

ASK
Process

Consulting Services

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ASK for Consulting ...

ASK for I.T. that Just Works!

ASK Process, Inc. provides these consulting services to help solve your Quality and Process problems so you can achieve IT Success. We also provide Training to support these services!

Areas of Expertise

We can help you in any of these areas. See the next pages for more information on each.

Software Development Processes – Agile (Scrum, eXtreme programming) or traditional (CMMI[®], PMBOK[®]) methods for project management, business analysis, testing, etc.

Software Quality – Quality Assurance, V&V, Testing, Reviews.

IT Service Management – ITIL[®] for all topics from Service Desk to Availability Management to Continuous Service Improvement.

Consulting Options

We can deliver our help in the mode that best suits your needs. See the next pages for more information on each.

Evaluation – We evaluate your organization's methods and processes.

On-Site Consulting – We come to your site to guide your staff.

Remote Consulting – We guide your staff via telephone and e-mail.

Consulting Subscription – We answer questions and review documents via telephone and e-mail.

On-Site Contracting – We provide personnel in addition to guidance.

To inquire about a consulting engagement or get answers to any of your questions:

Call us at 412-849-0421

or e-mail Info@ASKProcess.com.

What do Clients say about ASK Process?

The improvement in product quality resulting from newly defined development and testing processes resulted in an order of magnitude of product quality improvement as well as lower development cost and shorted more reliable time to market. We couldn't have done it without Alan's leadership.

– Carl W. Schwarcz, VP Development, ServiceWare

Mr. Koch is adept at navigating the gap between "where things are now" and "where things need to go." He has a strong ability to identify that kind of gap, then act on it - not only as a natural ability, but also with the in-depth understanding of the CMM. One of the key components of being able to do this, of course, is being able to speak in the company's own language - an obvious strength that Mr. Koch demonstrates.

– Nancy Hammond, SEPG Manager, NCS

I am very grateful that your knowledge, experience, and gentle perseverance were available to us. Your combination of stick and carrot, unwavering persistence, and thoughtful problem solving were the essential leaven that we required to do what was necessary.

– David J. E. Saumweber, Vice President, TranTec

Areas of Expertise

ASK Process, Inc. provides consulting services to help solve your Quality and Process problems so you can achieve IT Success. We can help you with these specific areas:

Software Development Processes

Whether you use Agile, traditional, both, or a hybrid methodology, we can guide you in solving your process and quality problems.

Choosing a Methodology – Selecting the right methodology for your organization is a complex task that requires knowledge of the various available options and an objective evaluation of the complexities and needs of your organization. ASK brings to each consulting engagement the knowledge about a wide variety of methodologies and models, both traditional and Agile. We have evaluated numerous organizations, and guided them in acting on their needs.

Agile Methods – ASK is uniquely qualified to guide you in considering or implementing an Agile methodology, having been active in the Agile movement since 2004. What kinds of projects are best for Agile? How will it affect my customers? What are the implications for how we manage? How will my developers cope? Whether it is Scrum, XP (eXtreme programming), another of the dozen Agile methods, or just "Agility" itself that has drawn your attention, we can help you to sort through the issues, make an informed decision, and make it work in practice.

Traditional Methods – ASK has been consulting on traditional methodologies since the 1990's. We have special experience with guiding clients to compliance with the CMMI[®] (Capability Maturity Model Integration from the Software Engineering Institute) – our clients have never failed an Appraisal! In addition, we draw from many other traditional sources including:

- PMBOK[®] – Project Management Body of Knowledge from the Project Management Institute (PMI)
- BABOK[®] – Business Analysis Body of Knowledge from the International Institute for Business Analysis (IIBA)
- SWEBOK – Software Engineering Body of Knowledge from the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- SPIBOK – Software Process Improvement Body of Knowledge from the International Institute for Software process (IISP)

Software Quality

Software Quality has always been a special focus for ASK. We have expertise in all phases of software quality work, and can help you to establish or improve how you do any of these things:

Quality Assurance (QA) – This includes all of the pro-active things that you do to ensure that your products and services will be high quality. (Although many people call testing "QA", *that* is actually Quality Control.

QA includes things like establishing and enforcing your processes, doing continuous process improvement, analyzing data to identify patterns and opportunities for improvement. ASK can

guide you in capitalizing on your tremendous opportunities to institute QA practices that will yield real benefits.

Quality Control (QC) – These are the reactive things that we do to detect and correct quality failures. Often referred to as Verification and Validation (V&V), these include testing (Unit, Integration, System, Acceptance, etc.) and reviews or inspections of documents, code, designs or other artifacts.

ASK can help you to understand where your QC practices are falling short, and help you to institute effective industry-verified practices to ensure that your products meet your quality needs.

IT Service Management

ITIL[®] (The Information Technology Infrastructure Library) is a set of best practices in IT Service Management. ASK can help you to capitalize on the ITIL best practices to improve any of your IT processes. For example:

Service Strategy – We can establish the mechanism to ensure that you are investing in appropriate service offerings to meet your customers' needs in a cost-effective way. This will help you to get the best possible value for the IT dollars you invest.

Service Design – We can guide you as you determine how to design your services so they can achieve appropriate service levels, including key attributes like availability and capacity.

Service Transition – We can help you to establish bullet-proof procedures for ensuring that changes to your IT Services can be rolled out without undue disruption or unhappy surprises.

Service Operation – We can help you to work through the day-to-day operational issues of managing relationships with your customers, monitoring your systems, and dealing with the problems that inevitably come up.

Continual Service Improvement - We can guide you in establishing the mechanisms that you will need to keep your services aligned with the constantly changing needs of your customers.

Consulting Options

ASK Process, Inc. provides consulting services to help solve your Quality and Process problems so you can achieve IT Success. These options are available to ASK Clients:

Evaluation

We will perform an in-depth evaluation of your organization's methods and processes to identify your strengths and your opportunities for improvement. Although Evaluation is often the first step in a full consulting engagement, a few clients have opted to use the results without additional support or guidance.

An Evaluation requires two to five days at your site in addition to preparation (before the on-site period) and analysis (after). An evaluation usually results in documented findings and recommendations. ASK charges a single flat fee for an evaluation based on the size and scope of the organization and processes being evaluated.

On-Site Consulting

We will come to your site to guide your staff in making the improvements that you need. This is often the most effective way to ensure that the important work of making improvements is not overcome by the tyranny of the urgent.

Each consulting engagement is unique, with its own plans, milestones and deliverables. On-Site Consulting is priced at a daily rate that is based on the length of the consulting engagement.

Remote Consulting

We will guide your staff via telephone and e-mail as they make your needed improvements. This is often a cost-effective add-on to On-Site Consulting (see above). When done without an on-site component, the effectiveness of remote consulting is dependant upon the focus that your staff is able to maintain on the improvement project.

Each consulting engagement is unique, with its own plans, milestones and deliverables. Remote Consulting is priced at an hourly rate that is based on the length of the consulting engagement. ASK staff track their time to the minute and provide itemized invoices each month.

Consulting Subscription

We will answer questions and review documents for a specified set of your staff via telephone and e-mail. Unlike Remote Consulting (above), Consulting Subscription does not include ASK staff doing work for you; only responding to your requests.

Consulting Subscriptions include no plans or milestones, and the only deliverables are responses to ad-hoc queries. ASK staff time is not logged or accounted for, and is limited only by availability. (For example, an e-mail may not be answered until evening if we are busy that day.) Consulting Subscriptions are priced at a flat rate that is based on the number of people being supported and the length of the subscription.

On-Site Contracting

We will provide personnel in addition to guidance (see On-Site Consulting, above). This is a good option when your own personnel do not have the time available to focus on your improvement project.

Each contracting engagement is unique, with the number of on-site contractors and their roles pre-defined. If ASK is managing the project, then plans, milestones and deliverables will be set. Otherwise, your manager will establish these things and direct the contractors' work. On-Site Consulting is priced at a per-person daily rate that is based on the length of the contracting engagement.