Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) Services

The Clean Water Institute, founded by Clean Water Services in 2010, provides outside parties with access to key staff and resources instrumental to making BPR a success.

We’ll help you:
- Reduce Management Layers
- Redeploy Staff
- Design Early Retirement and Buy-Out Incentive Programs
- Design and Achieve Budget Reduction Targets

Our Experience
Clean Water Services (CWS), a water resources management utility, encountered a significant challenge in 1995. After implementing a $100 million capital expansion to meet nutrient reduction requirements established by new regulation, it faced public pressure to privatize (like many other similar agencies at the time). After focusing on quality for many years, CWS now added a focus on value. Under the leadership of General Manager Bill Gaffi, CWS embarked on a BPR that created results unlike anything seen before in the public sector. In a matter of three years, CWS reduced staff and its budget by 20%—and has held these gains for nearly 15 years. Not long after implementing BPR, CWS won first place in EPA's National Clean Water Act Recognition Award for best operated facility at both of its advanced treatment facilities.

The legacy of BPR’s value-driven approach remains at CWS, demonstrating that quality can be maintained and improved concurrently. Recently, CWS implemented Effective Utility Management tools and the deployment of Lean/Six Sigma tools. CWS’s experience demonstrates that significant gains in value can be achieved through BPR. Those interested in accessing the expertise at CWS may do so through its non-profit Partner the Clean Water Institute.

BPR in Depth
The District launched a competitiveness initiative in the late 1990’s that lead to dramatic decreases in the cost to run CWS, including a $6 million (20%) decrease in the budget and a 75 full-time position reduction over two years. People often regard BPR as a cause of enormous upheaval and
change. However, with staff at CWS supporting the effort, and strong leaders willing to execute it, the organization emerged stronger in the end.

BPR enabled CWS to forgo rate increases for several years and to fund major capital improvements to meet new regulatory requirements with cash from rate revenue. Despite almost 20 years after the initiative started, the focus on value continues today at the District. Staffing levels remain far below the budgeted amounts from 1997 despite the increase in customers and new programs administered by CWS. The savings over this time amount to $142 million in direct operating costs and an additional $150 million in avoided capital. BPR and related activities have therefore saved CWS’s ratepayers nearly $300 million.

BPR provided the District with the freedom and flexibility to move the utility where it needs to be. The culture of providing the highest quality to our ratepayers remains a guiding ethos. A number of staff members are trained in the basics of Lean Six Sigma process and recent projects include a revision of the contracts and purchasing process as well as analyzing the fundamentals of biological phosphorus removal process control at one of the treatment facilities.

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About the Clean Water Institute

The Clean Water Institute (CWI) is a nonprofit organization, created by a well-respected public watershed management agency named Clean Water Services, to assist communities with watershed recovery efforts. CWI has capacity to convene and facilitate projects focused on education, restoration and technological innovations. It aims to further research and the development and implementation of treatment technologies and watershed recovery programs. CWI operates with a mission “To advance watershed restoration and resource recovery through innovative strategies and to promote scientific research, education, and environmental protection activities that benefit watersheds around the world.”