



SAIMAS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 3/2020 – DECEMBER 2020

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FROM THE EDITOR

This is our 2nd Newsletter for this year since the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Another year is almost at its end! Someone joked and said “ 2020 has been the longest 5 years he ever experienced!”

Hopefully, we will not be locked down again as we were in the beginning of the year. So please keep wearing your mask in public, avoid the crowds and spend your time in the fresh air.

Since the previous Newsletter SAIMAS hosted two more webinars with great success. An overview of one workshop is published in this Newsletter. We also feature the article on Benchmarking as promised.

May you all have a wonderful festive season and be kind to those who need your help!

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The Southern Africa Institute of Management Services

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Keep Safe

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Opinions expressed in articles in this Newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of the South Africa Institute of Management Services (SAIMAS)

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT

Dear fellow SAIMAS Members,

The end of 2020 is in sight, for most of us it was a challenging year, a year that required us to make changes to our lives and working circumstances. As indicated in Newsletter, Issue 1/2020, SAIMAS's planned and arranged activities /events for 2020 had to be amended in line with Covid-19 requirements. As a result our Annual General Meeting and Annual Conference were postponed till next year.

Contact workshops were replaced by Webinars, of which three were hosted respectively in August, October and November 2020. The topics of these webinars were 'Working in virtual teams', 'Managing organizational efficiency during times of crises' and 'Bouncing back: navigating disruption and developing resilience'. Thank you to all that joined us for the webinars, much appreciated. The next Webinar will be on 'Importance of Change Management for efficient virtual operations' and will be presented on 29 January 2021 by Cobus Terblanche. The Annual General Meeting is planned for 14 May 2021, final arrangements regarding this event will be communicated in due course. The Annual Conference is planned for October 2021, more information will be shared closer to the event.

I want to thank all of you that supported SAIMAS during this year, your participation is appreciated. Thank you to all SAIMAS Council members, Gerda Morrison our Office Administrator and Johann Pienaar our Web Administrator, for your commitment, hard work and support.

On behalf of SAIMAS Council, I want to wish you and your loved ones an enjoyable Festive Season, filled with joy and happiness. Please stay safe and all the best wishes for 2021.

SAIMAS greetings
Ria Loubser

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WEBINAR: MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFICIENCY DURING TIMES OF CRISES

By Cobus Terblanche

The webinar was conducted by Mr. Cobus Terblanche, which dealt with managing organizational efficiency during times of crises. He stated that Covid-19 has created circumstances that are out of the ordinary and we have been forced to adopt new ways of living and of doing things. Many people are working from home which have advantages and disadvantages. There are many uncertainties regarding service delivery from the customer's point of view. The question arises then whether the organisation is still operating to maximum capacity. Cobus highlighted issues which can assist with maintaining and ensuring satisfactory service standards.

Cobus emphasised the role of management services/ work study to assist and advise management to safeguard operational efficiency within organisations.

He gave a brief overview of historical pandemics in previous years and centuries and the impacts they had on society. He informed attendees that they have survived many pandemics in the past and they will surely survive this one we are currently faced with. (See SAIMAS website for more info on this topic)

Cobus discussed the advantages and disadvantages of working at home while also providing practical examples. These are the advantages of working at home;

- Flexibility
- Less distractions
- Proximity to home and family
- Less stress
- More productivity
- Better health
- Better work/ life balance

The disadvantages of working at home

- Isolation
- Distractions
- Difficulty in separating home from work
- Work doesn't end

□ Willpower

Cobus presented ten steps for ensuring customer satisfaction and emphasised that Government Departments and Private Companies must always remember that they are all serving customers and they must always put customers first by ensuring effectiveness and efficiency. Processes dictates effectiveness. Organise around the process to ensure effectiveness for different circumstances. The rules must be simplified, and repeatable processes must be created. All stakeholders must be engaged and their needs identified. A service culture must be entrenched and waste eliminated through leveraging technology to improve the organisational and processes. Change issues must be addressed effectively.

Change management forms an important part of managing efficiency and effectiveness and must be included in all the steps and processes because it helps people to successfully adopt the required behaviour needed to realise the benefit (business case) of the change. He stated that putting customers first means that you understand their journeys.

He presented a diagram that shows understanding customer journey which focuses on product awareness, consideration, purchase, retention and advocacy. The customer journey consists of positive experience which includes product awareness, product research, store visit, product purchase and product receipt. It also includes negative experience with are product issue and response and social complaint.

A customer journey tells the story of the customer's experience from the initial contact, through the process of engagement and into a long-term relationship. It may focus on a particular part of the story or give an overview of the entire experience. It identifies key touch points & interactions that the customer has with the organisation and it also talks about user's feelings, motivations and questions for each of these touch points.

He further explained a customer journey mapping that is used to identify and define an organisations customer touch points. A user journey map takes many forms, but whatever its form, the goal is the same which is to teach organisations more about their customers. Customer journey mapping simplifies everything because it is a technique to map, analyse and visualise how a customer engages with the organisation, via products, services, online experiences, retail experiences, marketing efforts and/or other channels. It captures customers' needs (what are they trying to accomplish, what problem are they trying to get solved), processes (what steps did they go through to achieve their goals), and perceptions (what was the experience, how did the company perform) at each touch point. This

visualisation allows you to consider each and every touch point, identify where gaps lie, and determine how to optimise the overall customer experience.

He listed the benefits of customer journey map which are:

- Higher customer satisfaction
- Less customer complaints
- Lower customer turnover or churn
- Better advocacy from current customers
- Improved customer relation management and engagement processes.

He displayed the template for customer journey and stated that it is available on the SAIMAS website.

He explained process wastes and its components. Process wastes consists of the following aspects:

- Waiting- Wasted time waiting for the next step in a process
- Overproduction - Production from making more products than customer demand
- Defects -Errors caused by rework, scrap and incorrect information
- Transportation -Unnecessary movements of products and materials
- Inventory- Excess products and materials not being processed
- Motion -Wasted time and effort related to unnecessary movements by people
- Extra processing -More work or higher quality than is required by the customer

As coronavirus lockdowns ease around the globe, brands are having to innovate in order to manage customer wait times. He gave examples based on the psychology of waiting lines in which he explained 8 reasons why some waiting times seem longer than others.

Eight (8) reasons why some waits seem longer than others:

- Unoccupied time feels longer than occupied time
- Solo waits feel longer than group waits
- Unexplained waits are longer than explained waits
- People want to get started
- Uncertain waits are longer than known, finite waits
- Unfair waits are longer than equitable waits
- Anxiety makes waits seem longer

- The more valuable the service, the longer the customer will wait
- Communicate what the hold-up is
- Train your people to manage customer wait time

Whether it's a global issue like COVID-19 or a local emergency, businesses must have a crisis communication plan in place for their customers. This goes beyond minor adjustments to marketing messages. The plan must extend to customer service teams, your website, social channels, customer-facing staff, and more. While we often can't control the societal crisis at hand, we can control our response to it.

Here are five tips to help you formulate a plan that communicates the impact of a situation and next steps to your customers:

- Show that you care
- Be proactive in your communications
- Offer a shoulder to lean on
- Inspire your audience –demonstrate good corporate citizenship
- Audit your content queue. Review your entire messaging stream, including social media, promotional and transactional emails, push notifications, and SMS, to identify communications that need to pause or shift as a result of the situation
- Don't let panic shake your customer focus
- Find ways to make digital more human
- Forging the future together

As this 'new normal' establishes itself, the way we deliver customer service will need to move to a new operating model. He stated that organisations must be focused on managing the new normal as follows:

- Managing customer expectations
- Managing demand
- Managing the virtual contact centre
- Using third party support effectively
- Getting the home office working
- Helping your people adapt
- Multi-skilling
- Shifting channels to free up capacity
- Managing demand through existing intelligent automation and self-service

References

<https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/pages/digital-transformation/articles/delivering-customer-service-during-COVID-19.html>

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CAPE WIND FARM BOOSTS ESKOM'S ENERGY CAPACITY – AND CREATES JOBS

The TRANSPORT & CONSTRUCTION™ reported on Nov 19, 2020: That the Cape Winelands mayor, Helena von Schlicht. announced, that the Perdekraal East Wind Farm in the Witzenberg local municipality has added to electricity capacity to Eskom and 70 permanent jobs in the Cape Winelands were created.

According to the mayor, the farm was launched in October and forms part of government's renewable energy independent power producer procurement programme. Speaking during a visit to the project, by Agriculture MEC Ivan Meyer, Von Schlicht said: "The wind farm has created 70 permanent jobs in the Cape Winelands. These jobs bring dignity and well-being to at least 70 families." "Besides job creation, it has contributed to Eskom's capacity to respond to the energy needs of households." The wind farm's construction project manager, Glen Hobson, said: "The 110MW wind farm comprises 48, 115m-high wind turbines. When operating at full capacity, it generates around 368.8 GigaWatt hours per year of clean, renewable energy. It supplies electricity to power up to 111 118 South African homes.

MEC Ivan Meyer said: "The power generated by the Perdekraal Wind Farm assists us to achieve safety and security in our agricultural and rural regions. It provides a sustainable energy supply which can support our economic recovery. The project supports job creation and advances dignity and well-being within communities". Meyer was accompanied by Agri Western Cape chief executive Jannie Strydom, who added: "Renewable energy is essential. The agricultural sector is dependent on a reliable, sustainable source of energy. "We have approximately 240 000 hectares of agricultural land under irrigation in the Western Cape. The province exports 45% of all agricultural products. A reliable, sustainable source of energy is of great importance to the sector and critical to ensure rural safety in the province," said Strydom.

According to the Vice-president of Agri Western Cape, Heinie du Toit, who farms in the Witzenberg region that the windfarm expands the scope to their farming operations by providing a reliable, sustainable energy source. "Access to a reliable energy source will enable growth in the agricultural sector," said Du Toit.

Boost your Brain with these 6 Ideas

Based on an article written by Hayley Alexander

In an article written by Hayley Alexander she states that “our minds are hard-wired to be lazy”. According to her you will always look for the easiest way to do things!

Researchers at the University of British Columbia published one of their studies, in the *Neuropsychologia* journal. “The study suggests that in order to conserve energy as a survival mechanism, our brains build routines that allow us to perform daily activities with the least amount of cognitive and physical effort required. The problem is that doing so provides the brain with little stimulation, which may become a problem as we age”.

According to the World Health Organization, dementia and other brain degenerative diseases will affect one out of every five people at some point in life. There are various factors that may contribute to the onset of mental deterioration, but the best thing that we can do is to build resilience against the effects of ageing and challenging your brain by breaking from routines.

Hayley Alexander suggest we should practise these brain-building exercises as researched by numerous institutes:

1. A tip from an article written for Interesting Engineering, suggests that you wear your watch upside down – “this forces your brain to really think every time you glance at it.” They also suggest switching hands, i.e. “using your non-dominant hand to do things like brushing your teeth.”
2. A study published in the journal *Frontiers in Aging Neuroscience* showed that doing jigsaw puzzles uses numerous cognitive abilities and is a protective factor against ageing. Similarly, you can do crosswords or play Sudoku, try your hand at a game of cards, or play Scrabble. Play word crush or Solitaire on your cell phone when you have a few spare minutes!
3. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention notes “that exercise helps to improve areas of the brain that control memory, planning and organisational skills. Mind-body activities such as yoga, martial arts and dancing have multiple physical benefits and are effective ways to train your memory and coordination skills.”
4. Interesting Engineering, suggests that you should try keeping your eyes closed from time to time when you don’t need to look while doing simple tasks, like folding laundry, showering or tying your shoe laces. Working blindfolded will “force your brain to use new neural pathways,” whilst engaging in different sensory experiences.

5. Evidence from neuroimaging studies shows that having a broad- vocabulary can be associated with improved long-term and working memory. When you come across an unfamiliar word while reading, look up the definition and try using the word five times the next day.
6. Making time to meditate. Healthline.com experts say that “daily meditation can calm your body, slow your breathing, and reduce stress and anxiety,” thereby optimising your brain’s processing speed. Try to find five minutes a day where you can simply sit in a quiet spot and focus your attention inwards.

Reference: Author Hayley Alexander from HealthInSite

BENCHMARKING

Benchmarking tips extracted from SAIMAS Journal March 1998 Vol. 5 No. 1
(By Cobus Terblanche, Business Consultant,)

Benchmarking is a method of measuring the performance of activities and processes against those of known or recognised leaders. Find someone who is doing it right or best and compare the differences. Learn from other procedures and methods to either apply or adapt them for own application.

Benchmarking can therefore be regarded as the search for industry best practices that lead to superior performances. The candidate processes for comparison should be reasonably available. The objective is to find similar situations that can be observed and evaluated to identify opportunities for improvement of own processes. The comparative processes may not be exactly the same but may bear characteristics that make them similar enough for use. The candidate processes can be either internal or external to the organisation.

Benchmarking Ethics

The ethics of benchmarking are clear. Benchmarking is the process of obtaining useful information to help an organisation improve its processes. Benchmarking is not spying or copying. It is important that each member of the bench- marking team understands and adheres to the Code of Conduct as adopted by the International Benchmarking Clearinghouse. Individuals agree for themselves and on behalf of their organisation to abide by the following principles for benchmarking with other organisations.

1. Principle of Legality
 - 1.1 If there is any potential question on the legality of an activity, don’t do it.

- 1.2 Avoid discussions or actions that could lead to or imply an interest in restraint of trade, market and/or customer allocation schemes, price fixing, dealing arrangements, bid rigging, or bribery. Don't discuss costs with competitors if costs are an element of pricing.
 - 1.3 Refrain from the acquisition, disclosure or use of trade secrets by any means that could be interpreted as improper, including the breach or inducement of a breach of any duty to maintain secrecy.
 - 1.4 Do not, as a consultant or client, extend one benchmarking study's findings to another company without first obtaining the permission from the parties to the first study.
2. Principle of Exchange
 - 2.1 Be willing to provide the same type and level of information that you request from your benchmarking partner to your benchmarking partner.
 - 2.2 Communicate fully and early in the relationship to clarify expectations, avoid misunderstandings, and establish mutual interest in the benchmarking exchange.
 - 2.3 Be honest and complete.
3. Principle of Confidentiality
 - 3.1 Treat benchmarking interchange as confidential and exclusive to the individuals and companies involved.
 - 3.2 A company's participation in a study is confidential and should not be communicated externally without their prior permission.
4. Principle of Use
 - 4.1 Use information obtained through benchmarking only for purposes of formulating improvement of operations or processes within the companies participating in the study.
 - 4.2 The use or communication of a benchmarking partner's name with the data obtained or practices observed, requires prior permission.
 - 4.3 Do not use any benchmarking information as a means to market or sell.
 - 4.4 Contact lists or other contact information provided by the International Benchmarking Clearinghouse may not be used for marketing in any.
5. Principle of First Party Contact
 - 5.1 Initiate benchmarking contacts through a designated benchmarking contact.
 - 5.2 Respect the corporate culture of partner companies and work within mutually agreed procedures.
 - 5.3 Obtain mutual agreement with the designated benchmarking contact on any hands-off communication or responsibility to other parties.

6. Principle of Third-Party Contact
 - 6.1 Obtain an individual's permission before providing his or her name in response to a contact request.
 - 6.2 Avoid communicating a contact's name in an open forum without the contact's prior permission.
7. Principle of Preparation
 - 7.1 Demonstrate commitment to the efficiency and effectiveness of benchmarking by being prepared prior to making an initial benchmarking contact.
 - 7.2 Make the best of your benchmarking partner's time by being fully prepared for each exchange.
 - 7.3 Help your benchmarking partners prepare by providing them with a questionnaire and agenda prior to benchmarking visits.
8. Principle of Completion
 - 8.1 Follow through with each commitment made to your benchmarking partner in a timely manner.
 - 8.2 Complete each benchmarking study to the satisfaction of all benchmarking partners as mutually agreed.
9. Principle of Understanding and Action
 - 9.1 Understand how your benchmarking partner would like to be treated.
 - 9.2 Treat your benchmarking partner in the way that your benchmarking partner would want to be treated.
 - 9.3 Understand how your benchmarking partner would like to have the information he or she provides handled and used, and handle and use it in that manner.

Etiquette and Ethics

In actions between benchmarking partners, the emphasis is on openness and trust. The following guidelines apply to both partners in a benchmarking encounter.

- In benchmarking with competitors, establish specific ground rules up front, e.g., "We don't want to talk about those things that will give either of us a competitive advantage, rather we want to see where we can mutually improve or gain benefit."
- Do not ask competitors for sensitive data or cause the benchmarking partner to feel that sensitive data must be provided to keep the process going.
- Use an unbiased third party to assemble and blind competitive data, with inputs from legal counsel for direct competitor comparisons.
- Consult with legal counsel if any information gathering procedure is in doubt, e.g., before contacting a direct competitor.

- Any information obtained from a benchmarking partner should be treated as internal privileged information.

Benchmarking Protocol

- Know and abide by the Benchmarking Code of Conduct.
- Acquire knowledge on benchmarking and follow a benchmarking process.
- Determine what to benchmark, identify key performance variables, recognise superior performing companies, and complete a rigorous self-assessment.
- Develop a questionnaire and interview guide and share these in advance if requested.
- Have the authority to share information.
- Work through a specified host and mutually agree on scheduling and meeting arrangements.
- Follow these guidelines in face-to-face site visits:
 - Provide an agenda in advance.
 - Be professional, honest courteous and prompt.
 - Introduce all attendees and explain why they are present.
 - Adhere to the agenda: maintain the focus on benchmarking issues.
 - Use language that is universal, not one's own jargon.
 - Do not share propriety information without prior approval from the proper authority of both parties.
 - Share information about your process(es) if asked, and consider sharing study results.
 - Offer a reciprocal visit.
 - Conclude meetings and visits on schedule.
 - Thank the benchmarking partner for the time and for the sharing.

Success Indicators for Benchmarking:

If benchmarking is not undertaken professionally, the risks for failure can be high. The following can generally be regarded as the success indicators for benchmarking:

- Clearly defined objectives for the benchmark project.
- Commitment to benchmarking by management.
- Clearly documented and an understanding of the organisation's own processes.
- A willingness to change and adapt based on benchmark findings.
- A willingness to adhere to the benchmarking code of conduct.
- An openness to new ideas, creativity and innovativeness in their application to existing processes.

The source utilised to compile this paper is the USA Department of Defence's Corporate Information Management CD for functional Process Improvement.

Contact SAIMAS for the full article.