

Transformation Practice

Removing roadblocks: A conversation with Seth Goldstrom

A well-functioning transformation office makes sure that activities produce results.

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In a transformation, companies can get stuck when trying to implement initiatives. In this video, McKinsey senior partner Seth Goldstrom explains how the transformation office can break through delay and indecision. An edited version of his remarks follows.

Interview transcript

A transformation office ensures that a transformation delivers by making sure that everyone does what they said they were going to do.

Often, companies will talk about the importance of their project-management office, or PMO. To me, the PMO has a bad connotation. It often signifies a focus on activity instead of results.

A transformation office, in contrast, looks at all the

assigned activities, which a PMO does, but then takes the step of examining how that translates into the operational metrics. How does that activity translate into the financials? In addition, it monitors health as well as performance. It tracks from activity to result.

A transformation office can also remove roadblocks. A lot of times, particularly in large companies, there are all these reasons why things drag. Companies can have a hard time implementing initiatives, particularly at the mid-levels of an organization.

A well-functioning transformation office cuts through that. It pushes people to make a decision in the room that day, as opposed to kicking the can to the next meeting or saying you've got to go talk to four or five people to get the appropriate sign-off.

Seth Goldstrom is a senior partner in McKinsey's Atlanta office.