

Sample Streamlining Strategies and Tactics

Fundamental or Essential Services

- What services are consistent with the department, division, section, or unit's objectives? The City's strategies?
- What services are essential to be performed by the assigned unit?
- Do users – internal and external customers – attribute a low value to the services rendered?
- Is the service consistent with the aims of reducing turnaround time, containing costs, or improving efficiency? Or is it a carryover of past growth periods?
- Was the service initiated to address a previous need that has diminished in importance?
- Does the service merit the people resources currently allocated to it in terms of skills and numbers?

New Services

- Are there strategic goals and objectives that are insufficiently staffed or addressed?
- Should some new services be added that are not currently performed? What benefits would be achieved by performing them?
- Have these services been performed in the past? If not, why not? If so, why were they discontinued?
- What of these services would be permanent or temporary?

Reduced Time Allocations

- Which services could be performed in less time?
- Which services could be performed with fewer people?
- Which services could be scaled-back or eliminated? What effect would reduction or elimination of the service have on the City business?
- Is the service duplicated in another unit, section, division, or department? Could this service be combined with another service in the same or another unit?
- Could the purpose of performing the service be met in a different, but more effective manner?
- Could we replace in-house services by using outside agencies or contractors? Other City departments?

Increased Time Allocations

- Are there benefits that could be achieved by increasing the time allocations to this service (e.g., increased customer service levels)?
- What costs are associated with increasing the time allocated to this service (e.g., increased training)? Would the increased time allocation be permanent or temporary?

Work Simplification

- Could we cut the least valuable parts of a report, activity, process, or position?
- Could responsibility assignments and the flow of information – up and down – be adjusted?
- Could our people produce action-oriented summaries rather than long reports?
- Could we stop comparing daily, weekly, or monthly results when such comparisons do not have significance for immediate action?
- Could standard reporting formats or work methods be used?
- Could we eliminate duplicate responsibilities within units or redundant information reporting?

Reduction in Scope

- Could we stop distributing reports, email, copies of mail, or other information to people who “want to know” and confine distribution to those who “need to know” for decision-making?
- Could we reduce *ad hoc* information requests initiated just in case a question may be asked?

Reduction in “Precision”

- Could estimates rather than exact calculations be used whenever justifiable?
- Could greater use be made of standard forms for repetitive tasks, thereby eliminating custom reports?
- Could we stop recopying or rearranging data from large reports to satisfy a particular unit’s or manager’s request?
- Could we stop checking documents in several units and use spot checks instead?

Cost Reduction of Performing an Activity or Service

- Could we delegate tasks to lower levels in the organization?
- Could we streamline work processes or increase productivity?
- Could we reduce labor costs through improved automation/technology for routine work? What would be the impact on service levels, turnaround, FTEs, or costs?

Improved Control through Organizational Changes or Other Means

- Are reporting relationships clear and concise?
- Are managers focused on high-priority activities? Spending their time appropriately? Is sufficient time dedicated to managing people? Is work “over-supervised”? Could manager: individual contributor ratios be increased?
- Are all control procedures absolutely necessary? Why were the controls established? Are these reasons still valid?
- Could we substitute post-audits for pre-approvals when seeking compliance with guidelines or policies?
- Could we reduce controls while safeguarding the City’s interests?
- Can expenditure authorities be delegated further?
- Can the fee structures be modified to cover costs, reducing dependency on the City’s General Fund?