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Business Insights

VALUE FOCUSED ANALYSIS

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In a prior Insight article Jesse LaDousa, Chief Customer Officer, wrote about our approach to software development, called “Value Focused Delivery”. This methodology has been refined over a number of years and allows us to deliver value faster, in a more predictable manner, with high quality. Key to this process is the first stage: Value Focused Analysis.

There are many references that can help you understand the foundation of this approach, in “Value Focused Thinking”. The Sloan Center of MIT was an early proponent of using such a process in order to make better decisions. Harvard’s Ralph L. Keeney discusses this approach in his book “Value Focused Thinking: A Path to Creative Decisionmaking”. BRM Institute offers workshops and other resources to help organizations become value focused. We’ve adapted these concepts to provide the up-front decision-making and definition of objectives crucial to successful and well-run projects.

There are a number of tools that help structure your thinking. While not explicitly linked to Value Focused Thinking, we’ve found them to be very useful within our Value Focused Analysis approach.

Robert Kaplan and David Norton first described the Balanced Scorecard and associated Strategy Map in the early 1990s. These tools are very well matched to the concepts embedded in a value-first approach. We often make use of them in brainstorming sessions to document goals for larger projects.

I’ve had the pleasure of working directly with Tom Gilb and his ValueFirst approach, first described in his book “Competitive Engineering”. He provides a number of key tools, such as the Impact Estimation Table and a structured language designed to make specification of objections consistent and clear. His tools are in frequent use within Clientek projects.

Not only do we use these concepts to execute effective software development projects, but we use them in running Clientek. Take a look at the references below and give consideration to exploring this approach within your own organization.

References:

[Creativity in Decision Making with Value-Focused Thinking](#)

[Value-Focused Thinking A Path to Creative Decisionmaking](#)

[Becoming a Value-Focused Organization](#)

[The Balanced Scorecard: Measures that Drive Performance](#)

[Competitive Engineering](#)

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