



IT Maturity Method Leadership Improvement

The IT Maturity Method (ITMM) uses IT to methodically enhance, advance, integrate, and mature businesses.

The ITMM quickly evolves IT and the broader enterprise into focusing on how technology can be used to impact and improve business function and further on how IT can be used for the transformation/maturation of organizations.

IT Enterprise Architecture is the art and science of creating a holistic model of technology (applications, data, infrastructure) and its associated business processes for an enterprise. IT Maturity advances this art and science several steps further as follows:

1. The art and science of creating holistic models is extended to Vendor Integration, as well as Leadership Improvement.
2. Mechanisms for tracking and measuring of technology, business processes, vendor integration, and leadership are provided.
3. Tuning and advancing tools are built based on the results of tracking and measuring.
4. Methodologies are provided to evolve product and services based on emerging technology.

In this article we introduce ITMM Leadership Improvement.

Everything You've Learned About Leadership is Wrong!

Reason One: Much traditional leadership training focuses on “winning friends and influencing others” types of techniques. While these traditional leadership techniques can be of great value in helping individuals get ahead as individuals, they are not focused on getting organizations operating optimally. The true goal of exceptional leadership is to get the teams being lead to operate exceptionally, not on maintaining the leader in a winning and influential position. Admittedly, having an exceptional team likely insures maintaining a winning and influential position. Unfortunately the converse is not true, having a winning and influential position does not imply having an exceptional team. Further without an exceptional team no matter how many friends you win and influence, the raw numbers of an unexceptional team will eventually eliminate the winning and influential position.

Reason Two: Many leaders do not have exceptional personal skills and many with exceptional personal skills are not leaders. There is not a one-to-one correlation between “winning friends and influencing skills” with leadership.

Reason Three: There are dozens, if not hundreds, of leadership models. In 1991, one survey counted 65 different Leadership classification systems. They cannot all be right. Undoubtedly they all have significant flaws or else there would a greater sense of agreement in the field of leadership.

Reason Four: One person’s view of a great leader is another’s view of a doofus put into a position of power via cronyism or nepotism. Look to politics for examples.

Reason Five: Most organizations have a constant flux of leaders running through their organizations. If leadership were a well understood skill there would be no need for significant and constant change.

Personal skills that enable winning friends and influencing others are valuable. That is why there is a partial correlation with leadership. This partial correlation has caused a confounding of “winning friends and influencing people” with the true meaning of exceptional leadership, which is the ability to create exceptional teams.

Detailed Examples

Reason Six: As an example, motivation is typically misinterpreted as a leadership skill. However, no matter how good a motivational orator a specific leader is, it is highly unlikely that anyone would show up the next day of work, if it were not for the true motivation that HR provides through salary and other benefits.

Reason Seven: Further, motivational speeches are often looked at by those on the receiving end as wastes of time and manipulative. Many employees are sophisticated and are well aware of motivational techniques. However, their motivation is to get their jobs done as efficiently as possible, pick up their true motivation from HR (paycheck and benefits), and then go off to do their own personal activities. They are more interested in, and would benefit more from, receiving an effective set of tools to get their jobs done more efficiently

Reason Eight: Counter arguments, like those given for motivation immediately above, can be found for many other personal skills that are often mistaken for leadership skills. This is because everyone interacts differently, and further, everyone has different opinions of what proper interaction.

The only leadership skills that correlate to the creation of exceptional teams are those that are oriented around organization and how organizations function.

Why This Mis-interpretation of Leadership Evolved?

Traditional leadership analysis has focused on individual leaders and correlations between many different individual leaders. However, leadership is not about the individual leaders, leadership is about the leader in the context of the organization.

Because of the complexity of analysis, simplifications are always made. Unfortunately in the case of leadership, the context of the analysis of leadership, the organization, has been typically thrown out. Without that context the only correlations that could be made were on individual or personal skills, which missed the mark.

Understanding Leadership in the Context of the Organization

As any organization is made up of many entities, in order to optimize the organization the primary key is optimizing how information and problem solving flows throughout the organization. The ability to do this optimization is true leadership.

Management, organization, extent, culture, and vision are the basic categories of information and problem solving flow within organizations, and as such, are the real principles of leadership.

As an example, imagine an intelligent entity in a computation system that needs to get a job done (this is what an employee or team member is minus all of the interpersonal/psychological/baby-sitting stuff). What does that entity need to get things done. As mentioned earlier motivation (food-energy-sustenance) is handled separately by HR. In order to get its job done, the entity needs to know how to communicate with other entities, what part of the problem it is solving, what parts of the problem other entities are working on, what the larger vision is, how deep to go into the part of the problem it is working on, and general methodologies to use in solving problems. Upon deeper investigation, all of this can, in one way or another, be described as management, organization, extent, culture and vision.

ITMM Leadership Improvement encompasses the context of the organizations, which includes training in how to optimize management, organization, extent, culture, and vision within your organization. Training also includes organizational structure types and properties, as well as how to track and measure, and tune and advance leadership and organizational structures within your organization.



Key Takeaways!

Understand that leadership is separate from “winning friends and influencing” techniques.

Understand how history has confounded “winning friends and influencing people” with leadership.

Understand that optimizing the information and problem solving flow in organizations is leadership.

Learn how to optimize leadership in your organization via ITMM Leadership Improvement Training from IT Maturity, Inc.

Exceptional Leaders are NOT Heroes, Instead They Methodically Create Heroes!

Exceptional Leaders are not and should not be heroes. Exceptional leaders do and should methodically and continuously make their team members heroes.

ITMM Leadership Improvement can be characterized as a mechanistic approach to leadership. The mechanistic approach to leadership as mentioned earlier, optimizes how information flows and problems are solved within organizations and enterprises.

Leadership principles and practices are mechanized through the creation of organizational processes and tools (e.g. management, organization, extent, culture, and vision), so that leaders can make team members become heroes methodically and continuously.

Leadership principles that cannot be turned into measureable processes, such as motivation (discussed above) are re-categorized as personal skills.

In this way ITMM Leadership Improvement training makes exceptional leadership accessible to a much broader group, because leadership skills and activities are delegated, taught, and practiced throughout the larger organization.

What kind of Leader do you want to be?

Scenario One:

- Great motivational orator.
- Wrong products and service with old technology.

Scenario Two:

- All departments communicating efficiently.
- All departments applying new innovations.
- Effectively advancing every aspect of your business.

Not only is ITMM Leadership built into the context of organizations, not individuals, it is integrated into the context of business, integrating leadership components into business activities and business activities into leadership.

Even if you fantasize that leadership is playing political games of survivorship, and you used such games to get into a position of power yourself, you do not want your team playing such games. You want your team to efficiently communicate and effectively use new innovations to enhance and advance every aspect of your business.

If you Develop and Rollout Leadership Principles, How Do you Know if they are used or are Effective?

Is your team unaware of which leadership principles are critical to your specific endeavor? Are leadership principles haphazardly known and practiced? Are you unable to quantify the effect that new leadership principles are having on your organization?

Leadership principles include basic 'organization' and 'culture' strategies such as delegation, enablement, escalation, risk taking, customer focus, and stake holder involvement. It is common for CEO's to hire consulting firms to help them determine which leadership principles their organization is in need of, or can best benefit from. However, once the consulting team leaves and the principles are rolled out, there are weak, if any mechanisms for follow through. In some cases, at major corporations, yellow sticky pads are left next to posters of leadership principles scattered throughout the organization.

ITMM Leadership Improvement offers tools for systematically and aggressively tracking and analyzing usage of leadership principles at both the organization and sub-organization level. Analysis of how effective each leadership principle is in aiding the advancement of an organization is essential for the success of any enterprise. Principles must be prioritized based upon the beneficial effect they have on an organization.

Implementation and analysis of leadership principles goes beyond just the high-level list provided by the consulting team. Basic Leadership skills such as delegation and escalation need to be aggressively tracked throughout every organization to enable superior organizational performance.

ITMM Leadership Improvement provides training on how to aggressively track and analyze both the usage and effect of leadership principles.

Leadership, Strategy, and Vision Must be Delegated in Order to Survive Today's Rapidly Changing Environment!

Leaders don't have to (and shouldn't) be held solely accountable for supposed leadership skills (e.g. management, organization, extent, culture, vision) that can be and should be turned into organizational processes. For example vision is something that should be created and evolved systematically and dynamically by the larger organization.

Is your strategy and vision stale after a few months? Does it take forever to determine the impact of market and technology changes?

You need to adapt your strategy and vision dynamically as markets and technology change via tools such as those that are part of ITMM Leadership Improvement.

No individual can know everything. In order to put together an effective strategy you need to integrate the ideas and research of a large and diverse team. A methodical process is needed to bring those ideas and associated analysis to the strategic level on an ongoing basis. As technology and market forces are always changing, strategy should adapt when new technology becomes available. When the market place changes you should recalculate your strategy in near real time.

ITMM Leadership Improvement tools can be used to gather and engage your larger team near real time, enabling and compelling your team to look at strategic and business advantages across every process and sub-process daily.

One of the newest fads is to have internet searchers on staff. Don't buy it. You need tools for the entire team to do searches on their respective business functions daily. Multiple different types of directed searches can be put into role based portals which update regularly. Corporate news and knowledge on portals should be supplemented with searches into diverse categories of information (e.g. patents, journals, markets, news, web, ...) for each of your team's diverse business functions.

Going further the ITMM Leadership Improvement creates tracking and metrics of your personnel's usage of those business function searches and how the searches are then turned into business realization and value.

The ITMM Leadership Improvement enables near real time Strategy and Vision evolution via integrated business function, business value, technology, and vendor maps.

[Learn How to Mechanically Tune Your Executive Team \(FREE tool included\)!](#)

As mentioned earlier, besides Leadership Improvement principle categories such as management, organization, extent, culture, and vision, and associated tracking and measuring, and tuning and advancing tools, ITMM Leadership Improvement also includes organizational structure tools. In this section we discuss how these tools in conjunction with some of the ITMM Leadership Improvement principles can be used to tune and advance your executive and larger team.

Basics

The basic membership of modern executive teams includes: Geographic leaders, Product leaders, Process leaders, Enterprise sub-process leaders, and Enhancement-Integration-Advancement leaders.

Geography, Product, and Process are familiar concepts, but what is an Enterprise sub-process? And what is an Enhancement-Integration-Advancement leader?

To understand Enterprise sub-processes you need to realize that enterprise activities, those activities where the enterprise interacts with its larger environment as an entity (e.g. public relations, government relations, investor relations, legal), can and should be turned into processes. And to further realize that all of these enterprise activities are sub-processes in the larger enterprise process bucket.

The most confounding organizational abstractions are those of **Enhancement, Integration,** and **Advancement**, which are one and the same activity applied to different domains. In all cases they correlate with efforts to improve elements of the business/enterprise. Enhancement includes improvement of critical business processes. Integration includes both **partner** and **vendor** integration, where partner integration includes working with sales channels as well as mergers and acquisitions. Vendor integration includes vendors providing services, software, and hardware (including parts) and the larger supply chain. Advancement includes putting new technology into both **product** and **service**.

Examples

To better understand these concepts we will explore an example executive team from a hypothetical multi-national corporation. The executive team is composed of the following members in addition to the CEO. Note that, as simplifications, support staff have been removed from the picture, and abstract team names are used.

- Geographic Region 1 Lead
- Geographic Region 2 Lead
- Geographic Region 3 Lead
- Geographic Region 4 Lead
- Process - Finance Lead
- Process - Product Development Lead
- Process - HR Lead
- Process - Marketing Lead
- Process - IT Lead
- Enterprise Sub-process - Communications Lead
- Enterprise Sub-process - Legal Lead
- Enterprise Sub-process - Government Relations Lead
- Enhancement/Integration/Advancement (Improvement) Lead

Observation 1: The CEO, in essence, is the enterprise process lead, so there should be no surprise that many enterprise sub-processes are part of his direct team. In the above example this includes Communications, Legal and Government Relations Leads.

Observation 2: Many processes leads are regional as opposed to being at the enterprise level. In other words this organization is not a symmetric process based organization. No organization should be expected to be symmetric across any leadership category. To understand this, let's look one level deeper into one of the Regional Leads' team:

- Geographic Region 1 Lead
 - Geographic Sub-region 1 Sales/Service Lead
 - Geographic Sub-region 2 Lead
 - Product Line 1 Sales/Service Lead

- Product Line 2 Sales/Service Lead
- Product Line 3 Sales/Service Lead
- Region Process - Manufacturing Lead
- Region Process - IT Lead
- Region Process - HR Lead
- Region Process - Marketing Lead
- Region Process - Finance Lead
- Region Enterprise Sub-process - Legal Lead
- Region Enterprise Sub-process - Government Relations Lead
- Region Customer Experience Lead (Advancement Lead - as described above)

In analyzing this sub-team many asymmetries can be seen. We see the Sales, Service, and Manufacturing process leads that were missing from the CEO's team, as well as other process leads, are asymmetrically aligned with regions, sub-regions and products.

Also note the variation between Geographic Sub-region 1 and 2 Leads. The Geographic Sub-region 2 Lead would have Sales, Service, Manufacturing, Finance, IT, and other sub-region process leads as part of his team, as opposed to the Sub-region 1 Lead, which leverages everything but sales and service from the larger region.

How specific asymmetries are chosen is based upon culture, process, and legal motivations that underlie the differentiation or isolation in regions and sub-regions. In the above sales, service, and manufacture are particularly differentiated by region. Thus, there are organizational asymmetries that exist around those processes. An example motivation for one of these asymmetries would be cost structures for manual labor being different in different regions, which motivates more manual manufacture processes or more automated manufacture processes for a region.

We discuss further below how to methodically identify which asymmetries will be most effective for your own organization.

Observation 3: To understand Enhancement/Integration/Advancement, let's look one level deeper at the Enhancement/Integration/Advancement Lead's team:

- Enhancement/Integration/Advancement (Improvement) Lead
 - Process - Supply Chain Lead (i.e. Vendor Integration)
 - Enterprise Partner (Mergers and Acquisitions) Lead (i.e. Partner Integration)
 - R&D Lead (i.e. Product Advancement)
 - Innovative Product 1 Lead (i.e. Product Advancement)
 - Innovative Service 1 Lead (i.e. Service Advancement)
 - Critical Business Process 1 Enhancement Lead (i.e. Business Enhancement)
 - Customer Experience Lead (i.e. Hybrid Product/Service Advancement)

Note that several different types of improvement are missing from this high level team.

- First, lower level partnership improvements are not included, but are rather delegated to marketing and sales organizations.
- Second, only one type of process hybrid is captured. Other possible hybrid process enhancements might include a hybrid product development and manufacturing enhancement where manufacturing rules are incorporated into the product development process so that products can be designed for higher quality, as well as, cheaper and quicker manufacture.
- Third, only one critical business process enhancement has been identified for high level attention. Many other processes might benefit from executive level attention.
- Fourth, only a couple of product and service advancements have been identified for high-level attention. Again, many different products and services might benefit from executive level attention.

The general concern in this situation, is whether or not the organization understands that they are delegating many types of improvement lower in the organization, and whether they have a methodology to escalate improvements and innovations up the organization chain when necessary.

Method

Was rigor use to make asymmetrical slices along regions and products or was it intuitive. Rigor requires collection of data, analysis of the data, and then creating a structure based on the data and analysis. For organizational structures what data should be collected? What data indicates when an organizational structure is working effectively or causing issues? Further, the collection of data, analysis, and creation of effective structures needs to occur near-real-time so that organizations can adapt as their environment changes.

ITMM Leadership Improvement identifies what data to collect, how to do analysis, and how to create structures. The above discussion was a short synopsis of what structures can be created for the highest levels of an organization, including geographic, product, process, enterprise sub-process, and improvement structures. Data that can be collected and analyzed includes tracking of management, organization, extent, culture, and vision leadership activities. All of this is discussed in greater detail in ITMM Leadership Improvement Training.

Key Takeaways:

1. Understand basic organizational elements - process, product, geography, enterprise, and improvement.
2. Improvement needs to occur across the full context of the organization, whether or not it sits in a top level office.
3. There are numerous hybrid process opportunities available that should be leveraged via organizational structures.

4. You should use mechanistic tools, like ITMM Leadership Improvement, to track, analyze, and evolve your organizational structures.

A FREE introduction to ITMM Leadership Improvement is available at <http://theitmm.com/Teaser>

Executive Team Self Analysis Tool (fill in all of the blanks below)

Geography Leads

Product Leads

Process Leads

Enterprise Sub-Process Leads

Improvement (Enhancement/Integration/Advancement) Leads

Gaps, Issues, Asymmetries, Delegations

Example 1: Asymmetry: Low cost for manual manufacture and regulations (legal reasons) in regions 3 and 4 forces different manufacture processes.

Example 2: Asymmetry: Sales and Service in region 4 is through a distributor channel for legal reasons.

Example 3: Delegations: Non-critical partnerships, business process enhancements, and product and service improvements can be delegated lower in the organization.

For a FREE high-level analysis of your organizations structure fill out the above organizational structure information and forward with your name, email, phone number, company, company size, position, and Industry to Surveys@theitmm.com.

Alternatively you can fill out the form online at

http://theitmm.com/News/Executive_Team/executive_team.html

FAQ

How can ITMM Leadership Improvement be used to handle complex projects?

While ITMM Leadership Improvement supports standard and advanced project management, it goes much further in the identification and tracking of other leadership and project solving activities in order to insure effective handling of complex projects.

- ITMM Leadership Improvement creates processes for managing organizational activities such as communication, delegation, escalation, and empowerment.
- ITMM Leadership Improvement creates processes for managing problem resolution activities such as depth, scope, increments, and lightweight.
- ITMM Leadership Improvement creates processes for managing organizational structure roles and responsibilities at an enterprise level which insures that organizational activities mentioned in the first sub-bullet above execute cleanly.

How can ITMM Leadership Improvement be used to handle regional differences?

The section “Learn How to Mechanically Tune Your Executive Team” above discusses how asymmetrical organizations can evolve due to regional differences. Please review to see how ITMM Leadership Improvement handles regional differences effectively.

How can ITMM Leadership Improvement be used to optimize planning ahead?

ITMM Leadership Improvement looks at planning as an ongoing near real time activity. Planning should include near real time knowledge of all business processes, products, services, vendors, partners and the larger enterprise environment and how all of these are evolving. Mechanisms are providing to track the evolution, foster the evolution, and analyze how to best react to the evolution.

Specific mechanisms include:

- Business process and integration maps.
- Business process research and improvement tools.
- A near real time improvement matrix which can be used for short and long term planning. Being near real time allows plans to adapt to changing business environments as well as the optimization of negotiation positions.

What is the best place to understand the optimization of an organization’s information flow and problem solving (or Exceptional Leadership)?

While Chief Executive Officers and other “C” level executives regularly get the big picture of what happens in their organizations, they are not on the front line of information flow and problem solving. The roles that get the best view of information flow and problem solving are enterprise level technical and project roles. Individuals in these roles get to see both detail and big pictures of problems across the enterprise.

While enterprise level technical and project leads do not get to see the full enterprise environment (e.g. breadth of business processes, and interfaces of the enterprise with the external world) they do get a unique and intense view at how information flows and problems are solved within the largest of organizations. It is from this unique vantage point that optimizations of information flow and problem solving can be envisioned.

Why reviewing case studies is not the optimum way of doing anything, or why we create models!

When dealing with intractable problems, often the only option is to look at successful previous cases to learn how to handle new situations.

However, if an effective and efficient model becomes available, it is more advantageous to use such a model due to both ease and predictability of usage. Usage of cases is an art with very variable results. With effective models, usage and results become predictable. This is one of the reasons why ITMM Leadership Improvement is of greater value than the study of an excessive number of only possibly applicable leadership and other enterprise management level cases.

Summary

ITMM training is lightweight, in one day you feel comfortable in using a broad range of tools that can directly and immediately enhance your business.

Act now to feel the excitement of enhancing your business with technological advances across every process of your business. Go to theitmm.com/training to get started with NEW ITMM Leadership Improvement online training NOW!

Author information



Dr. Justin Coven has worked as an IT Enterprise Architecture, which is the art and science of creating enterprise level models of technology and associated business processes, for a number of major automotive corporations. With the IT Maturity Method Dr. Coven has expanded this art and science to Vendor Integration and Leadership Improvement, as well as advanced the associated rigor of tracking and measuring, tuning and advancing, and enterprise wide innovation.