Eleven habits for highly successful BPM programs

Proven steps for getting started with process improvement
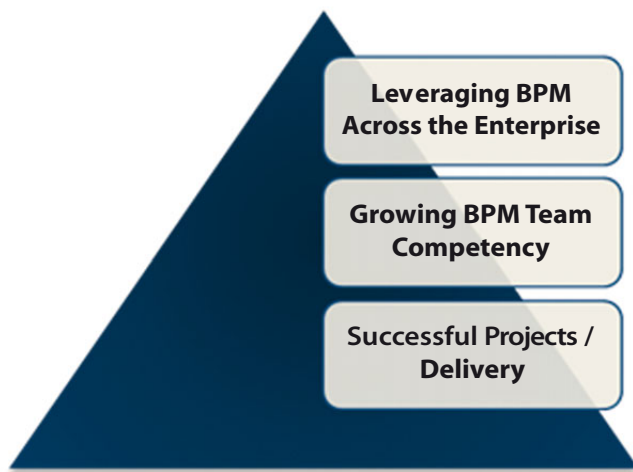
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Introduction

We have been at BPM for quite some time now—almost a decade! We hear quite often from our customers at the beginning of their BPM initiative that they have high hopes and big plans for BPM in their company as a core capability to drive process improvement across the business. They are eager to find out what they can do to ensure a successful BPM program—using IBM® WebSphere® Lombardi Edition, or related products in the IBM BPM suite.

Over time we have captured the "habits" of our customers that have proven to be successful with BPM on a long-term basis. What do they do at the beginning that sets them up for success? How do they invest along the way? And how do they really establish an enterprise-wide BPM capability?

We decided to present these suggested guidelines around the framework of Stephen R. Covey's book, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. The basic point he makes is that you have to have a paradigm shift in order to be effective—you have to think about things a little differently. There are progressions and stages that you need to go through in terms of building up your capability to become more effective. The first stage is about working on yourself as an individual, and later progressing to become someone who can have a significant effect across your community. BPM follows this same strategy.

Success breeds success. You cannot just jump into a fully developed enterprise-level program if you do not have any experience with BPM. It is definitely a progression in which each level supports the next. Start with the ability to deliver

Levels of BPM success

What habits will help an organization move up these levels?

single projects—prove you can do it. Then build up the team competency and infrastructure enabling BPM to be the platform for driving process improvement across the enterprise. By following the progression and the very specific habits at each step that we will outline for you here, your organization will be able to provide a real asset to your entire company as you move up the levels of a successful BPM program.

Successful projects/delivery
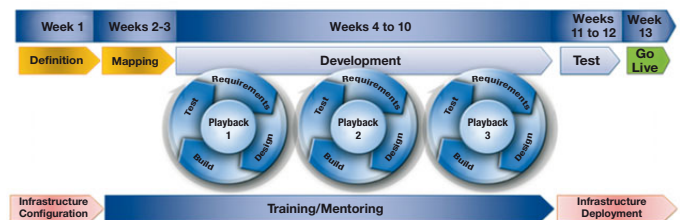
Habit #1 – Prove business value first
- Do not forget the focus should be on business value
- Be willing to make trade-offs for the first release

Pick out a challenge that provides business value—do not just do a small starter project. Successful BPM customers have jumped right into solving a business problem that matters.

In the first project, go after a discrete problem you are confident you can tackle. Only after a successful first iteration will you be able to completely justify the next deployment and continue to look at other parts of the business for additional process improvements.

BPM is agile. You need to take advantage of that—and do not attempt to solve all problems with a single "big bang" deployment of an end-to-end process. You need to continuously improve and iterate.

BPM project timeline

It has become common knowledge in the BPM space that in order to deliver business value, the only methodology that works is iterative delivery of a process. The traditional waterfall methodology has high risk of failure, because the business

and its requirements may change by the time the "final" process is ready to be deployed. Instead, through iteration and playbacks you can engage the business throughout the development phase and they will be able to share with you where the key points of value are in the process, which ultimately ensures that the right application gets built.

When using WebSphere Lombardi Edition, IBM suggests conducting at least three major playbacks in each project delivery. It is imperative that you bring together all stakeholders and step through the process application at three or more playbacks over the course of a 10- to 12-week long project. We even have some customers who, after realizing the importance of playbacks, hold them every week!
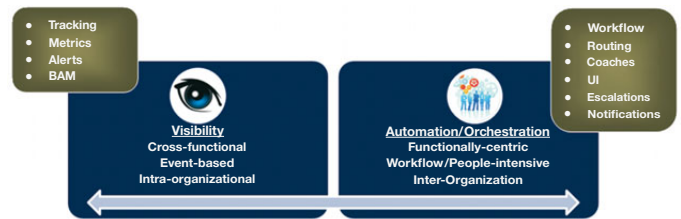
Habit #2 – Make BPM about productivity and visibility
- Metrics, KPIs and SLAs should be part of the Definition Phase
- Do not push metrics out of scope
- Remember visibility is critical to improvement

Make process improvement about visibility too. A lot of people come to BPM from a workflow mentality and they are thinking, "BPM is all about automation, right?" Yes, a key part of BPM is automating tasks that are highly manual and error prone today. However, at the same time, there is a whole other element to BPM, which is all about raising the visibility of how business is done and getting metrics established where you previously did not have any in place.

Successful BPM customers determine the key metrics they are trying to move by measuring the before and after. Without baseline measurements it is difficult to show the value business gained from all the process improvements. Many companies can you give you discrete metrics in particular departments, but they cannot give you end-to-end metrics of a key customer-facing process. IBM BPM can help.

How are companies using IBM WebSphere Lombardi Edition?

Some customers report that, for them, the first phase BPM is not at all about automating specific areas of the process. They do not know enough about their end-to-end process to accurately pinpoint where the problems are. Instead, their first step is BAM (business activity monitoring)—putting in place the ability to detect and track the end-to-end process. Using BAM, they are able to discover their biggest pains, bottlenecks, and opportunities for improvement.
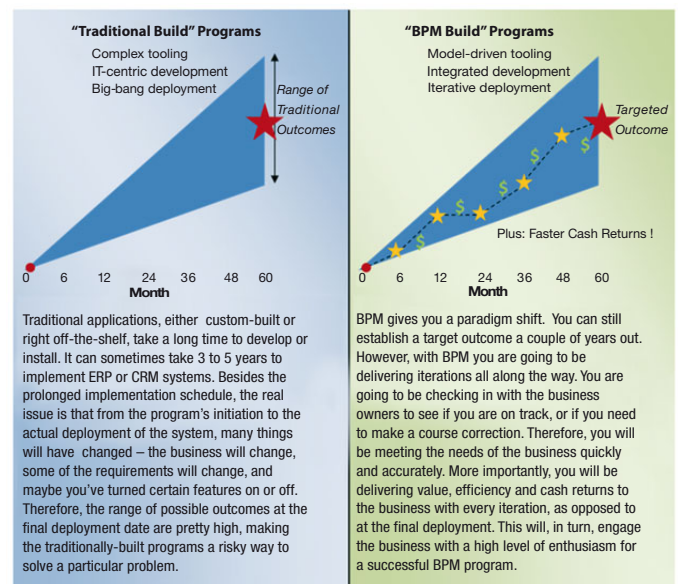
Successful customers not only think about automation and orchestration opportunities, but they are very much focused on the key metrics that are going to drive process improvement. End-to-end visibility is a usually a new skill set that needs to be learned. You have to really push out the first version of the project to get business owners to tell you what are the metrics they care about, what the current baseline is, and what metrics they would need to improve in three months in order for BPM to be considered a success. This is always a critical conversation to have because it really sets you up for proving the value of the BPM solutions that you deliver to the business.

Habit #3 – Never "one and done"

- Iterative approach...for Continuous Process Improvement
- Phases and Versions 2, 3…N will always happen
- Make trade-offs (but do not trade-off the metrics!)

With the iterative approach, you need to establish a paradigm, a mentality—not just within your BPM project team, but ideally in the organization as a whole—that you are not just deploying an application once. BPM allows you to get a first version of a process deployed quickly, to solve a discrete problem and to prove value to the business. But the real opportunity is in versions 2, 3 and beyond, bringing entirely new levels of capability and sophistication in efficiency or effectiveness to your organization.

BPM accelerates better business outcomes

"Traditional Build" Programs
Complex tooling
IT-centric development
Big-bang deployment

Range of Traditional Outcomes

Traditional applications, either custom-built or right off-the-shelf, take a long time to develop or install. It can sometimes take 3 to 5 years to implement ERP or CRM systems. Besides the prolonged implementation schedule, the real issue is that from the program's initiation to the actual deployment of the system, many things will have changed – the business will change, some of the requirements will change, and maybe you've turned certain features on or off. Therefore, the range of possible outcomes at the final deployment date are pretty high, making the traditionally-built programs a risky way to solve a particular problem.

"BPM Build" Programs
Model-driven tooling
Integrated development
Iterative deployment

Targeted Outcome

Plus: Faster Cash Returns !

BPM gives you a paradigm shift. You can still establish a target outcome a couple of years out. However, with BPM you are going to be delivering iterations all along the way. You are going to be checking in with the business owners to see if you are on track, or if you need to make a course correction. Therefore, you will be meeting the needs of the business quickly and accurately. More importantly, you will be delivering value, efficiency and cash returns to the business with every iteration, as opposed to at the final deployment. This will, in turn, engage the business with a high level of enthusiasm for a successful BPM program.

Habit #4 – Do not skip Process Analysis

- Requirements documents are not Process Analysis
- Do not overdo the initial requirements Definition phase
- Develop Process Analysis skills in your team early

While we are always excited to see that our new customers are extremely eager to dive right into solving business problems using BPM, we know that many times they are missing an

extremely crucial step. You simply cannot start a BPM initiative by going directly to building custom process applications just by using a "requirements document." It is imperative to complete Process Analysis, because this ultimately sets the foundation for a successful BPM program.

The opportunity with BPM is to really adopt a process mindset—which will immediately put you and your team in a collaborative context. Processes are performed by different groups within your organization. You cannot rely solely on a "requirements document" to go and build an effective custom application.

Process Analysis helps illustrates the end-to-end process:
What is the data needed at different points?
What is the velocity that we need in this process?
How quickly do we need the turnaround time to be and where are the issues with meeting this requirement?

You will not find the answers to these questions in traditional requirement documents. The objective behind Process Analysis is to help lead you through your process improvement effort.

Process Analysis is designed to help you:
Analyze specific business processes
Understand the main problem areas in the current process
Formulate a roadmap for recommended process improvements

In order to be successful, you have to have to develop Process Analysis skill within your team. It is a critical factor and it is something that sets apart traditional application development from building process application solutions using BPM.

Habit #5 – Take the time to deliver value
- A project that takes longer than 90 days is not a failure
- Self-sufficiency can extend project timelines
- Timelines can be dependent upon the sophistication of the process

For better or for worse, there is a ton of marketing out there for BPM vowing that you can deploy in two weeks, or you can deliver a complete solution with value in a month. We are not denying that such short timeframes are possible, because you can deploy within a month, given certain conditions. If that is the right timeline for your company, then do it.

But, do not forget our #1 Habit – Prove Business Value First! Most BPM projects using IBM WebSphere Lombardi Edition have set out to accomplish the following objectives within reasonably short timeframes, on the order of 90 days:

- Prove business value
- Deploy first iteration
- Get your win on the board
- Start delivering value back to the business
- Earn your right to do the next phases

On the other hand, if you feel you need more than 90 days in order to get your team ramped up, or you want to do some up-front process analysis—that is fine. Just be sure that you impart business value as soon as you can. And do not rush to

ship an irrelevant trouble ticketing system in 30 days just to show progress, because that will not help your BPM program in the long run. Instead, take the time to deliver value. Really stretch yourself—it is going to take effort but it will all be worth it once your company is able to realize maximum business value.

Another key point—if you make the decision that you want to be self-sufficient very early on in your BPM program, you need to extend your project timeline because you are taking time to learn along the way. You are not just sitting in the passenger seat and watching. These factors need to be taken into account when determining a timeline. You need to communicate to your team that you are going to take a little bit longer, but your organization will exit the project with some new capabilities that allow you to achieve success on your own. That is probably a great trade-off to make depending on what your company values and prioritizes.

Growing BPM team competency
Habit #6 – Build a complete team
- Java™ (or .Net) developers are not all you need
- Have the right mix of resources on the team
- Identify good pools of talent for developers (BPM consultants)

From our perspective, you have to go into BPM thinking about building a complete team. Having a BPM program is an investment—we think that it is a critical capability for any progressive IT department. You have to build a broad set of skill sets. Valuable BPM process applications are going to be integrated with your core systems of record, and you are going to be leveraging services—so there is definitely a place on your team for very technical people. But you also have to attain some new skills and capabilities as well, such as Process Analysis.

Successful companies using IBM WebSphere Lombardi Edition start thinking about the following during their first BPM projects:

- What is my team going to look like as I scale and expand this program?
- Who are good candidates for me to reach out to and plug into these different roles?
- What talent and capabilities do I still need to acquire?

BPM project roles

The good news is there is a well-defined set of roles. The terminology will be different depending on who you are talking to, but by and large the necessary skill sets are pretty clearly identified.

> *"BPM allows us to focus on our most critical business priorities first."*

—Erik Keller, CIO, SIRVA (Keynote Presentation, Driven Online 2009)

BPM role descriptions

Process Owner
- Establishes process goals and project success criteria
- Provides clarity on process scope and relative value of process activities
- Makes key business decisions that clear impediments to team progress
- Provides cultural leadership to facilitate adoption of process improvements

BPM Program Manager
- Guides Iterative Delivery
- Manages scope, budget, and resources
- Identifies and mitigates risks
- Conduit for escalations and issue resolution
- Provides internal and external status and dashboards
- Lets the Delivery Team deliver

BPM Analyst
- Leads process improvement efforts
- Expert in process decomposition, process/data analysis, scoping, optimization
- Identifies business case, key opportunities, prioritized roadmap, and ROI
- Identifies and enforces delivery of KPIs, SLAs, and scoreboards

BPM Developers - Process Consultants
- Drives Business Playback sessions
- Expert in Teamworks features in the context of solutions
- Implements process flows, services, business logic, and user interfaces
- Develops KPIs, SLAs, and scoreboards
- Models organization and task routing rules

BPM Developers - Technical Integration Consultants
- Responsible for systems architecture
- Designs and implements integrations, custom data storage, and complex data manipulations
- Guides infrastructure design and implementation

BPMS Administrator
- Responsible for installation and configuration of application servers, databases, and enterprise operating systems
- Identifies appropriate environment architecture required to support development, testing and production migration requirements
- Performs troubleshooting and root cause analysis of system and application issues
- Proficient in monitoring and tuning performance of a multi-tier solution with service-based integrations

Habit #7 – Make self-sufficiency a priority
- Do not allocate partial human beings
- Make sure all of the right skills are represented
- Do not mix self-sufficiency with tight deadlines

In the long run, customers that really succeed with BPM programs do one of the two following things:

- They make a commitment to allocating people full time to assemble a BPM team that represents all of the skills.
- They do not mix self-sufficiency with tight timelines—they make it a priority to take time to deliver value, which requires carving out time in the beginning of the program for the team to learn BPM. Some customers also use third-party partners extensively. Even then, the partners may need time to get up to speed on BPM, to become self-sufficient and acquire the skills that they need to be able to support you.

Education is a Key to Self Sufficiency

IBM Recommends:

Role-oriented training vs. "one size fits all"	Ongoing training & testing at multiple maturity levels	Mentoring to learn application of skills

Missing or insufficient skills can lead to slow adoption, lost value ... or complete failure

Make sure you are factoring in time and investment in education. To help you with this, IBM has established a role-oriented training and certification program for BPM programs that use WebSphere Lombardi Edition. In addition to testing, certification accounts for real applied skills demonstrated during deployments. This on-the-job training and mentoring

helps put you in the right mindset to be successful with BPM. IBM believes that the combination of certification, training and mentorship will help you to succeed with your BPM program.

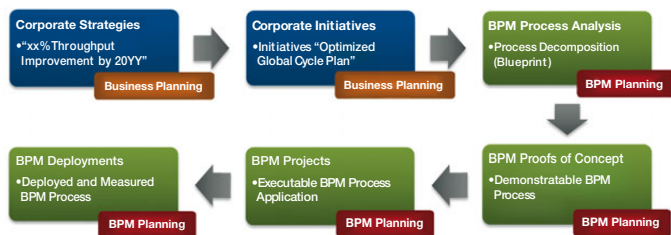| Level 1 Certified	Level 2 Certified	Level 3 Certified
• Individuals have basic skills required to complete BPM projects, under guidance of Level 2 and 3 leaders	• Individuals have advanced skills required to lead delivery teams in multiple BPM projects	• Individuals have Expert skills needed to drive BPM delivery, architecture, and goverance at the program level

Leveraging BPM across the enterprise
Habit #8 – Fund to value...not just first release

- BPM is about Continuous Process Improvement
- BPM should be programmatic
- Funding model should contemplate Projects and the Program

In order to drive BPM awareness to the executive-level, successful customers capture funding for the ongoing value of process improvement and not just for the first release of a project. You cannot simply go project to project—you are investing in a program. The companies that are thriving at process improvement tie BPM to a key initiative that they know is going to span multiple quarters and multiple years, in order to facilitate funding for the program throughout all stages of improvement and maturity.
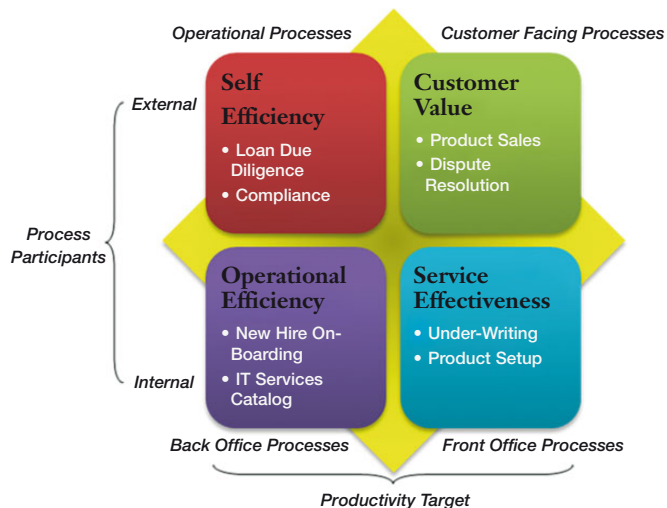
Tying BPM to corporate strategy

BPM Pipeline (Executive Review)—Increasing level of process definition at each stage with steering committee approval when promoting projects from stage to stage.

The most successful practitioners tie BPM into the corporate strategy of the organization. They look at the global initiatives the company is trying to accomplish.

- Are we looking to change our model to an outsourced man- ufacturing model?
  - If so, where are the pain points going to be and how can BPM and process applications help us as an organization thrive in it?

Some organizations really do things using a top-down approach—they take their global initiatives and then deter- mine at a strategic and tactical vision of how BPM can get them to achieve their objectives. This is a great way to sustain your BPM program and not be impeded by a project-by- project mentality.

BPM opportunity landscape

We have customers who follow a shared-services organization model and realize that BPM can help in a lot of different places. Customers like this go out and advocate BPM to different lines of business so that they can, depending on priorities, drive:

- Customer Value
- Service Effectiveness
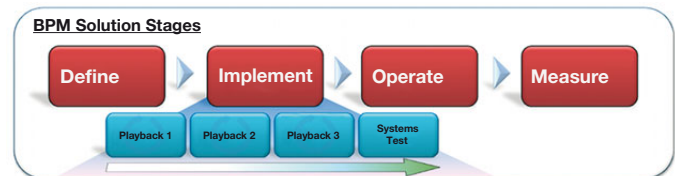- Operational Efficiency
- Service Efficiency

Then they gather input from different groups who are interested in using BPM to help their processes and they identify a pipeline of all the different implementable locations within their organization.

They also have a **prioritization matrix** in which they factor in the Return on Investment (ROI) for completing the project to help deliver business value by justifying the cost of implementing BPM. Another interesting point—the BPM program promoters look at the line of business and they determine what that group's organizational ability is to accept change, and what the awareness is as a group around process. If the group does not accept change very well and knows nothing about process—that in turn gets factored into the prioritization of the success rate for that project.

Habit #9 – Force collaboration
- Consider carefully for the first project
- Colocate team members from business and IT
- Leverage the Playbacks

We believe that in order to succeed in BPM as an organization, you have to engage the business. Core learning in BPM requires that you force collaboration. You have to collocate team members together and go after a completely different level of business engagement than you ever had for traditional applications that were built only in the IT side of the house. Our successful customers are able to fill the room during playbacks with people from both the IT and the business side of the house. This way you make sure you are on the right track throughout the development of the application and you can maximize the value you deliver back to the business!

Our approach and tool set allows for very fast and easy iterations. We call these playbacks—IT and business can sit side by side to tweak, playback and repeat. With WebSphere Lombardi Edition, you can press "play" at any time. No delays, no overhead—you get to leverage instant feedback from your process stakeholders.

Customer story: Playbacks drive engagement

This photo is from a playback at a large pharmaceutical company.

People from call centers, partners and process owners are present. The GM of this process has over a billion-dollar responsibility for this line of business. But he is here in this early playback, looking at the process, providing feedback on key metrics and on the future of the process. He is making the playback a priority. We consistently see that our successful customers are getting the business owners, process owners and process participants in the room where they can iteratively develop these process applications as a group throughout the delivery of the project. This is a key component of success. If you do not have this kind of collaboration, you will not have repeatable success with BPM projects spanning the enterprise.

Habit #10 – Establish the owners
- Processes are business owned
- BPM is the discipline/program
- BPMS is the enabling technology

You need people from the business engaging and saying what the priorities are for any project. The key benefit to this iterative approach is that you can make trade-offs and changes along the way in order to adapt to changing business conditions and requirements. To ensure that the right decisions are made, you have to have a level of business engagement that guides and directs you on your BPM journey.

Business Owners are an absolute requirement for succeeding with BPM.

Classic question:	IBM's answer:
Who should own the BPM project—business or IT?	The business should own the process improvement and IT should own the BPM program.

In a BPM program, one of the core elements is obviously the BPM suite (BPMS)—which is enterprise software. The BPMS is going to integrate with your core systems and share information across applications and services. Your key partners and

IBM believe that a BPMS should be a differentiating capability of a progressive IT team. Using a BPMS, a team should have the ability to go into any business group and put together a process application in a short amount of time that starts delivering business value and ROI.

Habit #11 – Market your work
- Create regular internal communications about progress
- Use videos, wikis, and portals to "show off" new processes
- BPMS is the enabling technology

Some IT groups do this habit intuitively—others need to develop it. We have noticed something interesting about BPM, particularly at the business side of the house—they do not "get" BPM until they actually see it.

Luckily, with products like **WebSphere Lombardi Edition** they can easily see:

- Process applications
- Process status
- Reports with drill downs
- Who is doing what task
- Bottlenecks and problems
- System integrations

Users can go from swivel-chairing between seven different systems to interacting with just one process application. All of these aspects help the business side see how BPM makes the process streamlined.

In order for you to get people in the various groups in your organization to buy into BPM, you have to market it to them. You have to go out and do road shows, impart knowledge on what process improvement has done for your projects, and what it can do for them.

Get a process conversation started—and more importantly—keep it going!

There are so many different technological venues that are available to help you do this quickly. Leverage your internal wikis and company newsletters. We have also had many customers who have done recordings of process application demos, or interviews with their end users. This material is sometimes uploaded to YouTube© for easy viewing by colleagues.

"If there is no business owner for the process, there's no process application. I won't do it."

—Erik Keller, CIO, SIRVA

The key is to get people to "see" BPM and to see the opportunity—because once you have done that, we can guarantee you the flood gates are going to open. You are going to have lots of different people coming to you and saying that they need your help over in a certain part of the business. That is when your BPM has program has really achieved an enterprise-level impact and mentality.

So what is next?

We have some assets that could be helpful to you whether you are just getting started with BPM or if you are building your team competency and looking to increase process engagement across the business.

Blueprint Account

- Go to http://www.ibm.com/software/integration/bpm-blueprint/
- Sign up for a free 30 day account!
- Single best way to get people in your business thinking about BPM and starting to document process problems that can feed into your process project pipeline.
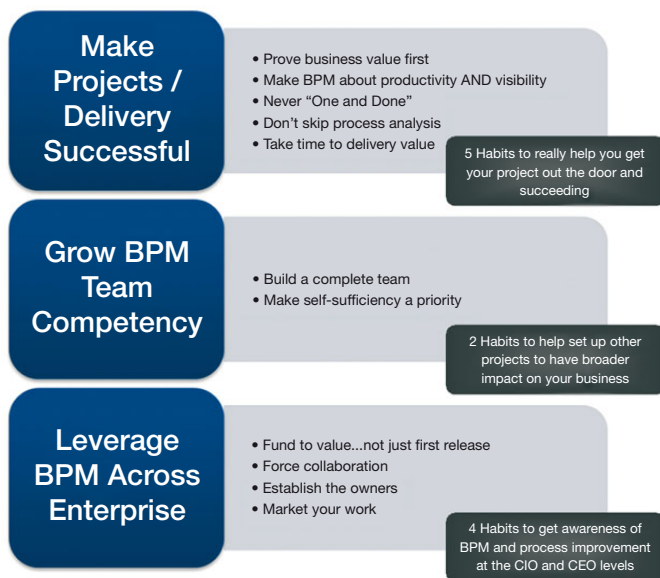
Whitepaper: Making the Case for BPM

- Check this out if you are trying to get your organization on board with BPM
- This really emphasizes why process improvement is a number one priority that IT teams and CIOs should be investing in.

Resources

- Go to http://www.ibm.com/software integration/lombardi-edition/library/
- Go to www.bpmblueworks.com
- Provides different kinds of content and ideas for how to get BPM projects started and sustain them across your enterprise

Recap of the 11 habits of highly successful BPM programs

Make Projects / Delivery Successful	• Prove business value first • Make BPM about productivity AND visibility • Never "One and Done" • Don't skip process analysis • Take time to delivery value

5 Habits to really help you get your project out the door and succeeding

Grow BPM Team Competency	• Build a complete team • Make self-sufficiency a priority

2 Habits to help set up other projects to have broader impact on your business

Leverage BPM Across Enterprise	• Fund to value...not just first release • Force collaboration • Establish the owners • Market your work

4 Habits to get awareness of BPM and process improvement at the CIO and CEO levels

From our perspective—at each stage, you are developing BPM capability

At IBM, we believe BPM is all about helping customers improve the productivity of their people. We provide innovative BPM software and expertise that engage business process owners and participants in every aspect of process improvement. From the upfront discovery and documentation of business processes, to engaging business participants throughout the development of process applications, and continuing through the collection of the right business data and metrics used to measure and identify areas for process improvement—you are developing your BPM capability. The company's focus in business process improvement initiatives has been putting business engagement first—this has consistently yielded the most transformative results for our customers.

Why BPM from IBM?

Business Process Management (BPM) software and services from IBM help organizations optimize business performance by discovering, documenting, automating and continuously improving business processes to increase efficiency and reduce costs.

For more information

To learn more about IBM BPM and IBM WebSphere Lombardi Edition, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following Web sites:

IBM WebSphere Lombardi Edition:
ibm.com/software/integration/lombardi-edition/

IBM BPM: **ibm.com**/bpm

WebSphere software

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