

Exploring the Influence of Organizational Culture to BPM Success: The Experience of a Public Organization

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Abstract

- (a) **Situation faced:** This chapter presents a cultural analysis of the BPM initiative conducted by a public organization - Pernambuco Court of Accounts (TCE-PE). Particularly, we look at how the organizational culture influences the evolution of our BPM initiative.
- (b) **Action taken:** We conducted in-depth interviews, observations and documentation analysis to understand the organizational culture. Then, we analyzed the extent to which TCE-PE culture is aligned with BPM-supportive culture represented by the CERT values (Customer orientation, Excellence, Responsibility, Teamwork).
- (c) **Results achieved:** We identified a set of cultural values, practices and organizational characteristics at TCE-PE that may influence the BPM culture. In other words, we wanted to understand what are the aspects of the organizational culture that would act as facilitators or barriers of our BPM initiative. Then, we present a set of strategies to nurture cultural values that are supportive of BPM and hinder the aspects that are obstacles of BPM.
- (d) **Lessons learned:** During our journey to establish a BPM-supportive culture at TCE-PE we learned that key success factors include: invest heavily on communication, understand who are the stakeholders and what they want, create a long-term vision of BPM goals and articulate them with future sponsors. We believe the experience presented in this chapter can be extremely valuable for public organizations that face similar challenges to align their organizational culture with BPM principles.

1. Introduction

Business Process Management (BPM) is considered a holistic management approach that includes the dimensions of strategic alignment, governance, methods, people, culture, and information technology (Rosemann and vom Brocke, 2015). In particular, organizational culture is considered a key factor influencing the success or failure of BPM initiatives (Schmiedel et al., 2015). Organizational culture can be understood as a pattern of basic assumptions discovered or developed within a group (Schein, 2010). If these assumptions prove of value, they are perceived as valid and communicated further to new members of the group (Grau and Mörmann, 2014). Therefore, organizational culture can change as long as shared values, beliefs, and procedures that prove successful are asserted over time. According to Schein's model, organizational culture can be analyzed on three levels: observable artifacts, values and norms, and underlying assumptions and premises – depending on their degree of visibility and consciousness.

In recent years, we observed an increasing interest of BPM by public sector (Valenca et al., 2013). Three main factors motivate public organizations to embrace a process-centric perspective. The first motivation involves citizens' demands to improve the quality of public services. The second factor is the need to adopt information technologies to support e-gov solutions. Finally, public organizations face continuous pressure for accountability and transparency of their activities (Alves et al., 2014).

This chapter investigates the BPM experience of the Pernambuco Court of Accounts (TCE-PE). Particularly, we look at how the organizational culture influences both positively and negatively the evolution of the BPM initiative. TCE-PE is a public organization with around 900 employees, responsible for auditing state and municipalities accounts. The organization's mission is to monitor and guide public management for the benefit of society. TCE-PE's vision is to be recognized as an effective instrument to improve public management in defense of social interests and prevention of corruption. The espoused values present in the mission statement are ethics, transparency, commitment, effectiveness, coherence, and impartiality. The aim of the BPM initiative is to standardize and automatize key business processes to gain productivity and quality. The BPM initiative is supported by well-established project and strategic planning principles. Top management trusts that BPM can be an important instrument to implement the strategic plan. TCE-PE has a culture similar to other Brazilian public organizations with hierarchical structure, low flexibility and strongly affected by political factors. Therefore, we consider this specific context presents a rich case to investigate the role of culture in BPM projects. In particular, the present case can provide inspiration and insights for public organizations around the globe that are undertaking BPM initiatives.

In this chapter, we present the journey of TCE-PE to deeply understand and transform the organizational culture to nurture values that are supportive of BPM. During our journey, we had to learn how to hinder the cultural values that acted as obstacles of the BPM initiative. By identifying facilitators and barriers affecting

BPM we were able to define effective strategies to foster a BPM-supportive culture at the organization. The following section describes in detail the situation faced by TCE-PE by means of the six core elements framework (Rosemann and vom Brocke, 2015). In Section 3 we explain the actions taken to understand the alignment between TCE-PE corporate culture and BPM culture. We adopted the BPM-Culture-Model from Schmiedel et al., (2015) to analyze the cultural fit. Then, in Section 4 we present the results obtained so far to foster BPM-supportive cultural values at TCE-PE. Finally, Section 5 describes lessons learned during our BPM culture transformation journey that can be useful to other organizations with similar contextual factors and cultural values.

2. Situation faced

Given the disciplinary role to ensure public organizations act in a transparent and ethical manner, TCE-PE operates in accordance with legality, morality, impartiality and honesty principles. An early driver for the BPM initiative at TCE-PE was our solid strategic planning and project-driven culture. The strategy monitoring includes follow-up bimonthly meetings with departments and annual summits with the board of directors and managers.

In 2001, the organization started preliminary attempts to build a strategic map. The departments created specific plans, but most of them were not related to strategic goals. Moreover, there was neither indicators nor operational processes to monitor these plans systematically. In the end of 2003, the first strategic plan was built for the period of 2004-2008, since then it became an institutionalized management practice. Its current strategic plan is based on SWOT analysis and Balanced Scorecard (BSC) and comprises the period of 2013-2018. The goals of the strategic plan include the following: increase the effectiveness of external control, improve public management, strengthen institutional image for society, obtain agility in judgment processes without compromising quality, encourage innovation and knowledge management, consolidate public sector governance, among others.

TCE-PE introduced BPM practices in 2012 and, one year later, a BPMO (Business Process Management Office) was officially instituted. At that time, the leaders of the initiative realized they didn't have sufficient expertise in process improvement. Then, the director board opted for establishing an R&D partnership with researchers from a local university (UFPE). Nowadays, the BPMO team is composed of nine professionals: two internal staff, four researchers with practical and academic experience in BPM and three undergraduate students. Researchers and students work part-time (15 hours and 20 hours, respectively). The team is very cohesive and two authors jointly manage the BPMO (one is servant of TCE-PE and the other is the coordinator from the university). Both managers take all decisions together and report results of process improvement initiatives to TCE-PE top management. The other two authors play the role of process analysts. It is

worth noting that researchers and students are considered active workforce of the BPMO, they are employed to conduct activities, such as, process modeling, analysis and implementation. Therefore, this case is presented from the viewpoint of TCE-PE's BPMO team.

To understand the context of the BPM initiative at TCE-PE, we present in Table 1 an overview on how the organization handles the BPM six core elements (Rosemann and vom Brocke, 2015). One of the initial projects we performed back in 2013 was an organizational diagnosis using system dynamics (Senge, 2006) to analyze the key barriers and facilitators influencing the BPM initiative in course at TCE-PE. We conducted interviews and observations to build systemic archetypes, the detailed results are available in (Alves et al., 2014). The diagnosis allowed us to analyze facilitators and barriers as factors that can interact with each other to create patterns of functional/dysfunctional systemic behaviors, which may foster/slowdown the success of the BPM initiative. We observed that the strong sponsorship given by the president and influential directors was the most relevant facilitator to promote the BPM initiative. They were committed and always supportive to implement new process-centric ideas.

Factor	Context
Strategic Alignment	The BPMO is a formal unit of the Governance and Management Department. This position ensures direct alignment with strategic goals. According to the strategic planning (2013- 2018), the BPM initiative is a strategic action. All process improvement projects are aligned and monitored by the organizational strategy. The president and directors actively sponsor the BPM initiative.
Governance	Corporate governance is a main concern for the organization due to the role as public accounting auditor. We developed a BPM governance model to guide the initiative and ensure its alignment with the strategy. We also modeled the value chain to represent key business processes. The scheme associates each process to specific values and clients. In total, 22 processes are part of the TCE-PE value chain.
Methods	A specific BPM methodology was created to suit the purposes of the organization and the characteristics of our business processes. The methodology has well defined phases, templates and procedures. Currently, it has been used in four process improvement projects. The core process of compliance audit has been fully implemented.
IT	Bizagi is the adopted tool for process modeling. TCE-PE also acquired a customized electronic process tool to implement business processes. The

	process automation is a means to standardize and control core activities and ensure the quality of services.
People	Public servants have permanent job stability. Staff is resistant to change and prefer to keep old practices of working. An intensive training program is in course to ensure that BPM knowledge is satisfactorily disseminated through the organization.
Culture	TCE-PE has a strong hierarchical structure. The organization has a mature strategic planning and project-oriented culture. The main publicly expressed values are ethics, transparency, formality and legality. A key subconscious value includes a paternalistic vision in the benevolent way the organization deals with staff and public organizations audited.

Table 1 – BPM Six Core Elements identified at TCE-PE.

During the systemic analysis, we identified that a major barrier was employees' resistance to change. Staff reported they saw similar management projects in the past failing and perceived such efforts were fruitless and something that would bring extra work for them. This was a typical fear to change situation that is very common in the local public sector culture. An important contextual factor (vom Brocke et al., 2016) of Brazilian public sector is that staff has permanent job stability. Frequently, public servants prefer to keep old practices instead of experimenting innovative ideas. Another barrier identified was the staff's poor understanding of what is BPM. They did not understand the concepts nor recognize the relevance of BPM. Therefore, it was clear for us that the strong sponsorship was our key asset but in order to ensure a sustainable organization-wide BPM initiative, we had to concentrate on the people and culture factors.

The diagnosis was a fundamental tool for us to understand the current situation, identify the main goals aimed with the adoption of BPM, and plan its evolution. An important outcome was the conclusion that in order to disseminate BPM successfully, we (as members of the BPMO team) needed to further investigate the organizational culture and promote a better alignment between internal cultural values and practices with BPM principles.

3. Action taken

Considering the TCE-PE organizational context, we decided to tackle the culture and people factors as key aspects to ensure the consolidation of the BPM initiative. We adopted the BPM-Culture-Model proposed by Schmiedel et al., (2015). The model presents the notion of BPM culture and how the organization

can perform the alignment of the organizational culture and its respective values to achieve BPM objectives. Figure 1 presents an overview of the model.

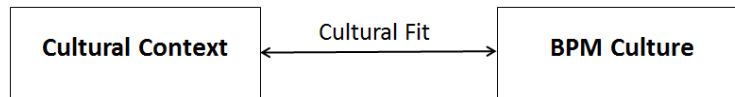


Figure 1 – BPM-Culture-Model (adapted from vom Brocke and Sinnl, 2011).

The model explains the interdependency between BPM and organizational culture by providing guidance to identify what cultural changes the organization needs to accomplish to promote a successful BPM initiative. In Schmiedel et al., (2012), a Delphi study was conducted to identify cultural values, named CERT Values that are supportive of a BPM Culture. The CERT Values are:

- **Customer Orientation (C)** – Focuses on customer needs and expectations regarding the outputs of the process.
- **Excellence (E)** – Refers to direction towards continuous improvement and innovation as a means to improve the performance of business processes.
- **Responsibility (R)** – Involves attitudes and committed actions to achieve process objectives as well as accountability and transparency regarding process decisions.
- **Teamwork (T)** – Refers to an open mindset towards cross-functional collaboration.

We also used the framework proposed by Grau and Mörmann (2014). The framework presents the interrelation between BPM and organizational culture by evaluating their influence on the performance of the organization. The authors claim that in order to successfully implement BPM, it is crucial to positively influence or change the culture of an organization. To achieve that goal, it is necessary to understand the visible artifacts, values and basic assumptions of the organization.

To gain an understanding of TCE-PE culture, we conducted nine in-depth interviews with staff from different areas and hierarchical positions. The interviewees included sponsors, process analysts, internal clients of the BPMO, and stakeholders from key process areas. In addition, several documents were analyzed, such as: organizational strategic plan (2013-2018), communication and training plan of the BPMO, organizational climate survey. We also performed non-structured observations during one year. One of the authors conducted the observations as part of her work routine at the BPMO. All relevant episodes, opinions, behaviors and interactions observed during meetings and daily activities were documented. The observation notes were discussed among the authors to share our perceptions regarding the visible actions and values. We also analyzed the underlying assumptions embedded on the organization invisible culture. Here it is important to highlight the support from a BPMO manager and co-author of this chapter. She works at TCE-PE for 20 years, and has large experience at

different organizational areas. Her personal experience was extremely valuable to clarify ambiguous observations and confirm specific impressions from the interviewees discourse. The result of this study was a set of cultural values, practices and organizational characteristics that may directly or indirectly influence the BPM culture. In other words, we wanted to understand what are the aspects of the organizational culture that would act as barriers or facilitators of our BPM initiative. Then, armed with this knowledge, we could create strategies to promote necessary cultural change.

Figure 2 presents the main cultural values and organizational characteristics of TCE-PE captured in our study. The figure also represents the CERT values, which were important elements of our analysis. Each cultural value observed at TCE-PE contributes positively or negatively to the CERT values. Following we describe the organizational context and present excerpts from interviewees discourse to better portray the organizational culture.

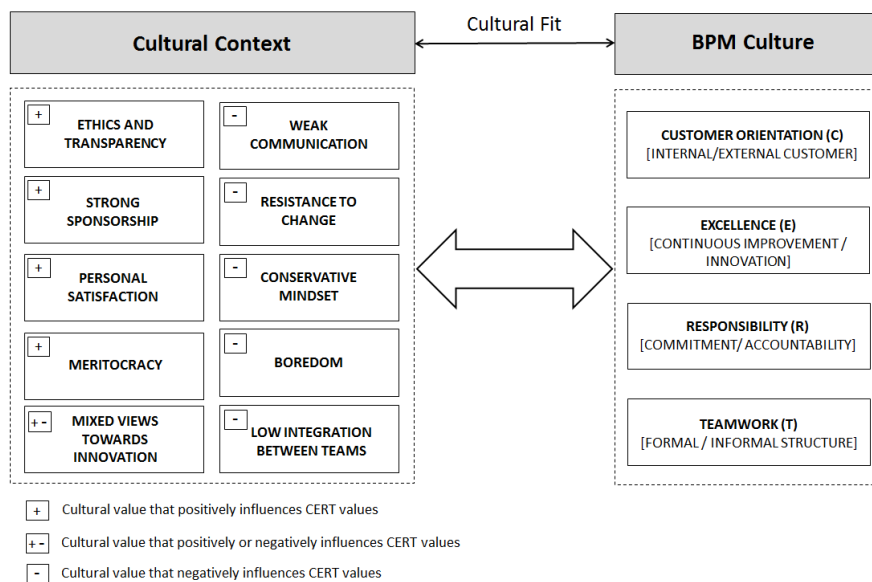


Figure 2 – Interrelation between TCE-PE Cultural Context and BPM Culture represented by CERT Values.

Weak Communication

We perceived that both internal (between departments) and external (between TCE-PE and other public organizations or society) communication is weak. The general public does not have a clear understanding of the role and the activities undertaken by a Court of Accounts. In addition, quite often staff does not comprehend who are the internal clients and consequently with whom they must interact. Interviewees reported the organization has inefficient communication

channels and need to improve communication by creating new or improving existing channels. The increasing demand for public administration to act with efficiency and transparency reinforces the criticality of the weak communication channels, as argued by a Business Analyst: *“the communication with the external public has improved a lot, but I think we have to change radically; people want faster answers, full transparency. I think the communication is still very slow (at the organization)”*. Currently, the organization is trying to improve external communication by advertising its activities on local newspapers and improving the Web Portal.

The weak internal communication raises the need of mechanisms to improve the understanding of BPM practices. Effective communication strategies (e.g. internal publicity of process improvement results) can bring awareness of BPM as an approach to transform the organization. Therefore, staff can understand precisely what BPM means and how process-oriented practices may help them in their daily activities. Moreover, staff must be informed about how BPM can promote agility and efficiency for the organization, which will positively affect TCE-PE's image for society. The following interview excerpt shows the BPM initiative shall improve communication: *“if people believe in it (BPM), they will help; they need to believe that it will bring results and make the organization more agile; if they see that we are providing information for society... the dream of the public servant is that people believe what we do is important”*, says a System Analyst.

The weak communication is a cultural characteristic of the organization that hampers its orientation towards the satisfaction of clients. Such communication flaw limits the understanding and responsive treatment of clients' expectations. This situation has a negative influence on the CERT value *Customer Orientation* (C). In addition, the inadequate internal communication is a barrier for sharing information between departments and limits cross-functional collaboration, which in turn affects the development of *Teamwork* (T). Finally, weak communication channels negatively impact the *Responsibility* (R) of staff, who may not perceive the importance of their commitment to process outputs and accountability of their daily activities to the achievement of process indicators.

Resistance to Change

Since the beginning of our BPM initiative we observed certain resistance to change, especially from older staff, who expressed a feeling of distrust regarding any new managerial approach. They frequently mentioned they've seen many innovative approaches failing in the past. This mainly stems from the fact that changes may take them from their comfort zone: *“for everything that we are implementing here there is a resistance: (people think) why change? This will bring more work for me”*, says a System Analyst. On the other hand, we observed a conflicting sub-culture composed by younger employees, who are eager for changes and extremely receptive to co-create a modern public administration. Evidently, the young generation became allies of the BPMO to promote a process-

centric view. In particular, there was some resistance to embrace BPM principles since it is a discipline that fundamentally promotes organizational change (Baumol, 2014). The director of corporate governance states that: *“the excess of formalism and the resistance to change may affect the BPM initiative”*. The director gave us precious advice to simplify our discourse whenever possible so that the BPMO could “speak the same language” of staff from different departments.

The fear to change and mistrust from some employees may hinder the development of cultural values related to innovation and continuous improvement, which are sub-dimensions of the value *Excellence (E)*. The generation conflict identified at the organization may negatively impact the creation of *Teamwork (T)*. We also perceived that if the initiative confronts very ingrained cultural values, it may not be easily assimilated or may even suffer boycott, which in turn may suffer the risk of failing. This resistance may occur even if the proposed actions represent a possible improvement of organizational results. In our case, to implement changes we had to convince key people who possessed legitimate or referent power at the organization. Then, they could act as facilitators of process-centric principles.

Strong Sponsorship

Despite being an embedded value of organizational culture, resistance to change can be minimized by political power. Top management sponsors can support strategic changes, as states the IT Director: *“if there is no sponsorship from the president or key directors for a substantial change, it does not occur”*. We identified an interrelation between sponsorship and the development of *Excellence (E)* and *Responsibility (R)* values of BPM culture. This situation was observed when we were implementing significant changes related to quality indicators and more radical innovation on the compliance audit process. The active sponsorship was paramount to ensure the implementation of critical changes. The commitment and responsibility of key employees also contributed to achieve desired results. In several occasions we relied on the close collaboration of process owners to endorse BPMO proposals during strategic meetings. We recognize that the strong sponsorship has been a key factor for the success of our BPM initiative at TCE-PE.

Low Integration between Teams

In general, employees do not have a holistic perception of the services offered by the organization. Besides, they do not understand exactly what are their contributions for the improvement of business processes. Departments work as isolated islands, they carry out disconnected activities and teams from different departments do not work as a cohesive team. The poor internal communication also contributes to intensify this problem. The situation may hinder the effective execution of business processes due to poor handoffs among areas. To achieve

effective collaboration among teams, it is often needed to explicitly request such cooperation by talking directly to the managers of the teams.

The low integration between teams is part of the organizational culture and represents a critical issue, as stated by a Project Manager: *“I think that teams from business areas may not truly understand the strategic goals. Sometimes, it is not clear for people what are the changes decided at the strategic level. They have certain distance from the organizational goals. Although there is investment on courses, campaigns about organizational indicators and achievement of goals, people do not feel effective part (of organizational goals) and this can negatively impact the change that is arriving”*. The fact that employees do not feel as part of a single integrated team and do not understand the relevance of their work to achieve strategic goals influences negatively the CERT values of *Teamwork (T)* and *Responsibility (R)*.

Mixed Views Towards Innovation

Formality and conservatism are strong cultural values at TCE-PE, which can be explained by the organization’s central role as auditor of public accounts. These values may represent barriers to innovation and change. However, there is an increasing awareness to promote innovation at the institutional level: *“no doubt the innovation award is an incentive policy; however, at the same time, the institution is very conservative in face of innovation. (...) People talk a lot about previous projects that failed and they fear to be stigmatized”*, says a Process Analyst. Incentives such as the innovation award are important instruments to promote innovative thinking. However, we observed that innovative actions are more punctual and some people still perceive innovation as a risky activity. The same Process analyst continues stating that: *“We don’t have practices to understand why errors occurred and how to prevent them. We can learn a lot from our mistakes”*. In sum, we perceived that staff has mixed views towards innovation. A very positive aspect is that at strategic level, staff is more open to innovation. During our strategic meetings with sponsors of the initiative, we concluded that the BPMO plays an important role to disseminate an innovation culture through the whole organization. Such actions will foster the value of *Excellence (E)*.

Conservative Mindset

Aspects of the existing organizational culture, such as, bureaucracy, legalism and resistance to change are barriers to implement a modern management model. In several occasions, especially during process analysis meetings, we identified a conservative mindset that hinders the organizational ambitions to establish a new management model focused on goals and supported by Balanced Score Card. We illustrate this fact with the following view from the BPMO manager: *“many of the modern attitudes to build a better organization, a partner of society clashes with the conservative culture that exists here”*. The President Assistant remarks *“the organizational culture expects to see concrete results to believe in new things”*.

Therefore, just when novel ideas prove to be successful, staff starts to accept and support change. Although TCE-PE works hard to consolidate a goal-oriented management model, we still identify unconscious cultural values of an obsolete mindset that is embedded with bureaucracy, political influence and inefficiency. This situation may hinder the development *Customer Orientation (C)*, *Responsibility (R)* and *Excellence (E)*.

Personal Satisfaction

Concerning the motivation of staff, we perceived their personal satisfaction for working at TCE-PE. This satisfaction is due to the organization's mission to inspect the correct use of public funds, which is considered a noble job. Staff is pleased to directly contribute towards the combat of corruption and promote the efficiency of public administration. They are proud of the organizational technical excellence, autonomy to execute their work and high salaries (which is above the average of Brazilian public sector). The cultural value of personal satisfaction positively influences the *Excellence (E)*, *Responsibility (R)* and *Teamwork (T)*.

Boredom

Despite being proud of working at the organization, some employees show certain level of boredom. They are tired of the bureaucratic work and do not perceive an effective result of their efforts. In fact, we observe that similar attitudes frequently occur in other public organizations in Brazil. It seems that the nature of bureaucratic work and traditional public sector management style are key reasons for such attitude. In our case, we detected that the low rotation of employees across departments and repetitive tasks are a source of their apathy. "*The institution does not promote job rotation; it leaves people too long at one place, doing the same task. For people who want to be relaxed at work, it is very convenient*", says the President Assessor. The job stability is also seen as a key factor that may negatively impact staff's commitment to achieve organizational goals. The cultural aspect related to boredom can be a barrier to achieve a BPM supportive culture. It negatively impacts all CERT values of *Customer Orientation (C)*, *Excellence (E)*, *Responsibility (R)*, *Teamwork (T)*. This is due to the fact that employees may not be motivated to leave their comfort zone because their salaries are guaranteed for the rest of their lives. Therefore, we perceived the need for results-driven management model that reinforces reward and promotion policies based on employees' performance.

Meritocracy

Aware of this intrinsic scenario of employees' boredom, the organization established a financial reward system, which evaluates employees' individual performance according to the achievement of goals defined by managers. Lately, the organization is trying to reduce the political indication to key positions. The results-driven model raises the need to appoint employees with proven

competence and commitment to strategic roles. This means that the organization is stimulating meritocracy as an important cultural value. We observed this fact in the following statement from a Process Analyst: *“as the organization reinforces the importance of a results-driven model, managers are seeking to assign competent people; Since people in leadership positions play a great influence on the achievement of these goals, there is even more attention to meritocracy”*. Meritocracy is a cultural value that has been strengthened at TCE-PE in recent years; it can foster all four CERT values.

Ethics and Transparency

Ethics and transparency are publicly values described at TCE-PE strategic plan. Such values are respected and play an important role on the employees' own identity, as explained by a System Analyst: *“honesty is a very strong value, people have this concern – if someone is honest, if it is correct to do something from the point of view of the external public”*. The values of ethics, transparency and honesty positively influence *Responsibility (R)* and *Excellence (E)*, since they stimulate commitment, continuous improvement and, especially, accountability.

Based on the cultural analysis presented above, we were able to identify and nurture cultural values that are supportive of BPM and create strategies to hinder the aspects that are obstacles of BPM. The key actions taken by the BPMO are centered on two pillars:

- Ongoing and appropriate communication is of high importance to ensure the dissemination of BPM supportive cultural values. Communication also plays a central role to minimize cultural values that hamper a BPM culture, as identified in Figure 2.
- Staff motivation and engagement strategies are drivers to promote transformation of negative cultural values identified at TCE-PE, such as: *resistance to change, low integration between teams, conservative mindset, boredom*.

4. Results achieved

This section reports the results obtained by the BPMO of TCE-PE to align the current organizational culture with values that foster a BPM-supportive culture. To achieve that, we analyzed to what extent the cultural values identified at the organization can act as facilitators or barriers of the BPM initiative. We defined a set of strategies to nurture desirable cultural values and perform change of values that hampers a BPM culture. Here, we discuss the results obtained so far in light of the ***BPM Six Core Elements***, as presented in Table 1.

In the early years of the BPMO, we focused on establishing internal ***BPM methods*** and organizing the IT infrastructure. Substantial effort was put on the creation of a methodology covering the whole BPM cycle. The BPM methodology

is based on good management practices (vom Brocke et al., 2014) but also takes into account the specific characteristics of the organization, internal staff and nature of business processes. This action is aligned with advice that BPM projects adopting a one-fits-all approach are likely to fail (vom Brocke et al., 2016). We created the methodology iteratively, while using and evaluating it on pilot BPM projects. The methodology has well defined steps, procedures and documentation templates. Currently, the methodology has been used on four process improvement projects. In addition, we have presented the methodology in several local events to disseminate BPM practices. Another important action related to methods was the definition of the BPMO structure, which included the description of roles, activities and services provided by the office (Jesus et al., 2015).

Regarding the *IT infrastructure*, the organization acquired a bespoke solution of electronic process that has been used to implement the business processes. We acknowledge that such solution is not exactly a BPMS but the tool acquisition was an executive decision motivated by the fact that other public organizations have adopted similar solutions from the same supplier. This was a clear situation to notice the *conservative mindset* and *mixed views towards innovation* cultural values in place.

Since the beginning of the initiative, we put strong emphasis on *strategic alignment*. We have regular meetings with sponsors of the BPMO and we try to direct our efforts as a way to materialize top management strategic vision and goals. Given the fact that staff holding managerial positions are eager to implement innovative ideas at TCE-PE, we recognized they are our key partners to achieve our goals to implement a BPM culture organization-wide. Initially, we perceived that employees did not understand the BPM jargon. To handle the communication mismatch, we conducted several training courses for employees to explain the basic concepts of BPM. We also promoted workshops and open events to publicize our BPM results.

In parallel, we developed a *BPM governance model* that was proposed as part of a PhD thesis from one of the collaborators of the BPMO. The model served as a guidance to develop our maturity model, which is currently being produced. In sum, our initial efforts targeted the core elements of methods, IT, strategic alignment and governance. Our rationale to choose that direction was simply because we considered the safest path to follow. Since the beginning of our initiative we were aware that culture and people factors were complex to treat, then our strategy was to guarantee some “quick wins” before dealing with them. The trainings and events were a way to inspire and engage employees who were already more open to changes. However, we knew that these actions were reaching only the tip of the culture iceberg. Another relevant result achieved refers to the Corporate Governance Model implemented by TCE-PE. The model has been an inductor of organizational development and modernization in recent years. The consolidation of the strategic plan with well-defined goals to guide improvement actions, and the strong project-driven practices are drivers to advance the BPM cultural transformation at TCE-PE. We are conscious that if the organization were not undergoing such remarkable management improvement, our

efforts to disseminate BPM would be much harder given the cultural context of Brazilian public sector.

By the end of 2015, the core business process of compliance audit was fully implemented. This achievement was publicized in external and internal media, as it was a key goal of TCE-PE's president. The publicity was extremely beneficial to disseminate the relevance of BPM and we perceived it was the right time to initiate more aggressive actions to handle the people and culture factors. At that time, the BPMO had already obtained recognition within the organization to be a hard working and committed team. Therefore, those employees who fear failures and are more *resistant to change* started to understand and trust BPM. The **cultural** analysis presented in this case is a key outcome for the BPMO to improve the cultural fit. We believe that by understanding this cultural panorama we were able to obtain a holistic vision on how to evolve our BPM initiative in a sustainable manner. To better direct our next steps, we decided to build a BPM maturity model. The proposal from Rosemann and de Bruin (2006) was used as reference model. We followed the five maturity levels and defined concrete goals that must be achieved in order to reach higher maturity levels. A change management plan guides all actions the organization and, in particular, the BPMO need to accomplish. The BPM maturity model is linked to the organizational strategic map.

To address the **people** factor more objectively, we created a stakeholders matrix to classify internal and external customers. This instrument is used to support the identification of key stakeholders who may influence the business processes under improvement. For instance, we classify stakeholders' legitimate (related to their formal position), expert (related to their knowledge regarding BPM and/or TCE-PE core activities) and referent (related to their respect among their peers) power. During process improvement projects, we also try to build closer relationships with stakeholders to understand what are their implicit motivations and needs. The classification enables the BPMO to define specific strategies to promote the correct engagement of stakeholders who can influence the success of our actions. By better understanding what are the stakeholders' expectations and level of power, we can mitigate the negative outcomes derived by the cultural values of *weak communication, boredom, conservative mindset* and *resistance to change*.

In regard to communication, TCE-PE has already included the goal "Improve internal and external communication" on the strategic map. The strategic action involved the creation of an institutional communication plan. In addition, the communication department has been restructured. The organization conducted the following actions: creation of TCE-TV (an internal channel with videos showing the activities of departments and relevant news), weekly column at local newspapers informing the main activities in course, redesign of the corporate website, and creation of institutional profiles on Facebook and Twitter to boost communication with citizens. In addition, internal communication was leveraged with the introduction of short videos called "Minute with the President" on the Intranet. The videos share information regarding top management decisions. The organization also invested on internal marketing campaigns called "Digital

Windows” to promote strategic projects and present relevant facts on digital screens spread at the buildings corridors and lifts.

The BPMO also created its own strategic communication plan. It presents communication goals to disseminate BPM knowledge, describes potential risks and problems faced by the initiative, and proposes actions to address them. The plan covers the organizational strategic cycle (2013-2018) and is updated biennially. The plan is linked with the BPM Maturity Model. This means that when defining change management activities, the BPMO also analyzes what are the required communication actions.

By improving both internal and external communication with the actions described above, the organization can foster the consolidation of positive cultural values aligned with CERT values. Effective communication strategies can reduce *resistance to change*, improve *integration between teams* and demystify *innovation views*. In addition, internal and external communication efforts have direct effect on *personal satisfaction* as well as *ethics and transparency*, respectively.

When the current organizational strategic plan was created, managers and their subordinates had difficulty to understand how their routine activities could contribute to strategic goals. To handle this problem, recently the organization defined employees’ individual performance indicators associated to strategic goals. These goals are measured by means of deliverables specified in performance agreements for each department and employee. The definition of clear individual, departmental and organizational goals as well as the transparency of results may encourage staff engagement and motivation. This action can leverage *meritocracy* and minimizes staff *boredom*. However, since this initiative only started few months ago, we are not able to measure its impact.

5. Lessons learned

During our experience to develop cultural values that foster a BPM philosophy at TCE-PE, we faced several challenges and opportunities that we report here as lessons learned. We believe the following findings can be helpful for other organizations that have similar cultural values and context. The main lessons we learned during our journey as members of the BPMO at TCE-PE are:

- **Associate the BPM maturity model with organizational strategic map:** Considering the organizational strategic map, we built a sectorial strategic map for the BPMO. We identified the actions related to specific strategic goals that should be under the responsibility of the BPMO. These actions became the mission of our sectorial strategic map. Then, we linked requirements of the BPM maturity model that would support the achievement of the mission. We organized correspondent projects and action plans, which were monitored by specific indicators.

- **Invest on communication strategies:** We believe that appropriate and timely communication is a key success factor for any novel management approach. Since TCE-PE has been experiencing strong managerial transformation, with initiatives from different areas, including the BPMO, it was necessary to invest heavily on communication. With our communication actions we were able to disseminate basic concepts, elucidate unfounded fears and resistance, advertise relevant results both internally and externally. Promoting a positive BPM marketing is a main strategy to foster an organization-wide evolution of our initiative.
- **Understand who are the stakeholders and what they want:** In the beginning of our BPM initiative we convinced strategic staff to attend our training courses and participate on important process analysis meetings. They can be considered the first “ambassadors” of BPM. We must admit that such articulation was done quite intuitively; we simply invited the most receptive, curious and communicative staff. Then, we perceived how their sponsorship was fundamental to articulate our goals and actions with more resistant employees. To capture the influence and power played by stakeholders (from different departments and hierarchical positions), we created the stakeholders matrix. With this instrument, we can identify the key staff that should be actively participating in process improvement initiatives due to their positive influence and expertise. In contrast, we can also identify those individuals who can obstruct (both consciously or unconsciously) the diffusion of a BPM culture.
- **Create a long-term vision of BPM goals and articulate them with future sponsors:** Public sector is affected by regular elections and frequent change of managerial positions. This situation can affect current initiatives that frequently are discontinued by new leaders who may have different political agendas. Aware of this intrinsic condition faced by public organizations, we decided to articulate the evolution of the BPMO with the whole board of directors and counselor cabinet. Ensuring the strategic alignment with current and future leaders has been an important strategy to guarantee the sustainable evolution of BPM at TCE-PE.

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