



DESIGN “SLIM WORK” – Through Banking Service Improvement –

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Abstract

Amid the prolonged sluggish period in Japan's economy, companies are actively attempting the restructuring of their organizations in order to reduce costs and improve operational efficiencies. At the same time, interest in re-engineering is also growing amidst serious reconsideration of operational structures as a whole. However, a good look at the contents of these activities and rationales reveals that they have stopped at the level of introducing the efforts of an individual corporation or expressing a general idea, and it is difficult to say that they have demonstrated methods and procedures as generally applicable outcomes.

In our research, we tried to keep this problem in mind while conducting our study, which used the example of actual operations in city banking, where we considered methods to lessen trouble and waiting time for service users (customer), and lighten work loads for the suppliers (bank clerks), to design “slim work” using simple procedures and low levels of resource investment. Specifically, we interpreted the work process within the structure of the initial state, the final state, and the necessary changes (basic transformations) needed to connect the two. From the viewpoint of achieving slim work, we considered our basic concept of work to consist only of that basic transformation, and if we should come across with any inconvenience in actual application, we would first clarify the reasons and then would design the work to add the necessary changes, as a fundamental rule. Based on this work, we propose the following three approaches, showing specific procedures for each, as methods for actually structuring and improving work: ① Designing work so that it consists only of the basic transformations. ② Clarifying all those work tasks in the present process that correspond to the basic transformation, and the elimination of all other tasks. ③ Studying the role of the “objects” used in work, and to provide substitutes of simple objects suited to “slim work”. In addition, we will apply each method to actual banking service operations, adding our considerations of the effectiveness and interactive relationships of these applications.