

DEVELOPMENT AN ATELIER PLATFORM FOR ACCEPTING AND MANAGING CUSTOMER ORDERS: INCREASING EFFICIENCY AND ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKFLOW OF TAILORS

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Annotation. Workflow efficiency is the general pattern, process, and performance that you and your team complete a project with. The overall goal of optimizing your workflow is to streamline this process to be as efficient as possible while creating as little waste as possible during the process.

It's easy to think about workflow efficiency in terms of a specific project or sprint, but that is not the only scenario where it's important. It's also crucial to position workflow efficiency in the context of entire teams and enterprises. This is because, especially where there is a lot of collaboration, your work might involve a lot of outside variables and communication with other team members. This is all part of the workflow and should be prioritized alongside your individual assignments.

It's crucial that different teams, departments, and employees are all working efficiently as part of a shared workflow. This increases transparency between members of the group and allows everyone to work together in a more efficient manner. There are a couple of strategies that are focused on creating efficient workflows, and after talking about some of the causes of workflow inefficiency, we will outline these strategies as potential solutions. As you will soon come to know, these employee strategies are the Agile methodology, Kanban, and Scrum.

What Causes Inefficiency in The Workflow

Before we break down how to increase workflow efficiency, we need to understand the causes of inefficiency. Here are some of the main causes of inefficiency in the workflow.

Repetitive/Unnecessary tasks that concern Workflow Efficiency

The completion of repetitive or unnecessary tasks is a major source of inefficiency within teams and is a big waste of one of the most important resources – time. It's often the case that this is simply the result of miscommunication between teams, something we'll touch on in a bit, but it can also be the result of mismanagement.

Usually when creating a workflow, one of the first steps is creating a priority list for your team that they can reference and draw from as they move forward. If this priority list is out of order, then it can result in repetitive tasks and big consequences for your deadline.

Manual Data Entry for Workflow Efficiency

Manual data entry is a relatively niche task that, while not widely applicable, is a massive time-waster for teams. These tasks waste so much time for two reasons.

Firstly, entering data is a labor and time-intensive task. It takes forever to enter things one by one and, especially if you aren't an Excel wizard, it can consume entire days.

Secondly, the alternative to manual data entry is usually a process that's extremely streamlined. Automated data entry tools are fairly easy to use and should help improve your time saved massively. When the alternative to data entry is so much faster, it feels like you're wasting even more time doing it yourself.

Human Error and the Workforce Efficiency

Human error is a common place where teams waste both time and productivity, and unlike manual data entry, it isn't something we can automatically fix. People will always make mistakes while working, and while this isn't fully unavoidable it can be improved upon. Human error can be minimized by creating a structured method of working where people are never wondering what comes next. This means you are always working towards a specific goal, which helps improve your focus and efficiency.

Miscommunication

Miscommunication is the biggest reason for inefficiency and leads to many other issues, one of which is repetitive work. Miscommunication should be able to be solved in the workplace and can be improved by the introduction of new tools and the increase of transparency in the workplace. By using online whiteboards to organize your tasks, and using communication tools like Slack to keep in touch with your team, you will inherently improve the transparency of your work product and communicate better with your team.

What Are the Goals of Improving Workflow Efficiency?

When looking at the main causes for inefficiency in the workflow, all of them relate to a couple of important variables. These variables are the overall goals of improving workflow efficiency and should be your guide for gauging your current state and seeing where you can improve.

Resource Allocation

Part of improving workflow efficiency is siphoning resources to the correct places. This means taking resources away from places that aren't as productive and reallocating them to places that will make better use of them.

Human Error

This, as we mentioned earlier, is an area that can't be removed entirely, but it can be improved upon. Getting the right people in the job and giving them a solid structure to work under means they will likely make fewer errors and improve their individual efficiency.

Overall Output

One of the main goals of improving workflow efficiency is being able to increase the overall output of your team. This means you are both churning out results at a quicker, more efficient rate, and you're also able to do this more often.

Quality of Work Product

Sometimes you aren't focused on the amount of product produced, but increasing the product's quality. This is a separate goal of improving workflow efficiency and can be prioritized similarly to the overall output. These are the goals of improving workflow efficiency, but why would you take the effort to improve it in the first place? It's simple – to improve the speed, quality, and ROI. These three factors are the key motivations behind improving workflow efficiency and are why most teams look to strategies like the ones below to build an efficient team. If you can get your team working faster and producing higher quality products, you will inherently be getting more return on your investment. From both an internal and external perspective, this does nothing but help your business and your skills as an individual. While there are some specific steps you can take to immediately improve your workflow efficiency, we want to highlight some of the umbrella methodologies that you can implement with your team to improve not only your next project but the way you work as a team. Sure, these are all distinct frameworks, but their end goal is always to complete your project in an efficient manner and improve your workflow efficiency.

Agile Methodology

The agile methodology is a theory that focuses on adaptability. This means agile teams usually break projects down into very small elements and tasks that can be easily rearranged. These are completed in small iterative periods.

The agile methodology is built around the expectation that things are going to get moved around, and more often than not, that is the case. Especially for software

development, there are certain things that might need to get prioritized over others at the last minute, and agile teams are equipped to pivot to a new priority quickly.

The nature of iterative sprints and pivoting when needed is a very good way to improve your overall workflow efficiency and ensure that your team is tackling the highest priority items. Using agile means there is very little friction with changing priorities and pivoting between tasks, which is something that can be a big barrier for some teams. For this reason, the agile methodology is a great way to improve your workflow efficiency.

Kanban Framework

The kanban method is a branch within the agile methodology but unique in its own right. While agile is an umbrella theory to apply to your mentality and tasks, kanban is a visualized workflow that you integrate your work into. The kanban board helps visualize what tasks are required to finish the current project and organizes them into columns based on their current status. This allows you to move tasks forward as they are accomplished, and at a glance, you can see what your overall workflow looks like. This methodology is specifically geared towards creating constant improvements and building them over time. Kanban wants you to continuously improve your workflow efficiency by facilitating discussions about team priorities and task management. This is a unique and very widely used board and a great way to improve workflow efficiency.

Scrum Methodology

Scrum is a more organized version of the agile methodology and is focused on strict two-week sprints. These sprints are evaluated and optimized after you're finished, and the changes are implemented into your next sprint. The key point to note about scrum is that it focuses on optimizing the time it takes to finish your project and wants to get work done faster. For many looking to improve workflow efficiency, this makes it very appealing. The team uses a scrum board, similar to the kanban board, where you organize the required tasks into the sprint backlog and work forward from there. A key feature of the scrum framework is that it prioritizes different roles in the project, one of which being the scrum master. The scrum master meets with the product owner to determine the sprint requirements and then facilitates the completion of the work for the rest of the team. The scrum master is also responsible for troubleshooting difficulties within the process and ensuring things are done on time. This focus on cyclical improvements and constantly pushing for more efficient results makes the scrum methodology very popular to teams looking to improve their workflow efficiency.

Conclusion about Workflow Efficiency

Whether it's agile, kanban, scrum, or your own personal strategy, there are a ton of different ways to improve workflow efficiency. These strategies are helpful but they all work towards the same goal: getting projects done faster and better. Hopefully, this guide helped you in your journey to optimize your team, and if you're interested in learning more about how collaboration can fuel that journey, check out.

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