



## HIGH-YIELD METHODS

*Process design for front/back office and service environments*

### “Harvard Business Review” On Reducing Office Cost

Few companies realize how much they can save by redesigning and restructuring front and especially back office functions. Across a broad range of clients, *our Visual Workflow engagements identify office employee reduction opportunities averaging around 15%*. But few companies are availing themselves of this very significant cost-reduction potential. And most that do cut office costs take an across-the-board approach, which usually damages the company as much as it saves payroll dollars—and still leaves large potential savings untouched.

Several factors inhibit organizations from initiating office process improvement projects, but in our view “I just don’t see the waste” constrains more than any other factor. That’s why a new, *one-page abstract from HBR*, “Make Your Back Office an Accelerator,” makes such compelling reading. In a single page, authors Paul Rogers and Hernan Saenz, both with Bain, pull back the blindfolds by sharing their research findings from examining 37 companies across a broad spectrum of industries.

Key quotes from this abstract include:

*Our study of 37 companies...shows that strategically trimming and reconfiguring support functions such as HR, finance and procurement is smarter than making wholesale cuts. Done right, it can actually improve effectiveness as it reins in costs.*

You’ll find this sentiment echoed throughout our website.

*Redesigning smarter support services requires companies to dissect their processes...eliminating steps that don’t truly contribute to the business.*

HYM has developed a unique process approach, Visual Workflow, for this very purpose.

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*Restructuring...typically has the biggest impact...*

And restructuring is precisely what wholesale cuts *do not* achieve. Companies take the “meat cleaver” approach—only to hire everyone back once business improves, but *without addressing their fundamental office process issues.*

All of this HYM has been preaching for the past dozen years. And it feels great to have this corroboration.

If your business has a significant office staff, you *need* to read this abstract. As a writer myself, I won't break HBR's copyright, but you can order the reprint from HBR for a whopping \$4.50. Just use the link below to reach the order page.

Best regards,

Dick Lee

Principal, High-Yield Methods

[http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/b01/en/common/item\\_detail.jhtml;jsessionid=GKAWWH040HB02AKRGWDR5VQBKE0YIISW?referral=4320&id=F0703G&requestid=33128](http://harvardbusinessonline.hbsp.harvard.edu/b01/en/common/item_detail.jhtml;jsessionid=GKAWWH040HB02AKRGWDR5VQBKE0YIISW?referral=4320&id=F0703G&requestid=33128)