, the framework was designed to be a dynamic tool, which changes as individual needs and systems evolve. Therefore, it is believable that any small business consultant could find this framework to be a very helpful tool for their trade.

The ultimate purpose of the thesis was to create a usable tool for small business consultants to assist them as they investigate, analyze and present their findings to new clients. This objective has been accomplished. The design goals have been met and there is now a worthy devise to assist small business consultants with their daily work.

**Analysis of Case Study**

The framework was tested on only one company. This could lead to questions of validity. Yet the question to be answered by completing the test of the framework, by using it to research an existing small business, was to show that the framework would be usable to small business consultants.

Through the case study, the researcher was able to gather a significant amount of information, map the company's processes accurately, define legitimate areas of weakness, recommend changes, and present the findings to the owner effectively. Only time and experience using the framework can truly determine how effective of a tool it is. It seems
likely, however, that a consultant would realize professionalism, consistency and organizational skills, the more proficient she became at using the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants.
Chapter Five

SUMMARY

It is important for small business consultants to demonstrate the same type of process management approach they are promoting for their clients. To accomplish this, the consultant needs to be organized, consistent and customer-driven.

A search through current appropriate literature was accomplished to discover what tools were available to assist small business consultants in their initial investigative phase of a new client. Several basic tools, such as process maps and scattergrams were detailed in the literature, yet no guide on how the consultant should proceed. It was then determined that a framework could be developed for such a use.

Further research was then conducted to discover current trends in process management in order to have a background from which to create this new tool: the Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants.

Next, the consultant's "shoes" were donned and an actual small business, Weight No More, Inc., was investigated as though it were an actual client. The framework proved to be an extremely useful tool for analyzing this weight management case study organization. Excellent information was gleamed and provided useful insight for the owner.

It is not the expectation of the researcher/author that the framework developed will be adapted by all small business consultants. Instead, current and future consultants will now have a starting point from which to grow and begin to develop their own system.
Conclusion

As business consultants enter the small business scene, their goal is often to help owners develop manageable processes that allow for superior quality and customer service. This goal, of course, is in conjunction with helping the owner increase bottom-line profits. For this goal to be achieved, the consultants themselves need to "practice what they preach".

Consultants vying for small business clients will need to have sharp customer-service skills and keen awareness of how to investigate these organizations to discover where improvements can be made.

For years quality assurance "gurus" such as Dr. W. Edward Deming, Ichiro Ishikawa, and Joseph Juran, tried to educate American management on the importance of a process-oriented approach. Xerox, Motorola, and IBM were among the first companies to initiate this approach in the United States. Prior business was conducted using the traditional management orientation. This previous system was developed using military concepts when manufacturing was the primary industry in America.

The process-oriented approach has become so popular in the corporate world, that most organizations have hired individuals or even established entire departments to lead their efforts with this system.

This customer service focused management trend is also beginning to filter down to small businesses. Small business operations are much less broad and processes are generally less involved than their larger counter parts. However, small businesses are generally run by an individual or small groups whose time is extremely limited.
Hiring a full-time Quality Assurance Manager would be impractical for these organizations. Thus, small business owners are turning to consultants to help them stay competitive and to assist them with developing a well-tuned customer-driven system.

As this opportunity continues to grow for small business consultants, they, too, need to develop a system for working with their clients: the small business owners.

The framework developed through this thesis and studied via an actual small business may not be the exact answer for all small business consultants. However, it is an excellent tool to assist small business consultants as they adopt a quality assurance protocol for their management style.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX

Appendix A  Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants - blank

Appendix B  Permission for Use of Name and Company Information

Appendix C  Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants - case study

Appendix D  Procurement, Production and Distribution Process at Weight No More, Inc.
Appendix A


STEP ONE: Identify Client

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Owner's Name:</th>
<th>Date: ____________________________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Small Business:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address: __________________</td>
<td>Telephone: __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax: __________________</td>
<td>E-mail: __________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of business (goods/services provided):</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of business's inception:</td>
<td>Yrs. in business:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client's primary reason for hiring consultant:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP TWO: Schedule Interviews

1. Contact owner and several key staff members to schedule interviews.
2. Allow enough time for in-depth interview without interruption.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner (name):</th>
<th>Staff (name):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date/time:</td>
<td>Date/time:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff (name):</td>
<td>Staff (name):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date/time:</td>
<td>Date/time:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP THREE: Record information from interviews

1. During interviews gather all information regarding operations and employee concerns from owner and staff.
2. Record information in space below. (idea: bring tape recorder- then transfer comments later)

Example Questions:

Are all work days run about the same?
If "Yes" describe a typical day.
If "No" describe a typical Mon., Tues,... Sat etc.
Ask for all organizational processes: Who is responsible?
How is it measured?
How is it evaluated?
Ask staff to describe organizational processes through their eyes.
Ask customers to describe their experiences with the organization.
Ask vendors to describe their experiences with the organization.
### Appendix A - continued

**STEP THREE: Record information from interviews (continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Example Prompting Questions for each process:</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe the current process for inventory control &amp; administrative duties.</td>
<td>Describe the production process.</td>
<td>How are your products/services delivered to the customers?</td>
<td>How are the various processes evaluated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is responsible for these duties?</td>
<td>Include who in the organization is responsible for each step.</td>
<td>What is your customer service policy?</td>
<td>Is there a formal evaluation process?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How are orders taken?</td>
<td></td>
<td>How is feedback gathered from the customers?</td>
<td>How is the information gathered utilized by the company?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employee Concerns:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Owner Concerns:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Additional Comments:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
STEP FOUR: First Draft Process Maps
1. Transfer notes from interviews into clear, simple, accurate process maps
2. Include every activity performed throughout the organization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key:</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rectangle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>diamond</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>circle</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arrow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procurement
(First draft of the company's procurement process is mapped in this space)

Production
(First draft of the company's production process is mapped in this space)
### STEP FOUR: First Draft Process Maps - continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key:</th>
<th>rectangle</th>
<th>diamond</th>
<th>circle</th>
<th>arrow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities</td>
<td>general heading</td>
<td>Staff responsibility</td>
<td>flow of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Distribution**

(First draft of the company's distribution process is mapped in this space)

**Evaluation**

(First draft of the company's evaluation process is mapped in this space)
### Appendix A - continued

#### STEP FIVE - Review First Draft with Owner and Staff
1. Set up meeting time and date prior to your visit: Date: __________ Time: __________
2. Write changes needed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### STEP SIX: Revise Process maps and Review with Client
1. Revise process maps below using information from Step Five.
2. Set up next meeting to review changes Date: __________ Time: __________
3. Revise & Review until 100% agreement is achieved. Date: __________ Time: __________

**Key:**
- **Rectangle:** activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
- **Diamond:** general heading
- **Circle:** Staff responsibility
- **Arrow:** flow of work

**Procurement**

(Revised procurement process mapped here)

**Production**

(Revised production process mapped here)
## STEP SIX: Revise Process maps and Review with Client - continued

**Key:**
- **rectangle:** activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
- **diamond:** general heading
- **circle:** Staff responsibility
- **arrow:** flow of work

**Distribution**

*(Revised distribution process mapped here)*

**Evaluation**

*(Revised evaluation process mapped here)*

## STEP SEVEN: Consultant Analyzes Process Maps

1. Analyze flow of employees and materials
2. Analyze flow of work

*Looking for Service gaps, bottlenecks, time strains, obstacles, barriers*
Appendix A - continued

STEP SEVEN: Analyze Process Maps - continued
(The consultant will review the completed process maps and any additional notes pertaining to the organization.)
(Any notes from this analysis may be written here.)

STEP EIGHT: Develop list of Recommendations for Improvement
1. Review analysis in STEP SEVEN and provide recommendation for each fail-point.
2. For each recommendation provide a description of your service available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fail-Point(s)</th>
<th>Recommendation(s)</th>
<th>Services Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP NINE: Prepare for Presentation
1. Schedule meeting with owner (& staff).  
   Date:  Time:

Ideas for Presentation:
Mode of Presentation: slides  overhead projector  handouts  other

Tools Needed: business cards, service list, extension cord, pointer, other...

Other Ideas:
Appendix A - continued

STEP TEN: Presenting the Findings and Recommendations
Date: __________ Time: __________ # of people present: __________
People Present: _______________________________________________________
Comments made by attendees regarding presentation and information presented:
(note: mark down who made the comment)
-----------------------------------------------------------------------------
Optional: Give survey card to attendees: # returned __________

STEP ELEVEN: Self-Evaluation
1. Take time to think about the process just completed with this client.
2. Review the following questions to help jog your memory.
3. Write down any changes you want to make on the framework or the process.
Questions:
a. How was the framework helpful in working with this client? __________
b. Do you feel more cues need to be listed at any section?
c. Is there any thing you want to add to make service better for your future clients?
d. Is there anything that you want to change about this framework? What?
e. Are you completely satisfied with your professional relationship with this client? Y N
   If Yes, what did you do that made the relationship work well?
   If No, What did you do that prevented the relationship from working out?
   What changes would ensure a better working relationship with the next client?
   f. Review the results of the survey given out at the presentation.
      Are there any changes you could make based on the customer feedback?
f. Additional comments or ideas for improving your service to your future clients:
**Appendix A - continued**

**STEP TWELVE: Implement Changes**
1. Review ideas and comments from STEP ELEVEN.
2. Make necessary changes to framework and process.
3. Devise way to remind yourself of ideas to provide better service to future clients.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Changes Implemented:</th>
<th>initial:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**STEP THIRTEEN: File**
1. File this framework in the appropriate file for this client.
2. Make sure all forms stapled to it are secure.
3. You may want to place entire framework in an envelope to keep it together.

**STEP FOURTEEN: Keep in continuous contact with client**

*Examples:*
1. Send handwritten Thank-you Note to client.
2. Add client to Christmas Card List
3. Include business card in all written correspondence.
4. Telephone client after Three months - if client has not been in contact -
   - Date:
   - Result of Call:

Additional Notes On This Client or Organization:
Appendix B

PERMISSION FOR USE OF NAME AND COMPANY INFORMATION

I, Lea Anne Werder, owner of Weight No More, Inc. of Lyndonville, New York, do permit Nicole Lamb Kmicinski to use my name, the name of Weight No More, Inc., and pertinent company information in her thesis entitled: "A Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants: A Case Study Approach".

All of the information I have provided pertaining Weight No More, Inc. is accurate and complete.

Signature: Lea Anne Werder

Date 5/11/06
### Appendix C

**Process Mapping Framework for Small Business Consultants - case study**

#### STEP ONE: Identify Client

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Owner's Name:</th>
<th>Lea Anne Werder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of Small Business:</td>
<td>Weight No More, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>994 Morrison Rd, Lynden, NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fax:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of business (goods/services provided):</td>
<td>Weight management company. Food is cooked and prepared for customers. Customers' weight is tracked. Education is provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of business's inception:</td>
<td>Jan. 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrs. in business:</td>
<td>3+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client's primary reason for hiring consultant:</td>
<td>-case study-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### STEP TWO: Schedule Interviews

1. Contact owner and several key staff members to schedule interviews.
2. Allow enough time for in-depth interview without interruption.

| Owner (name): | L. W. |
| Staff (name): |                     |
| Date/time:    | 3/10/97 - 2pm; 6/10/97 - 12pm |

| Staff (name): | Cook - Fred |
| Date/time:    | 4/15/97 - 2pm |

| Staff (name): | Staff - Donna, Mark, Beth |
| Date/time:    | 4/15/97 - 2pm |

| Staff (name): |                     |
| Date/time:    |                     |

#### STEP THREE: Record information from interviews

1. During interviews gather all information regarding operations and employee concerns from owner and staff.
2. Record information in space below. (idea: bring tape recorder- then transfer comments later)

**Comments:**

- No Evaluation phase - "Don't want to change".
- All days differ (Mon. - Sat.) see process maps + notes
### Appendix C - continued

**STEP THREE: Record information from interviews (continued)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Typical Work Week:**

- **Sun:**
  - LW: plan produce order
  - Call in " "
  - Check newspapers for coupons
  - Check menus & print.

- **Mon:**
  - LW:
  - Unload groceries
  - Review menus w/ cook
  - Organize client files.
  - Determine count for meals
  - Accounts receivable

- **Cook:**
  - Check menus
  - Prep/cook food for following day.
  - Cook food for mTuW.
  - Make copies of menus for clients.

**Employee Concerns:**

- Staff:
  - Set up the pick-up table
  - Restock pick-up table - as needed
  - Portion snacks

**Owner Concerns:**

- Bag bread & other pre-prepared foods.
- Wash pots & pans.
- Pack coolers for Attica/Medina.
- Drive meals to Attica. Supervise pick-up.

**Additional Concerns:**

- Clients:
  - New client - pick up orientation, counseling, complete enrollment
  - Current clients - weigh-in, ask ?
  - Pickup meals, pay
  - Perspective clients: call or stop in any day
  - Ask questions
### Appendix C - continued

**Process Mapping** 79

#### STEP THREE: Record information from interviews (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procurement</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Distribution</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Typical work week continued</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Tues.)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LW</strong></td>
<td><strong>meets w/cooks - reviews recipes</strong></td>
<td><strong>client counseling</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>helps with meal prep</strong></td>
<td><strong>new client sign-up</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>menu administration</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cook:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>meets w/LW to review recipes</strong></td>
<td><strong>answer phones</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>prepares meals</strong></td>
<td><strong>supervises kitchen when LW not there.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>staff:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Drive food to Medina</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Supervise meal pick-up</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Distribute food at Batavia site</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>clip coupons</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LW</strong></td>
<td><strong>administrative work at home</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>place large food order</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LW</strong></td>
<td><strong>cook food for</strong></td>
<td><strong>lunches</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>serve at lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>answer all client questions at lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cook</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>help cook lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>prepares all pre-prepared foods</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Finishes all portioning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>set tables for lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>stock table for pick-up</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>distribute meals</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>help serve lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Clients</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>eat at lunch</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>weigh-in and pick-up meals for Th, F, S.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>ask ?'s.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(Friday)</strong></td>
<td><strong>LW places small orders.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sat.</strong></td>
<td><strong>LW grocery shops w/ coupons.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**STEP FOUR: First Draft Process Maps**

1. Transfer notes from interviews into clear, simple, accurate process maps
2. Include every activity performed throughout the organization.

**Key:**
- **Rectangle:** activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
- **Diamond:** general heading
- **Circle:** Staff responsibility
- **Arrow:** flow of work

**Procurement**
- LW reviews inventory
- LW plans menus
- LW plans groceries shopping list
- LW orders food and supplies from distributors
- Food delivered to WNIM

**Production**
- Owner and cook prepare meals
- LW + cook supervise staff
- LW + cook supervise staff
- Staff portions, dry prep.
- Staff cleans kitchen/dishes
- Staff sets up for Thurs. Lunch
- To Distribution
STEP FOUR: First Draft Process Maps - continued

Key:

rectangle: activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
diamond: general heading
circle: Staff responsibility
arrow: flow of work

From production Distribution

meals Distributed to clients

Staff helps serve luncheon

Thursday Luncheon

owner helps serve luncheon

LW or Staff monitors meal pick-up

meals driven to Attica for pick-up

owner drives meals to Medina for pick-up

Staff monitors meal pick-up

Evaluation

- No formal evaluation process.
- No formal process for soliciting customer feedback.
STEP FIVE - Review First Draft with Owner and Staff

1. Set up meeting time and date prior to your visit: Date: 6/12/98 Time: 12 pm
2. Write changes needed below:
   1.) Be more specific with administrative duties in Procurement Process.
   2.) Did not include education in the production/distribution processes.
   3.) Add "Food Stored Properly" in Procurement Process.

STEP SIX: Revise Process maps and Review with Client

1. Revise process maps below using information from Step Five.
2. Set up next meeting to review changes Date: Time:
3. Revise & Review until 100% agreement is achieved. Date: Time:

Key:
- rectangle: activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
- diamond: general heading
- circle: Staff responsibility
- arrow: flow of work

Procurement

* See Appendix D for complete Final Process Maps.

Production
STEP SIX: Revise Process maps and Review with Client - continued

**Key:**
- **rectangle**: activity or task that is one of the owner's responsibilities
- **diamond**: general heading
- **circle**: Staff responsibility
- **arrow**: flow of work

**Distribution**

*See Appendix D for complete final process maps.*

**Evaluation**

**STEP SEVEN: Analyze Process Maps**

1. Analyze flow of employees and materials
2. Analyze flow of work

*Looking for Service gaps, bottlenecks, time strains, obstacles, barriers*

**A. Owner's Time:** LW assumes many responsibilities in all major processes. Her time is very limited.

- LW could delegate more duties to Head Cook
- LW's time could be used for evaluating the business,
gathering feedback from clients, benchmarking,
and planning for the future.
Appendix C - continued

STEP SEVEN: Analyze Process Maps - continued from prior page.

B) Evaluation Process - This process is non-existent. Change occurs on a "trial-n-error" basis, or based on owner's ideas.

- Provide ideas for developing an evaluation process of which the owner will be comfortable.

C) Feedback - Customer feedback is not solicited, but accepted.

- No formal process in place to use feedback for improvement.

- Provide ideas for soliciting feedback and using the info. for making improvements.

STEP EIGHT: Develop list of Recommendations for Improvement

1. Review analysis in STEP SEVEN and provide recommendation for each fail-point.
2. For each recommendation provide a description of your service available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fail-Point(s)</th>
<th>Recommendation(s)</th>
<th>Examples of Services Available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Lack of process to gather customer feedback + opinions</td>
<td>*Develop process feedback</td>
<td>*Process Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Analyze + use information gathered</td>
<td>*Survey Cards/Focus Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Lack of business evaluation process</td>
<td>*Develop process</td>
<td>*Trend Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Evaluate on regular basis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Utilize data for decision making</td>
<td>*Process Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Owner's time spent on daily production</td>
<td>*Delegate</td>
<td>*Mystery Shopping, Cost,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Reschedule time</td>
<td>Analysis, Benchmarking,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flow-Charting, Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEP NINE: Prepare for Presentation

1. Schedule meeting with owner (& staff).

   Date: 5/10/00  Time: NA

   Ideas for Presentation:

   Mode of Presentation: slides overhead projector *handouts* other

   Tools Needed: business cards, service list, extension cord, pointer, other

   Other Ideas: Mail findings to owner follow-up with phone calls to discuss findings.
STEP TEN: Presenting the Findings and Recommendations

| Date: | 6/19/00 | Time: | # of people present: | 1 |
|-------|---------|-------|----------------------|

People Present:

- Lw - owner

Comments made by attendees regarding presentation and information presented:

(note: mark down who made the comment)

- Lw agreed to comments w/ process maps as indicative of Weight No More Inc. in 1997. However, a great deal has changed at Weight No More, Inc. since the study began in 1997.

OPTIONAL: Give survey card to attendees: # returned NA

STEP ELEVEN: Self-Evaluation

1. Take time to think about the process just completed with this client.
2. Review the following questions to help jog your memory.
3. Write down any changes you want to make on the framework or the process.

Questions:

a. How was the framework helpful in working with this client? extremely helpful
b. Do you feel more cues need to be listed at any section? No.
c. Is there any thing you want to add to make service better for your future clients? Add additional page(s) to Step 3 - This is a huge place for notes!
d. Is there additional anything that you want to change about this framework? What? Make sure to speak with as many staff, clients, vendors as possible

e. Are you completely satisfied with your professional relationship with this client? Y N

If Yes, what did you do that made the relationship work well?

- Open communication

If No, What did you do that prevented the relationship from working out?

- NA

What changes would ensure a better working relationship with the next client?

- More timely

f. Review the results of the survey given out at the presentation.
Are there any changes you could make based on the customer feedback?

- NA

f. Additional comments or ideas for improving your service to your future clients:

- NA
### STEP TWELVE: Implement Changes

1. Review ideas and comments from STEP ELEVEN.
2. Make necessary changes to framework and process.
3. Devise way to remind yourself of ideas to provide better service to future clients.

Date Changes Implemented: If used again initial: \( \checkmark \)

will add page(s) to Step 3.

### STEP THIRTEEN: File

1. File this framework in the appropriate file for this client.
2. Make sure all forms stapled to it are secure.
3. You may want to place entire framework in an envelope to keep it together.

### STEP FOURTEEN: Keep in contact with client

**Examples:**

1. Send handwritten Thank-you Note to client.
2. Add client to Christmas Card List
3. Include business card in all written correspondence.
4. Telephone client after Three months - if client has not been in contact -
   
   Date: \( \checkmark \)
   
   Result of Call: \( \checkmark \)
   

Additional Notes On This Client or Organization:
Appendix D: **Procurement, Production and Distribution Processes**

- **Procurement**
  - Reviews inventory
  - Plans menus
  - Plans grocery shopping list
  - Reviews menus with cooks
  - Groceries shops & delivers food to kitchen.
  - Food stored properly

- **Production**
  - Plans menus
  - Orders from food & supply distributors
  - Volunteer clips coupons
  - Owner or cook receives food and supplies
  - Owner & cook prepare main portion of meals
  - Owner & cook supervise & direct the staff.
    - Staff portions dry foods and prep.
    - Staff cleans kitchen, pans, dishes etc.
    - Staff sets up for Thursday lunch

- **Distribution**
  - Meals & Education distributed to customers
  - Meal distribution
  - Thursday Lunch
  - Education distribution
  - Owner signs in new clients; explains system; gives general weight loss instruction
  - Educational workshops with guest speakers offered every 2 weeks
  - Meals driven to Attica pick-up location by staff.
  - Meals driven to Medina pick-up location by owner or staff.
  - Staff helps serve
  - Owner helps serve
  - Addresses clients' questions & concerns
  - Owner monitors meal pick-up at Batavia facility
  - Staff monitors Meal Pick-up

- **Processes**
  - Develops advertising
  - Personnel issues
  - Financial & legal issues
  - Professional development and research
  - Owner prepares/develops education material
  - Owner prepares for education workshops
  - Owner prepares for education workshops