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Virtual Interest Group – Problem Management

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Access to Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) - Time away from jobs - Had to prove value	Don't over utilize them, or use shot gun approach. Use specific requests for individuals. Limit problem to production environment, even when asked. We stressed the advantage of fixing repeating issues so we don't have to distract Level 2 from important project work and other planned work (incident response is always unplanned work!) People in problem roles are high level SME's and are considered 1 step below mgmt role. Management support / buy in. Allow teams in common tool to create Problem records. Get's buy-in to value and accountability. Tied to QA.
Getting full buy-in to process - Do it myself is faster/easier	Empower SME's to raise awareness to existing problems and drive resolution. Why it's included in training with "What's in it for me." Problem can champion solutions. Demonstrate that this processes is proven, reduces outage minutes, errors (case studies)
Separate Incident vs. Problem - Communication of "change" - Reason for separation	Proper communication to organization to get buy-in (sell it up front). Proper dialogue prior to process roll out. Marketing / presentations top down. Courses for managers to get them on board. Stress benefits of both and ability for people to participate in both.

CHALLENGES	SOLUTIONS
Conflict of interest Problem vs Incident (outage) - Resistance to gather information/data to help root cause analysis in outage (crisis)	Education about the value of following process even under stress. Get common methodology to root cause analysis (prevents ad-hoc approach) Do training on root cause analysis method selected. Drive benefit of common language (ITIL and root cause methodologies)
Funding for Process and Roles	Quantified the cost to the business for problems and showed that many of them are quite costly in hard costs and also customer satisfaction costs
Executive Sponsorship - Training budgets /time	Suggest educating by example. That way, it's understood what it means, how to apply the inc or problem process. It covers the WIIFM concept in a way.
Defining scope of process and linking it to Financial justification	Define scope so you don't have to "boil the ocean". Have a core problem team. Then demonstrate ROI e.g. reduction in outages on key services.
Defining and proving value R.O.I	Metrics. K.P.I.s tracked and reported on.
Define "what is root cause" at what level do we take that?	Draw a line, with the executives in terms of how they define root cause. Spend time on classifications and agree. Started with simple Root Causes. As process matured expanded classifications so it becomes more granular. This improvement comes from continuous improvement process (concept).
Avoid "blame game"	This is difficult. Focus on objective of process to reduce outages. Include people across groups.
Integration across the functional IT areas ie. architecture , development etc.	Pretty much a requirement in large organizations to integrate across areas. Have central group that leverages distributed groups.
Difficult to decide what data is required to be tracked in tool. What should be "required" fields for reporting / analysis. ie Root cause category	Learn along the way. Designed KPI's. Continuous improvement to look at data required for reporting. Never stop on improvement.
Reluctance of people to document findings and solutions.	Communication on success and Why, WIFM and benefits to the organization. Provide templates to make it easier and efficient. Documents expectations consistently.