SANTA CLARA COUNTY: TRANSFORMING AN AGENCY

Selina Toy*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the upcoming implementation of the CalWORKs Information Network (CalWIN) System, the 17 counties that have been using the Welfare Case Data System (WCDS) for over 30 years will face a combination of challenges in operations, technology, and human resources and training. While the planned CalWIN system will improve the operational effectiveness of eligibility determination, it will also bring about considerable changes from the current way of doing business. Each of the now 18 WCDS consortium counties are preparing for the implementation by utilizing strategies that are appropriate for their Agencies. The CalWIN System is scheduled to pilot in the Spring of 2002, with implementation scheduled over the following two years.

My BASSC interagency exchange brought me to Santa Clara County Social Services Agency, where the CalWIN System was the catalyst for their Agency Transformation Project, defined as a major system, business, and organizational transformation. With the support from their Board of Supervisors, the project is under the leadership of the Information Systems Director and the Director of the Department of Employment and Benefit Services, and has the commitment of approximately 60 full-time unclassified staff. The involvement from all levels of staff was actively encouraged through opportunities to participate in workgroups. To ensure organizational success, there was a large investment in obtaining the perspectives and concerns of line staff through a variety of strategies associated with change leadership and communications.

The overall targets of the Agency Transformation Project are:
- Improve agency performance-based budget performance, accountability, and responsiveness
- Build technology infrastructure to support performance improvements
- Recruit, retain, develop and train appropriate human resources to support agency improvements
- Invest in change leadership to ensure organizational success of process and technology redesign efforts
- Implement uniform project management methodology to ensure project leadership and successful completion

In order to reach the targets of the Agency Transformation Project, the objectives of the project are defined and implemented through five key tracks: 1) project management, 2) CalWIN and information technology infrastructure, 3) agency process transformation, 4) change leadership and communications, and 5) human resources and training. The five project tracks are interdependent upon each other, and information was available from an assortment of venues. The use of innovative strategies in change leadership and communications were the focus of my internship, and are discussed in detail in the full case study.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on my learning experience in Santa Clara County, I have developed the following recommendations for consideration by the San Mateo County Human Services Agency (Agency):

Conduct an Assessment of the Organization's Readiness for Change to CalWIN

An investment in the human capital required for successful implementation should provide opportunities for staff to learn about the upcoming changes and reflect any feelings they may have regarding the change process. By taking the time to solicit the comments of management and line staff, the Agency can increase buy-in and ensure a smooth transition to the new system. This recommendation can be accomplished through the use of data gathering strategies, such as surveys, focus groups, regional meetings, or presentations.

Strengthen the Agency's Communications Strategy

With the diverse range of projects being implemented in San Mateo County, a more defined communications, marketing, and outreach strategy could benefit both internal and external stakeholders. The coordination of outreach and marketing materials will improve efficiency and streamline the processes for information dissemination. The creation of a communications team to develop a shared communications plan for agency-wide projects could be an effective strategy to highlight innovative approaches in service delivery, disseminate information on the progress of key projects, and offer career development opportunities for the retention of existing staff.

Santa Clara County: Transforming an Agency

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Background

The San Mateo County Human Services Agency (Agency) is planning for the implementation of the CalWORKs Information Network (CalWIN) System in August, 2003. The Agency's CalWIN project team is currently in the early stages of internal strategy development. A steering committee has been formed, and subcommittees will begin meeting in July, 2001 to address anticipated operational issues impacted by CalWIN, as they relate to training, policy, conversion and implementation, technical issues, and human resources. The implementation of the CalWIN system will affect staff currently involved in eligibility determination and the information technology systems that will support the new software application.

My visit to Santa Clara County Social Services Agency granted me the opportunity to learn how they used the CalWIN project within the Department of Employment and Benefit Services as a catalyst for their dynamic Agency Transformation Project (ATP). Because the ATP is a fast-paced and iterative process, the premise for my case study is based on my observations in the early Spring of 2001. During my brief visit, I witnessed daily progress on goals, ongoing revisions made to project plans, and concepts that quickly developed into deliverables. This experience has broadened my perspective on how a state mandate can be a springboard for agency-wide, operational change.

After a brief history and outline of the key elements of the Agency Transformation Project, this case study focuses on the roles of communication and leadership in transforming Santa Clara County's automated welfare system. The case identifies the implications for San Mateo County Human Services Agency and provides recommendations.

History of the CalWIN Project

The CalWORKs Information Network (CalWIN) System was born out of Chapter 303 of the 1995 Budget Act and Legislation enacted in October 1997 (W and I code sections 10823 and 10824). The mandate allowed for the utilization of four Statewide Automated Welfare Systems (SAWS): ISAWS (Interim Statewide Automated Welfare System), currently in operation in approximately 35 small counties; LEADER (Los Angeles Eligibility Automated Determination, Evaluation & Reporting System) currently in the rollout stage; C-IV (Consortium IV), currently in design; and WCDS (Welfare Case Data System), initiated in 1968 and currently still operating in 17 counties. Although the WCDS system continues to function beyond the normal operational cycle of a software application, a replacement system has been explored over the past several decades. The planned CalWIN System will replace the current WCDS system, and will automate eligibility determination, benefit calculation and case management for the now 18 WCDS consortium counties.

The CalWIN Project includes the design, development and implementation of the CalWIN System. Application design for the CalWIN system is currently underway at the CalWIN Project site located in Folsom, California. The system is scheduled to pilot in the Spring of 2002, with implementation

scheduled over the following two years. The targeted date for the implementation of the CalWIN System in Santa Clara County is May 5, 2003.

KEY ELEMENTS OF THE AGENCY TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

In August 2000, the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency (SSA) embarked on a major system, business, and organizational transformation. The catalyst for the Agency Transformation Project (ATP) was CalWIN, the system that will improve operational effectiveness while facilitating better utilization of public and private resources to assist clients who are moving from welfare to self-sufficiency. The implementation of the CalWIN system will affect their CalWORKS, General Assistance, Medi-Cal, Food Stamps, Cash Assistance Programs for Immigrants (CAPI), In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Foster Care Eligibility programs. The ATP is a proactive approach to overcome the barriers to success by focusing not just on the CalWIN system, but also on the people, processes, and infrastructure in which it operates. A copy of the Board of Supervisors resolution for the Agency Transformation Project is attached as Exhibit 1.

In consideration of the changes that will occur with the transition to the CalWIN system, a multitude of concerns surfaced from SSA staff. A few of the major issues identified by front line staff through a focus group include: a) insecurity regarding their jobs, b) fear that their current computer skills will not be adequate for the new CalWIN system, c) fear that they will not receive adequate training on how to use the new system, d) lack of clarity on how their existing job functions will change, e) concern about how their job classifications and salaries will be affected, and f) adjusting to changes from their current practice of doing business. In order to address the ongoing concerns raised by staff, the SSA is using a highly integrated team approach by bringing together resources from different areas with complementary skills, including current line and management staff, full-time dedicated unclassified staff, Deloitte Consulting and other contractors.

The ATP is under the leadership of the Information Systems Director, and the Director of the Department of Employment and Benefit Services, and has the commitment of approximately 60 full-time unclassified staff. Eleven project managers within the CalWIN staff provide leadership to their respective teams. All CalWIN Managers meet for weekly updates on the progress made towards their deliverables. A CalWIN implementation steering committee was formed with key stakeholders, CalWIN staff, social services program managers, CalWIN committee lead members, and representatives from the unions. The initial pre-launch phase was accomplished through the CalWIN committees, comprised of over 170 agency staff.

The targets of the Agency Transformation Project are:
- Improve agency performance-based budget performance, accountability, and responsiveness
- Build technology infrastructure to support performance improvements
- Recruit, retain, develop and train appropriate human resources to support SSA improvements
- Invest in change leadership to ensure organizational success of process and technology redesign efforts
- Implement uniform project management methodology to ensure project leadership and successful completion

The ATP is structured in five phases: 1) assessing

climate for change, 2) setting the climate for change, 3) develop the new business model, 4) prepare for implementation, and 5) implementation. The objectives of the project are focused on five key tracks: 1) project management, 2) CalWIN and information technology infrastructure, 3) agency process transformation, 4) change leadership and communications, and 5) human resources and training.

While the various project tracks and objectives are interdependent in the planning and implementation of CalWIN, the focus of my interagency exchange was on how the change leadership and communication strategies relate to the larger, grand scale planning effort.

Role of Communications

The role and function of the communications team is to perform work related to CalWIN and SSA communications and information dissemination through various mediums including newsletters, roadshows, social marketing materials, and web content/presence. A communications committee was formed to provide guidance in the development of materials. The major products of the department include the development of written communications and communication standards, conducting presentations and roadshows agency-wide, utilization of social marketing strategies, and information dissemination through web content development and management. An example of promoting internal communication is the "CalWIN Update," a newsletter published and distributed to project team members. A copy of the newsletter is attached as Exhibit 2.

Presentations and Roadshows

The presentations provide an integrated face-to-face mechanism to present project updates, provide a "face" to the CalWIN/ATP effort, and convene dialogue among project staff and line staff. The concept is to bring a standard presentation "on the road" to SSA staff stationed in district offices to provide a consistent message regarding the CalWIN/ATP. The presentation includes an exercise led by the change leadership team, a Power Point presentation on the current political trends and opportunities as they relate to the CalWIN/ATP project, and a concept demonstration of the CalWIN software application. In the first roadshow, the attendees were primarily comprised of eligibility workers and customer service workers. The completed evaluation forms found that staff felt the presentation was informative and the software demonstration that simulated the CalWIN application was helpful in visualizing the future screens for capturing client information to determine eligibility. Many attendees also had thought provoking questions regarding the future of their job functions and responsibilities. As of April, a total of 16 roadshows were scheduled to reach 1125 employees in 16 district offices. There are a targeted total of 20 roadshow presentations.

Social Marketing

The purpose of social marketing is to plan and implement programs designed to bring about attitudinal and behavior change using concepts from commercial marketing. By creating a trademark and promoting the CalWIN effort, it creates exposure for the project, increases the awareness of staff regarding the upcoming change, and provides an opportunity for conversation. This strategy also recognizes committee members for their efforts and encourages their ongoing participation and support of the project. A CalWIN logo was developed and there is an effort underway to develop the CalWIN mascot, a

computerized "mouse" named Calvin. Social marketing activities include distributing CalWIN-related giveaways and recognition items for CalWIN volunteers. For example, when a CalWIN committee completes their workplan goals, volunteers receive a choice of a portfolio, briefcase, or duffle bag with the CalWIN logo. The communications department will also begin working with an advertising agency to improve upon their internal communication plan and implement additional social marketing strategies to promote the CalWIN/ATP within the SSA.

INVESTING IN CHANGE LEADERSHIP

The leading change strategy is to assist each internal and external stakeholder in completing the process of letting go of the current systems, managing the passage through the transition, and launching into a new beginning. The desired outcome is that everyone who will be impacted by ATP and the CalWIN implementation is identified, involved, and given the opportunity to access the tools necessary to successfully deal with the human issues and individual experiences that surround change. This strategy includes acknowledgment of staff members' need to grieve due to the end of the current computer system and to prepare employees to accept the future changes in their roles as a result of the transition to CalWIN.

Periodic Change Survey

The Periodic Change Survey (PCS) is a tool that 1) identifies change-related challenges and strengths of the CalWIN implementation and other major agency initiatives, 2) is a method for assessing an organization's readiness for change, and 3) serves as a device for obtaining employee's views and input from a large cross-section of an agency. A series of focus groups were conducted with targeted

groups and survey participants were asked to rate 25 factors based on level of importance in implementing change successfully, as well as the agency's current performance in that area. The Risk Wheel assesses an organization's readiness for change around 12 identified categories at various levels within the organization: vision, value of change, transition, executive support, skills capabilities, communication, infrastructure, competing resources, motivation, openness to innovation, attitude, and benefits of CalWIN. The survey found that openness to innovation ranked as the most critical factor, infrastructure was consistently rated as a critical risk factor, and skills and capabilities were seen as a barrier to change.

Change Leadership Curriculum

A request for proposals (RFP) was released for the development and design of a curriculum that focuses on the human issues surrounding change in the workplace. The development of the RFP was based on the recognition that the transformation effort will result in many questions and concerns from staff impacted directly or indirectly by the change process. Its purpose is to assist SSA staff in recognizing and positively embracing the changes that will occur with CalWIN. The curriculum is intended to prepare employees to accept the future changes their work, roles, and agency culture by providing valuable tools that will assist them in recognizing endings, managing transitions, and embracing the changes that will occur.

The selected contractor will be requested to design training materials, which include a Trainer's Manual, a Participant's Manual, and Visual Aids. The curriculum designed for staff is entitled "Manage Yourself in Changing Times" and will include a 4-hour version and a 1-hour version that

will be utilized as a refresher course. A separate 7-hour customized curriculum will be developed for managers and supervisors, entitled "Leading in a Changing Environment." In addition, the contractor will instruct the SSA staff development trainers on how to teach the 4-hour program to the entire SSA staff. This strategy allows the SSA the ability to increase their in-house capacity to provide training and instill the philosophy of change management within the agency. Although the development and implementation of this curriculum is a supportive concept, the CalWIN team recognizes that carrying out its intent is dependent on the voluntary participation of front line staff and their willingness to embrace and utilize the tools that will be available.

Simulation Laboratory

The CalWIN/ATP Team currently has plans for the development of a simulation laboratory to assist SSA staff in envisioning how eligibility determination will change with CalWIN. This is an innovative approach aimed at providing a safe place for training and experimental learning, and will assist in decreasing staff anxiety and concerns regarding the functional changes that will occur with the CalWIN system. A practice application will be developed and loaded on to computers in a laboratory setting, where staff will be invited to visit and participate in a simulation exercise. This is an interesting and creative strategy that can be structured to meet several goals.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SAN MATEO COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

Over the past year, San Mateo County has been involved in an agency-wide dynamic planning process for Outcome-Based Management (OBM). This process integrates planning, priority setting,

performance measurement, and budget development in order to focus available resources toward specific outcomes. OBM implementation, along with the upcoming planning and implementation of CalWIN in August, 2003, will produce similar issues in dealing with changes that affect the current and future business processes of Agency staff. This will result in an increased need to provide timely, accurate communication regarding changes in policies and operating procedures. As the strategies to focus on these upcoming challenges continue to develop, San Mateo County may be able to draw upon the experience and perspective of the process changes of our neighboring county.

In forecasting the impact of the conversion to the CalWIN system, San Mateo County may have an advantage due to the fact that the Agency has increased staff access to computers and have provided an array of computer skills training over the past several years. The majority of staff are currently using computers in their daily work and operating similar software systems for tracking client information, such as the SMART system.

The following items are presented as recommendations for consideration in San Mateo County:

Conduct an Assessment of Organizational Readiness for Change to CalWIN

In order to assess the sentiment of Agency staff regarding the upcoming conversion to the CalWIN system, the use of data gathering strategies, such as surveys, focus groups, or presentations may serve as a valuable beginning point for identifying possible areas of concern. These activities will provide an opportunity to begin a dialogue with staff to inform them of the CalWIN project and the possible future change in job roles and functions. Staff who may or

may not be directly impacted by the implementation of CalWIN should be included, and issues that surface could be addressed at CalWIN steering committee meetings. The steering committee will also be able to formulate appropriate responses to the issues identified in the various settings.

It is recommended that the Agency build upon the existing work of their internal Organizational Development department by incorporating these strategies to assess the readiness for change. By continuing to investigate the perspectives of staff, the CalWIN project team will be better equipped to develop a contingency plan.

Strengthen the Agency's Communications Strategy

There is currently a diverse range of innovative Agency projects being planned and implemented in San Mateo County. In order to maximize the information available regarding these efforts, it is recommended that an effective communications and outreach strategy include the creation of a communications team dedicated to spearheading communication for agency-wide projects. These projects could include Outcome-Based Management, CalWIN, Family Development Credential, Electronic Benefits Transfer, Proposition 36, and Individual Development Accounts.

San Mateo County currently utilizes a public information officer to coordinate both internal and external Agency communication, which includes the distribution of information through the Agency newsletter, email updates, and website development. A broader communications team could be utilized to develop an effective communications plan to share and circulate information for a broader audience. Through this effort, a venue to high-light innovative approaches and best practices, track the progress of key projects, and offer new learning opportunities among Agency staff would be created. This recommendation could be accomplished within the existing resources in the Agency with limited fiscal impact. The proposed communications team could include representative staff from the different regions in the county and/or key project staff, who could meet monthly to discuss common strategies and work together to build a clearinghouse of information for the Agency. The formal coordination of outreach and marketing materials will improve efficiency and streamline the processes for information dissemination.

CHARTER

OF THE

Exhibit 1

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY

AGENCY TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors received a valid charter petition for the signing of the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency Transformation Project, duly signed by the leadership of the Santa Clara County Social Services Agency; and

WHEREAS the Agency Transformation Project constitutes Santa Clara County's ongoing efforts to enhance client services and improve business systems for staff; and

WHEREAS these efforts demonstrate our commitment to the State of California mandate as outlined in Chapter 303 of the Budget Act of 1995; and

WHEREAS the Agency has organized 15 project teams with 210 staff members representing an Agency-wide commitment to inclusion of all stakeholders; and

WHEREAS the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, after recognizing the importance of the Agency Transformation Project, has determined that the significant undertaking of this initiative is monumental in scope and magnitude to the residents of Santa Clara County;

RESOLVED that the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors hereby approves and grants this charter petition on Thursday, 2 November 2000.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this charter signifies the conclusion of the Pre-Launch Phase and is further recognition for this effort since the signing of the $484 million contract with Electronic Data Systems Corporation and the MOU with the State Health and Welfare Data Center on 7 December 1999.
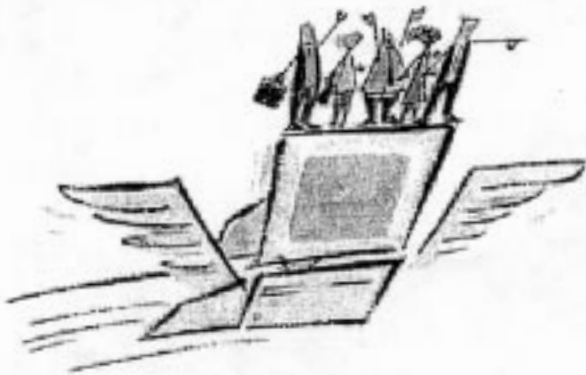
WITNESSED:

DONALD F. GAGE
CHAIRMAN
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

WILL LIGHTBOURNE
DIRECTOR
SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY
SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Exhibit 2

CalWIN update

A Chronicle of Program Milestones and Successes   **20 December 2000**

It's a time for celebration!!! Today we commemorate the completion of the first stage of the CalWIN/Agency Transformation Project, "Assessing the Climate for Change." With the ending of this first phase, we have conducted the necessary preliminary work that will set the stage for the change efforts in the next project juncture. The tremendous amount of work related to CalWIN is unequivocally matchless in its scope and undertaking. Our success in completing deliverables is owed to our collective efforts and diligent work within each of the seventeen committees. And, we have done just that...

PROGRAM SUCCESSES. This milestone of completing Phase I activities was achieved by the successful delivery of project-related products. All committees charged with the development of a charter have completed this assignment by creating living documents that will continue to be revised and refined to respond to the Project needs. In addition, the Committees also made significant inroads into planning and research, providing invaluable roadmaps to the eventual design and implementation of CalWIN and new business processes. The following deliverables were completed:

ACERT (Employment Services)
- Developed a Work, Organization, and Task Plan
- Provided Input in JRP and JAD Sessions
- Completed Five (5) As-is Business Maps for Employment Services Programs
- Completed Opportunity Matrix

ASPIRE (Auxiliary Systems)
- Recruited appropriate staff to form work group whose tasks will be scheduled and is dependent upon deliverables from other groups

Current Systems/Data Conversion Committee
- Completed System Data Flow Diagrams

CalWIN.com (Communications)
- Developed CalWIN Logo
- Completed Orientation Packets
- Launched CalWIN.com Newsletter
- Completed Audience, Media, and Message Analysis

Data/Systems Integrity and Accuracy
- Designed Template for CDS Exemption Message Reporting
- Developed System for Error Tracking

FACES (Foster and Adoptive Care)
- Completed As-Is Business Maps for Foster Care Programs
- Completed Opportunities Matrix

Forms, NOAs, and Correspondence
- Listed all current forms and translations available
- Identified NOAs needing translation in non-CalWIN accepted language
- Created Implementation plan for use of second language forms, NOAs, and all non-CalWIN forms
- Revised current translation policy for CalWIN application and current forms application policy for future CalWIN use

CalWIN Human Resources, Recruitment, and Restructuring

- Assisted in the development of Board Transmittals which created unclassified positions for the CalWIN Project
- Assisted in the development of CalWIN job specifications
- Developed Testing Process and Took Part in the Recruitment and Hiring for CalWIN Positions
- Conducted Testing on a Weekly Basis, Culminating on Filling 37 Positions

Genesis (Intake Eligibility)

- Developed a Work, Organization, and Task Plan
- Completed As-Is Business Maps for Intake Eligibility
- Completed Opportunity Matrix

Infrastructure & Support

- Developed an "Ergonomic & Your Work Environment" Curriculum/Workbook.
- Designed a Site Readiness Matrix

Money.com (CalWIN Fiscal and Reporting)

- Validated Requirements
- Provided Input and Evaluated JAD Session Products
- Completed As-Is Business Maps for Fiscal and Reporting
- Completed Opportunity Matrix

NSYNCC (Continuing)

- Completed As-Is Business Maps for Continuing
- Completed Activity Description Templates
- Completed Form & Report Inventories
- Completed Opportunity Matrix

Policy Committee

- Developed a Work, Organization, and Task Plan
- Developed a Policy Protocol
- Developed a Template for Current Policies, with Guidelines and Instructions for Completion
- Developed a Template for Policy Changes

Stakeholders

- Conducted Offsite with Stakeholder Appointees
- Developed Communication Format for Reporting on Appointee Activities
- Implemented and Analyzed Preliminary External Stakeholder Questionnaire

Subject Matter Experts

- Created Decomposition Diagrams
- Assisted in and Validated Narrative Business Function/Logical Process Models
- Validated Functional Requirements for General Systems Design

TIPCWIN (Training and Implementation)

- Developed the Plan and Logistics for the September 25, 2000 CalWIN Symposium
- Identified Opportunities and Risks with Respect to CalWIN Training

This list of accomplishments is only an abbreviated representation of each committee's completed tasks . It is, however, reflective of the dedication and amount of hard work that individuals have invested in their support for the CalWIN/Agency Transformation Project. We continue to look to all CalWIN Committee members to assist and champion this effort.

THE TRANSITION. The evolution from Phase I into Phase II offers new opportunities to retool our project management approach. Pat Garcia and the CalWIN Human Resources Team has been hard at work recruiting and hiring full-time CalWIN staff to bring more efficient functionality to complete day-to-day tasks. Their arrival will greatly assist our overall effort to prepare and equip the Agency for CalWIN's implementation.

Changes in leadership have also been implemented. Specifically, committees that focus primarily on "operations" (e.g., Intake, Continuing, Employment Services, and Data Integrity) will be under the leadership of Patrick Duterte. Committees with technical assistance and support functions (including Communications, Stakeholder, Training, and Fiscal) will be lead by Todd Pierce.

Another retooling modification has been to focus on the Project needs for the next phase and the committees that will be necessary to complete these deliverables. As such, the resources originally assigned to the Auxiliary Systems, Infrastructure and Support, CalWIN Human Resources, and Policy Committees will be restructured. The leadership of the CalWIN/Agency Transformation Project is grateful for the contributions made by these committees and are humbled by the dedication of those individuals who participated in this process. Although the deliverables of these committees are nearing completion, we will be seeking the continued involvement and support of these Committee members in other capacities. ↝

CalWIN update

AGENCY TRANSFORMATION PROJECT

A Chronicle of Program Milestones and Successes   **29 March 2001**

WORKING TOWARDS A NEW BUSINESS MODEL

Prior to Welfare Reform, the benefit delivery model was "cash-centric" and seen as an entitlement. In this business model, it was the client's obligation to search for services and the Social Services Agency's responsibility to provide timely and accurate benefits.

As Welfare Reform matures, cash-based caseloads have dramatically declined. The political support for time limits and work requirements are stronger and the likelihood of declining funding is greater. More emphasis will need to be placed on the working poor, those who need health coverage and food assistance, and developing post-employment wage growth plans. New strategies will be required to overcome the historical stigma associated with welfare. These services need to be provided in a client-centric, cost-effective manner that crosses over jurisdictional and organizational boundaries. The CalWIN/Agency Transformation Project is committed to approach this issue by understanding and moving in the direction of streamlining our business' processes.

Understanding Process

A business process is an organized group of related activities that together create value for our clients. For example, the customer's need fulfillment process, includes steps such as entering the client's data, identifying programs for which this individual is qualified, and meeting the immediate needs of the client. When these steps are all performed properly and integrated together, they create the results that our clients expect: the provision of social services or benefits that are accurate and complete. However, no one of these steps is more important than any other; only when all are brought together do we get the results we need. SSA business processes are how we do the real work, how we create the results we provide to our clients.

The State of Today's Processes. The underlying source of many contemporary business performance problems is the sad state of institutionalized business processes. They are fragmented across isolated functional areas. Within SSA, these areas include reception, intake eligibility, continuing eligibility, employment services, financial reporting, management reporting, foster care eligibility, and in-home supportive services. Each step of the customer need fulfillment process is likely to be performed by a different person in a different part of the Agency.

This fragmentation means that our processes are plagued by numerous organizational hand-offs, in which work moves from one part of the Agency to another. Hand-offs are the source of necessary work unseen by the client, but are the cause of delay, errors, and inflexibility. They also mean that no one involved in the process can see or understand the work flow. In SSA, where silos are built around functions, processes are invisible, unmeasured, and unmanaged. This is why there is sometimes a break down in the system. Our functional organizations are like medieval castles,

surrounded by high walls and moats. Each castle views the others with limited understanding, and the people within them are focused inward. Some are concerned only with their own jobs; simultaneously, some are not concerned with the whole, with the other "castles," or even with the client. There is sometimes a confusion on who has accountability or management responsibility for the processes.

Focusing on Processes.   Today's business world – fiercely competitive and constantly changing – demands that we free ourselves of the problems that afflict other functional organizations. Our clients are becoming more sophisticated and deserve the benefit of having an integrated work process.

Thus, we need to create an organization in which people do their tasks but think about their processes. When our staff considers the needs of the client and the larger context of their work, people will work and behave differently. It is therefore paramount that we refocus our collective attentions away from tasks and onto process, the benefits of which include:

- Alignment among everyone involved in performing the process
- Creation of a common focus (i.e., client-centered services)
- Reduction of non-value-adding work
- Faster, more efficient service delivery times
- Lower error rates
- Greater flexibility
- More manageable and repeatable work

SSA Core Processes

The shift to a process emphasis requires changing people's thinking and therefore their behavior. For the Social Services Agency, our core processes must be characterized by their (1) client centricity, (2) mirroring of customer activities, (3) client-outcomes orientation, and (4) alignment with Agency vision and goals.

The four core processes identified during the 7 March 2001 SSPM/CalWIN Steering Committee Offsite are:

CLIENT NEED IDENTIFICATION

- Conducting outreach and marketing to help clients and potential clients identify needs and choose SSA as a service provider, if appropriate
Outcome: Client identifies need and arrives at SSA

CLIENT NEED FULFILLMENT

- Immediately address the critical need that a client approached the agency to fulfill

Outcome: Client critical need is fulfilled

EMPOWERMENT PLANNING

- Plan client path to self-determination. Identify appropriate benefits and services/service providers to remove barriers to success.
Outcome: Client identifies plan to overcome additional obstacles to self-determination

EMPOWERMENT

- Provide benefits and services on an ongoing basis in order to enact plan for empowerment, and achieve self-determination
Outcome: Client attains self-determination

Next Steps.   This shift in redesign efforts has enormous implications. In light of the hiring of full-time process staff (whose scope includes the redesign of Intake, Continuing, Employment Services, General Assistance, and Foster Care processes), the CalWIN Steering Committee has come to the conclusion that five CalWIN Committees will need to be restructured to reflect the new direction in process redesign efforts. The functional committees of ACERT, NSYNCC, Intake, and Foster Care will be remodeled to fit the four CalWIN Core Process described above. Each process team will include:

- 2 Full-time CalWIN/ATP Redesign Staff
- 1 Deloitte Consultant
- 7 Subject Matter Experts
- 3 Labor Union Representatives

The products created by these process design teams will be assessed and reviewed by affected SSPMs and the CalWIN/ATP Planning and Implementation Management. Thereafter, products will seek validation from the larger CalWIN Steering Committee, and approval from project sponsors Todd Pierce and Patrick Duterte.

Closing

By focusing on our processes, we can transform our Agency and achieve the new levels of performance that our current environment demands. A process organization is one in which everyone understands clients' needs, the Agency's processes, and where each of us fits in. It is a challenging transition but one with many rewards. We wish to thank the members of the ACERT, NSYNCC, Intake, and Foster Care Committees for their hard work and dedication to the CalWIN/Agency Transformation Project. The new direction, becoming a process organization, puts each of us in touch with with needs of our clients and the real purpose of our work.