3 Problems with Your Workflow and How to Fix Them

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If you spend too much time managing your processes only for them to break or slow down your business, your troubles may be coming from inefficiencies in your workflow.

Many organizations have embraced technology and automation as part of their daily processes to ease their workload, but this adoption doesn't always come naturally. Technologies enable companies to keep pace with their industry but only if they truly help you address the roadblocks you face.

We've put together three of the most common issues that companies may face after implementing a document management and workflow solution. We'll also look at some ways that you can resolve those issues and get the most out of your new technology.

Throwing Technology at a Problem

Many businesses think that merely automating their processes can resolve any issues they may be facing. While a document management and workflow solution can greatly organize and improve your business processes, you'll first need to take some steps to ensure success.

We're not saying that your automation technology is wrong or malfunctioning; rather, the technology cannot address any underlying issues you already have. Technology is only a tool that, in this case, automates and simplifies your work. If the process itself is broken, the technology may very well make things worse.

As an alternative, look into your performers (e.g., employees or third-party vendors) and your systems (technology related to your workflow like scanners or other uploading technology) to identify any underlying issues. For example, you need to properly train your employees and optimize your systems so they're able to use your automation and workflow solutions properly. This ensures that you're getting the most out of your investment.

Address Hidden Bottlenecks

Identifying bottlenecks may seem like an obvious answer to solving workflow issues, but sometimes, smaller bottlenecks may be overlooked because they're deemed insignificant or simply aren't visible. These smaller bottlenecks can rear their ugly heads in big ways in the future, so it's best to solve those problems once they've been identified. You may be tempted to just leave things as they are;

after all, if everything seems to be functioning well enough now, why bother? This, however, is a risky move.

One of the best ways to identify hidden or small bottlenecks is to hire a third party to take a look at your workflow and processes. Their fresh set of eyes may be able to spot inefficiencies that you've overlooked simply because you're too familiar with your own operations. There are workflow experts you can bring in who are trained to find these hidden bottlenecks and provide solutions to help you address them before they become a problem in the future.

Missing or Poor Workflow Mapping

If you've done all of that and are still unable to reap the benefits of workflow automation solutions, the issue may be caused by a lack of workflow mapping (or a poor attempt at one).

While you may not realize it, you most likely have hundreds of workflows happening all at once at any given time. Often, a new workflow is created quickly and without much planning because, as we all know, you sometimes just have to get something done. And while this may work as a short-term strategy, it's important to document all of your workflows and map them in the future.

When you have an issue with a workflow and someone objects by claiming that this is how things have always been done, you're experiencing the classic example of an unmapped workflow becoming too entrenched in your business practices. It's become such a normal part of your business operations that your employees worry that it'll be more difficult to fix the problem than to simply put up with it. But it won't be. If you can fix these inefficiencies earlier on before they worsen, you'll be able to make the most of your workflow automation system.

Mapping and outlining workflows can take time and may seem tedious, but it's crucial to the success of your workflow and automation technology. With a properly mapped workflow, you can analyze your process to identify any weak links or bottlenecks, giving you time to eliminate them early on.

Getting Started

Successful businesses recognize the importance of having efficient workflows. At the end of the day, automation software is just a tool; it can certainly make your life much easier, but only if you plan your adoption accordingly and identify any potential bottlenecks that could slow it down.

Considering automation software for your business? Check out Optix, our document management and workflow solution designed to optimize business processes. Whether you want to automate your existing workflow or solve a new workflow challenge, one of our experts is ready to help you get started. Contact us today to learn more.