

ACCELERATING VISIONS TO REALITYsm

Our Philosophy

...never stop learning and looking...

There are several core values and philosophies embodied in our approach. AVR reflects experiences gained over our 80 plus years of combined experience. However, we both have a sense of the need to keep learning and look for new ways to do things. Six Sigma and Project Management are still emerging as major forces for change even though many of the tools have been around a long time. Concepts in the latest business management books and papers such as Confronting Reality by Larry Bossidy & Ram Charan and The 8th Habit by Stephen Covey re-enforce our approach. Other sources of learning include Blindsided by Jim Harris, Learning Paradox also by Jim Harris and Re-imagine! by Tom Peters. Our belief is that one must never stop learning and looking for new approaches that can be integrated into tried and true methods to achieve the best possible results as soon as possible. One of our differentiators is our effort to remain flexible as new ideas surface, while we pass these new learnings through the filter of our experience.

Many tools

The experience gained from our external reading and our years of experience is integrated into the AVR approach. Other tools such as Portfolio Management, Management of Change and techniques such as negotiation, conflict resolution, and planning are examples of various approaches that may be used in our work. The Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) represents the state of the art in managing a project style environment. The tools, technique and approach of Six Sigma are very powerful in improving process performance in any operation.

...a mixture of the best...

This brings us to the **first core AVR principle**. That is, **there are many great tools which are individually significant, no single one is sufficient**. We have always strived to use the right tool for the right job - basic. As we consider what it REALLY takes to *Accelerate Your Visions to Reality*, we see that it takes a mixture of the best from many environments - INTEGRATED into a systematic approach.

*...prove
y = f(x)*

The **second core AVR principle** is that **decisions must be based on facts and real observations** - not conjecture and supposition. The engineer in us demands to know how the conclusion was reached. The Six Sigma discipline requires us to prove $y = f(x)$. The Project Manager in us requires that we have a plan, account for detail and know how we will get to the end.

*...trust and
open
dialogue...*

Our **third core AVR principle** revolves around people. We've all heard the words, "people are our most important asset," when the reality was very different. It is our observation that real, meaningful change in an organization can **ONLY** be achieved through the people. We have seen the good and bad of the people management process and are committed that this be done right. The AVR process requires that we establish an environment of trust, open dialog and acceptance of diverse opinions early in the effort to release innovation and creativity, harness people's knowledge of the business, desire to do good work, and energy to implement the change in a timely manner. AVR requires continuous, committed involvement of stakeholders at all levels.

The **fourth core AVR principle** is the necessity of good planning. This involves getting input from within the company, from outside customers and clients as well as suppliers. When adequate time is taken up front, implementation can move forward with fewer surprises and greater success.

OUR WORK PROCESS

The first step in *Accelerating Visions to Reality* is **UNDERSTANDING**¹. Here we want to learn about your business, the environment in which it operates, challenge assumptions, gather performance data, learn the strategic imperatives and be able to feel the vision. We must make sure our clients understand what really needs to be done and that we understand it well enough to help them. Several key things must be part of this process:

- Executive involvement is key
- The view must be not only from the inside out, but also outside in
- As wide a participation including all stakeholders for input and review as possible. The more inclusive the picture here, the better will be the implementation and final results.
- A “Document of Understandings” is completed at the end of this phase. It will contain:
 - Where are you today?
 - Where do you now think you need to be tomorrow to thrive?
 - What are your perceived barriers to success in this business environment?
 - What are the priorities and urgencies in implementing your Strategic Initiatives?
 - Documentation and Understanding of Assumptions

...consider all the resources...

The second general phase is **PLANNING**. Once we know where we’re going at a high level, we can set the course on how best to get there. We need to consider all the resources i.e. money, people, time, willingness for change, market pressure. We believe that a **portfolio management** approach works best. This helps ensure that organizational (corporate, enterprise) balance of efforts² is maintained,

¹ UNDERSTANDING is designed to help our clients and us come to common agreement on the environment, vision, available information, strategic initiatives and view of the enterprise. The goal is to help the stakeholders better understand their world and their vision, and to enable us to learn enough to help in the planning and implementations process. The “Document of Understandings” provides a check so that we can ensure we have a common starting point.

² EFFORT: is a unit of work, i.e. project, six sigma project or implementation. We will select the tools and techniques most appropriate to getting the job done.

value is optimized, strategic alignment is achieved and the right number of efforts for available resources are planned. This is key to the *Acceleration* part of AVR. Key activities here include:

- Completing the business case and risk analysis for strategic initiatives
- Developing the tactical plans for implementing strategic initiatives
- Enlisting key stakeholders and managers who will own the plans
- Developing prioritized project plans and charters for implementation teams
- Selecting the optimal tool/discipline (or combination) e.g. Six Sigma, Project Management methodology
- A “Document of Planning” is completed at the end of this phase. It will clearly outline the roadmap³ of how and when work necessary to achieve the vision will be completed. Key assumptions and requirements will be identified so that the management team will understand the level of commitment resources in people, time and money they are making.

...quick turn tactical efforts...

Next is our “*Making it Happen*” phase, which embraces the execution and control of project management, the Six Sigma DMAIC process and change management, prioritized project teams work to complete assigned projects according to the overall portfolio management plan. Our goal is to break any Strategic initiative down into a series of relatively quick turn tactical efforts. This keeps the effort moving, allows for quicker problem resolution, faster return on investment and visible success.

- Regular communication and review are key
- No fault, open, honest discussion of issues is mandatory. This is one of the most violated principles in the business environment. It isn’t easy to achieve, but can bring returns money cannot provide.

Throughout the entire process, **FEEDBACK** is ongoing. Regular reviews, formal and informal, keep people involved

³ ROADMAP: the document which outlines the sequence of work (efforts) to be done. It describes how to move from where we currently are to where the vision leads.

...*feedback is ongoing*

in the physical change processes and help to manage emotional and personal impacts of the transition. Problem resolution, enabling efforts to move forward more quickly, perhaps elimination of some tasks and ongoing input are all key parts of this process.

In summary, we apply the best of Six Sigma, Project Management, Management of Change, and other tools in the appropriate amount and at the appropriate time to facilitate ***Accelerating Visions to Reality.***