

EFFECTIVE EXECUTION

FOREWORD

‘Compliance is the motivation of the weak!’ International Organization for Standardization (ISO) and Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) have far too often become compliance games. Check off all the boxes and you will get a merit badge to stick on the front door. Tick-the-box compliance leads to one of the three outcomes given below.

1. *Sustainable compliance*: Practices and processes are periodically evaluated and updated when necessary to stay relevant to changes in customers, markets, technologies and business conditions, sustaining the current level of performance and hoping it is enough.
2. *Regression to mediocrity*: Compliance is maintained but practices and processes are not updated, resulting in degraded performance as work methods decay under changing conditions.
3. *Degraded compliance*: Staff slowly undermine processes as they encounter stressful business conditions and begin taking shortcuts on a path to a poor-performing adhococracy.
However, there is a fourth outcome that is not seen as often as the first three.
4. *Pursuit of excellence*: Compliance is considered only a starting point rather than an objective and staff perpetually seek better ways of performing work to achieve even greater results.

Raghav’s book takes the current quality and process standards as a basement for performance and rapidly moves beyond them to describe methods for the pursuit of excellence. He integrates the best concepts from Lean Six Sigma, Capability Maturity Model (CMM)/CMMI, People CMM, Agile, DevOps and other improvement methods to provide an integrated roadmap for the journey to excellence. At all stops along his richly illustrated journey is measurement. Most hawkers of methods promise orders of magnitude improvements but without rigorous measurement, these are empty boasts. Among the great benefits of this book is Raghav’s introduction to his SPRUM® (Systemic Process Review Using Measurements) method for guiding

and evaluating process improvement. Successful improvement programs have all taken an approach similar to SPRUM.

Raghav's recommendations are founded in his experience at Motorola India Electronics Pvt. Ltd (MIEL). The night before they began telling their story on the internet in the early 1990s, I had a dinner with two MIEL executives in Austin. I was amazed at the story I was hearing, results which to that point had only been achieved in aerospace, the first industry to adopt CMM-based process improvement. Within days, MIEL's revelations of dramatic productivity and quality gains from process improvement went viral ('went viral' was not a concept in the early 1990s). These results validated the value of process improvement through much of the industrial world, especially in India. Raghav has taken these lessons and dramatically expanded them with advances made in the past two and a half decades.

Yet, this book is about more than just process improvement. Raghav focuses on important sections on competency and workforce development. It does little good to improve work processes if people do not have the skills to perform them, or worse, if the staff is in perpetual churn. There are two types of learning curves. First is an organization that is always starting the learning curve anew and never progressing past the initial stages because of perpetual turnover. The second, more extensive curve is the true learning organization that builds and retains advanced knowledge of its business as a stable workforce continues its journey. Raghav shows how to achieve the latter because higher levels of the learning curve confront competitors with a difficult barrier to entry.

So at its core, this is a book about organizational development and a thorough and broad-ranging one at that. Traditional change management is not enough, you must understand how organizations mature through stages of growth in their journey towards excellence. The process maturity framework in its essence is a unique model of organizational development using an organization's business and workforce processes as the means for transforming both its culture and results. I can summarize the maturity journey in four words: 'Stabilize'—'Standardize'—'Optimize'—'Innovate'. Follow Raghav through this book, he will show you the way.

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