3 Key Efficiency Components For The Service Based Business

An observation I've made of companies endeavouring to increase operational efficiencies, is that the three components of technology, processes, and people, are critical for success. Weakness in any one area creates a system of bottlenecks. Companies who think that the latest technology will achieve the gains they want without considering the broader operational issues will end up the poorer and with little to show for it. Likewise we can have a two hundred page operations manual, but, with the wrong people or inadequate technology, the results can be dismal. We can hire the brightest and most intelligent people but if the company processes aren't addressed, progress can be slow with increased staff attrition.

Essentially, job management software sits at the operational centre (as in Figure 1 or can be viewed as the foundation of workflow as in Figure 2.) It is the system that when used in its entirety creates flow from the front end enquiry, through the work flow process to the resulting customer payment. As the visuals demonstrate below, it requires all three components, interacting with each other, for successful streamlining.
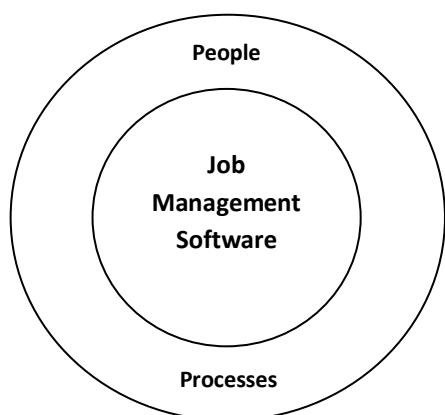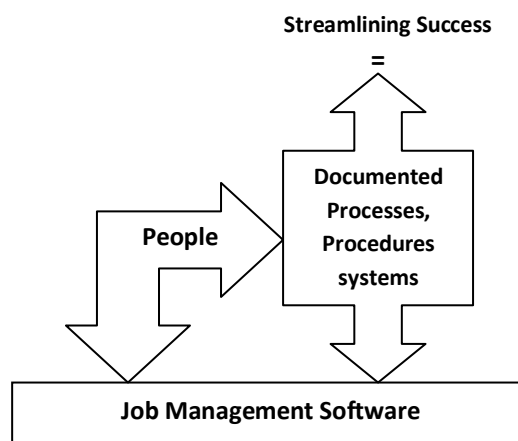
Figure 1

Figure 2

Situational Examples

1. Accounting firm. Had brilliant software but little in the way of processes to accompany work flow. They had great people but lacked an overall co-ordinated approach. Once the link was made between software, process and ensuring the right people were at the right process points, the revenue and nett profit results were significant.
2. Trade service firm 1. Had excellent job management software (simPRO) but were experiencing chaos and bottlenecks. Again, establishing the right people for the various sections related to the software eg. Job scheduling, invoicing etc. along with documenting the related procedures created the desired streamlined effect along with an estimated 20% capacity increase for additional work.
3. Trade service firm 2. Initially a paper based job management system combined with good people in the wrong positions - these were creating delays in various areas across the company. Installation of job management software (simPRO again), personnel role changes and strategic recruitment, along with process redesign, resulted in a fifty percent reduction of quoting and invoicing times, positioning the company for the next stage of growth.

These businesses all experienced increased efficiencies as they focused on these three key areas. Neglect just one component and the outcomes will be a substantial distance from the streamlining success you are after.

Good luck!