

SIPOC model shown in Figure 3, the process consultants walked ASD employees, managers, and directors through the development of their process models. Then using the defined tools, they assembled the processes into “a system of systems” which became the business process model. As this process was completed, the broken interfaces, missing links, and misaligned priorities were systematically uncovered and addressed.

### Business Process Model Pays Off

The business process model has now been established and operating long enough to clearly demonstrate the magnitude of the accomplishment. Processes are regularly measured and reported. Internal conflict and tensions are dramatically reduced. Most important for United Defense stakeholders, ASD has generated record-setting financial performances over the last two years. As the division continues to build and model more advanced processes, continually improved customer focus and execution excellence are expected.

In order to ensure that the business process model would become an enduring foundation for improving process management and future growth, it had to be fully integrated into the continual improvement philosophy of the organization. This was a key lesson learned from previous process improvement efforts, many of which turned into “shelfware” when the implementing teams disbanded. The tendency to reinvent process improvement with new management approaches was replaced with an enduring but flexible continual improvement approach in the business process model. Its architecture has provided a robust and flexible framework for integrating other process improvement initiatives, among them ISO 9001 for quality; ISO 14001 for environmental management; CMMI® for software & systems engineering; P-CMM® for workforce development; and “lean thinking.” Flexible architecture is essential for accommodating new initiatives and evolving customer needs while always providing a baseline from which to measure improvement.

By starting at the top and consistently maintaining a vision of reducing process complexity and giving process champions latitude to define and improve their processes within the defined process architecture, United Defense has built a system that has proved it can meet the challenges of a continually evolving and changing business environment. By augmenting the expert minds that made ASD successful in the past with the expert knowledge embedded in its business processes, ASD has created a solid path for improving business performance and satisfying customers well into the future.

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### PM’s Dilemma Hits the Mark

I liked the article “The Program Manager’s Dilemma” in the May-June 2004 issue of *Defense AT&L* very much. I particularly liked the author’s analogy with “The Prisoner’s Dilemma” and the truth tables that illustrated the consequences of the various combinations of trust and don’t trust.

I was the software team lead on a contract with one of the prime DoD contractors several years ago, and mutual trust worked quite well. We both made mistakes and both forgave each other when it happened. We managed to avoid blame-throwing and letters to the contracting officer. I agree that if a person must pick one side as a default, it is better to err on the side of trusting even if you get burned a few times. Otherwise, you will be always be callous and suspicious and never reap the benefits of a mutual trust relationship.

One thing people in the government often fail to appreciate is that contractors must make money to stay in business. They can’t deficit-spend like the government. Often people view this money-making as greed, when it is only survival. Viewing it as greed leads to mistrust.

Al Kaniss