



Energy and Services Company

Change Management Moves Large Utility Forward

As one of the largest natural gas utilities in the Southeast, our client's non-utility subsidiaries and divisions are also engaged in acquiring, marketing, transporting and storing natural gas for large-volume customers, and in retailing residential and commercial gas appliances.

Ciber has worked with more than 100 utilities – electric, gas, and water – on such issues and areas as Smart Grid, billing and customer information systems, enterprise resource planning, work management systems, GIS and security. Our combined industry, technological and business expertise helps utilities overcome challenges and create repeatable solutions based on global priorities.

The client is an energy and services company primarily engaged in the transportation, distribution and sale of natural gas to over 690,000 residential, commercial and industrial customers in the Southeast. Ciber was engaged by the client to develop an IT Strategy and actionable roadmap through conducting an assessment of the company's business systems, related support systems, processes and infrastructure. An evaluation of the IT organization and an assessment of the alignment between IT and the business were also integral components of this initiative.

Dynamic change in the energy landscape creates challenges

The client faced a changing business and legislative landscape with SmartGrid, alternative energy variables and Cap and Trade to name a few. In addition, the client is evaluating and experimenting with non-regulated revenue offerings. Given the dynamic changes in their internal and external environments, the client wanted to ensure that their information technology environment would support their desire to be responsive, nimble and operationally secure. The goal of the initiative was to analyze the current state of the IT systems, platforms, processes, infrastructure, governance and organization. Ciber would then evaluate these against contemporary standards and "best practices", and make recommendations on how to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the company's technology platforms and IT organization.

Also, the fact that business and IT integration and relationships had broken down was of high concern to management as this situation was impacting both IT and business results in fundamental ways.

Organizational Change Management aligns IT and business

In response to the need to effectively assess the alignment between the business and the IT organization and provide a vehicle for “actionable” remediation, the Ciber team designed and deployed a structured Organizational Change Management (OCM) methodology to:

- Identify core “root cause” process and behavioral dynamics that result in business/IT disconnects and misalignment
- Apply contemporary analysis tools and service quality fundamentals as goals and operating constructs
- Provide a framework through which the IT organization can move forward with corrective action

The methodology allows for the identification and isolation of relevant issues impacting the effective integration of IT with the business. This provided a basis to conduct interventions and workshops designed to bring focus to those issues among impacted incumbent team members and stakeholders via visible and measurable work streams. The methodology facilitates the direct engagement of stakeholders at multiple levels, identifies ‘low-hanging fruit’ as a means for achieving early wins to gain the confidence of the organization, and actively accelerates the ability of IT to collaborate with external stakeholders.

Its foundational components are grounded in quality and process improvement approaches such as business process reengineering and Six Sigma. The strength of the methodology lies in its intervention-focus vs. traditional, softer Change Management solutions. This approach blends professional practices of Organization Development, Change Management and Knowledge Management as a means to produce visible, measurable changes in the client’s environment in real-time. The incremental value comes from a progressive, cross-functional view of what an organization can accomplish when working together productively and Ciber’s ability to provide a clear and auditable plan to achieve that goal.

Improved morale sets the stage for innovation

The Ciber team observed unexpected, proactive “real-time” adoption of the OCM methodology and its resulting findings during the engagement itself. This directly led to a positive impact on IT morale during the IT Roadmap exercise. Given the clarity of the methodology and how it could help IT align effectively with the business, the IT organization readily embraced the approach and actively participated on its orchestration and deliverable development.

Deployment of this methodology, and the resulting roadmap was a cornerstone for the change management initiative to dramatically improve and optimize the integration between the IT organization and the business.

The client stated they expected the quality of work performed by Ciber on the information technology strategy component of the engagement. They also indicated the results from the organizational assessment work stream far exceeded their expectations as they weren’t aware of Ciber’s expertise in the areas of human capital or organizational development.

The clarity of the OCM methodology had a practical impact. Greater efficiencies were realized, resulting in cost-reductions. Even more important, a clear understanding of the client’s needs paired with successful deployment of the methodology and forward-thinking IT strategy enabled the organization to become more operationally secure, responsive and nimble. The client is now positioned for the future, with enhanced flexibility and a foundation for growth and innovation.

About Ciber

Ciber is a global IT consulting company with approximately 6,000 employees in North America, Europe and Asia/Pacific. Ciber partners with organizations to develop technology strategies and solutions that deliver tangible business value. Founded in 1974, the company trades on the New York Stock Exchange (CBR). For more information, visit www.Ciber.com.