

What do we mean by Catalyst?

The end game of any engagement is for the customer to get something implemented and eventually managed. Operations are the policeman of the operational environment, no compromises are acceptable.

It doesn't matter how good the engagement is if it doesn't work afterwards. The biggest complaint customers have is that they were sold something that doesn't eventually work, or they had a very stressful time during the whole implementation process. The focus of this segment is to see things through the eyes of the customer, clearly understanding the Operational environment, starting from the point of how something will operate, and reverse engineering the solution and associated activities to ensure that the customer experience is just as strong afterwards and during as it is at the beginning.

Having a strong understanding of how operations functions in both the customer environment as well as your own and your own will enable you to be a true Operational Broker, someone who can share best practice in context to your knowledge of both operational platforms.

This experience will give you fundamental skills to avoid pitfalls and guarantee operational success, so when you put the solution together it works in an integrated, cohesive and reliable way.

Why does being a Catalyst matter in Professional Services ?

Most PS organisations focus so heavily on the sales process that they forget the importance of implementing well and ensuring a robust operational solution. This is an important part of the customer experience as it build confidence throughout the journey. An experienced Catalyst can identify issues before they occur and can suggest meaningful alternatives that will speed up the process and ensure success. Or being responsive when things go wrong.



I. Customer Service Excellence

Foundational knowledge on the methods for delivering customer service excellence, including all touch points in the customer experience, and how to get the organisation to rally round to provide strong customer service, the key elements of improving the customer relationship .

Why does this skill matter?

The PS guy is the secret weapon for good customer service. Because they have the potential to be close to the customer and their needs they have the opportunity to change the perception of quality at a large number of touch points. This is a massive opportunity to get at the heart of the service and be the temperature on behalf of the your organisation.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

Strong Relationship builder and an authority in my subject. I understand where people are coming from and I'm very good at setting and exceeding expectations. I'm a strong networker and I am sensitive and tuned in to the feeling of the customer and am able to articulate the real issues to my own organisation.

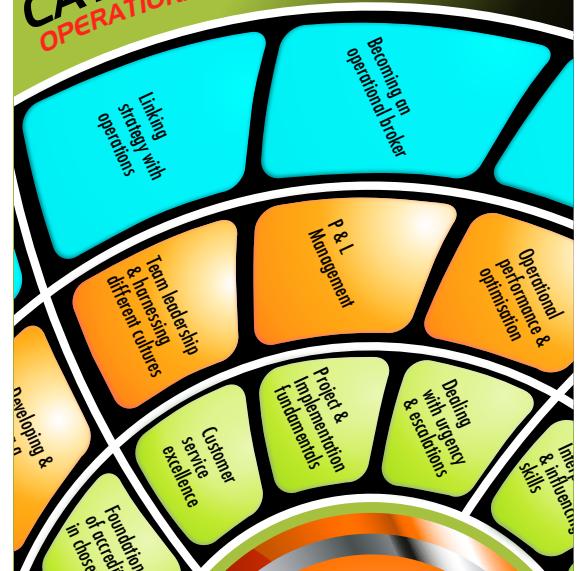


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What are the foundations of being a Catalyst?

The reputation for a catalyst can be built or destroyed on the ability of the individual to deal with issues as they arise. The biggest complaint people have is not getting regular feedback during a problem and the key to building strong foundations is to develop skills around interacting with transparency when communicating with customers, possessing solid project methods for both project management and implementation, and the ability to act on escalations and issues which will inevitably occur.

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2. Project & Implementation Fundamentals

Fundamentals on skills and methods to delivering high quality implementations and approaches to excelling in project management and delivery. Strong focus on the skill on practical implementation and project management which takes real life experience and the application of pragmatic methodology and structure away from the theory.

Why does this skill matter?

At some point, being structured and being able to really make things happen is vital to success, and developing a strong reputation for this will drive a reputation of someone who gets things done. Treating each engagement as a project will give good foundations and portray a solid and professional work ethic, and overall enjoys things get done well and on time.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

I'm organised and structured. I've thought through the component parts of what needs to be done and how to get there, without ignoring the costs. Most important of all, I have a strong sense of setting and managing customer expectations understanding delivering is important, but we also need to take care of the costs.

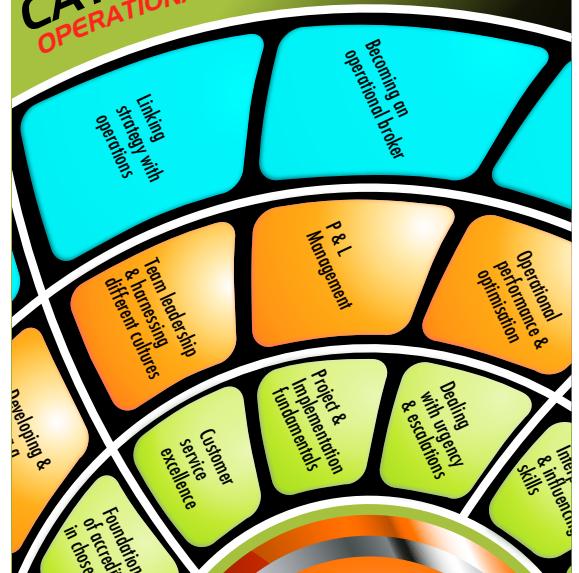


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3. Dealing with urgency & escalations

Core skills on how to optimally manage escalations and urgent issues thought the project lifecycle. Most customers feel let down when people don't give feedback or manage expectations during an escalation, there is also a need to develop the skill to ring fence the people fixing the problem from the communication channel.

Why does this skill matter?

Having a sense of urgency is really important, but being able to differentiate the urgent from the Important is key. Escalations are interesting because they go up the management chain until they eventually get directed to the person who can do something about it. This segment focuses on how to manage really effectively and get stuff done at the same time as keeping good communication channels open and getting problems resolved quickly and professionally.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

I've already thought through the mitigation plan if there is a problem and can quickly leap into effective action. I'm action oriented but calm and thoughtful.

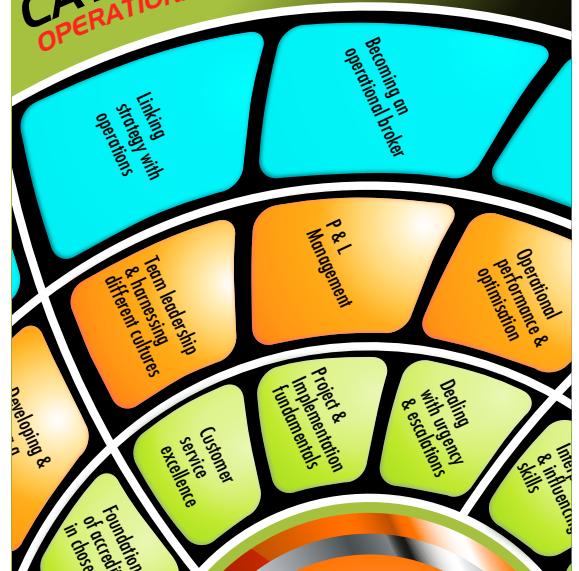
There's a need to be someone who is level headed but can make decisions quickly and overcome roadblocks.

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I. Team leadership & harnessing different cultures

In this environment there is a constant need to work in direct and virtual teams and to have the ability to quickly get the team to gel and be effective. In the International arena, there is a real benefit of working in a wide geography, which requires skills to be able to manage people remotely who may not be direct reports and harness the positive parts of each culture without generalising.

Why does this skill matter?

Being in a virtual or matrix team has become the norm especially during projects or engagements, and this if not understood or managed correctly can be the make or break of an activity or project. Being skilled in this area will quickly standout and elevate the success of that team and their engagement.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

I'm very well versed in remote and matrix management, I'm, an excellent communicator, and I really understand people, what their motivational drivers are and how to get the best out of the team. I avoid generalisations of different cultures, but still drive the team hard towards the goal.

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What does a professional Catalyst know how to do?

The professional catalyst builds on the foundation so there is a strong focus on managing the day-to-day performance for both technical and business operations. There is a strong requirement to make the most out of what you have , which leads to a strong focus on optimisation, looking for ways to maximise the investment. There is also a growing requirement to manage the costs; it is therefore key to have in depth knowledge of managing a P&L.

Finally this is the area requires strong leadership skills, harnessing a multi-cultural workforce, either with dynamic and virtual, remote or direct teams of professionals.

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2. P&L management

Running PS as a business. Being able to run a full P&L, and deeply understand how to build and maintain the appropriate revenue and associated costs within this business and associated business reporting and actions.

Why does this skill matter?

Professional Services is normally a profit centre, so it's really important that everyone understands that costs and revenues go together and success isn't only about getting things done or having a Roll Royce solution but that the company is profitable. Profitable PS funds more people and expertise and ultimately improves the whole customer and internal experience.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

I know how to run a business. In fact I treat this like my business, and am able to understand all the component parts that make up how things get done.

I can build a business case, create a TCO and ROI for a customer that would be accepted at Board level, and I could hold my own in an internal business review to support the business and associated numbers.



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3. Operational performance & optimisation

There is a great deal of pressure on organisations to do more for less, so having the skill to optimise infrastructures, organisations and provide operational efficiency is key. This includes performance optimisation, automated operations and organisational efficiency.

Why does this skill matter?

The building blocks of a solid business case for buying your products and services will come from this area. Being able to step back and draw from experience will enable you to come up with an optimisation strategy that is both creative and practical.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

You have genuine experience with optimising infrastructures and organisations. For Infrastructures, both inside and outside of the system and network and within the application. For organisations you will be familiar with how to develop operational efficiency through automated operations techniques and developments.

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I. Linking strategy with operations

This focuses on the master skill or turning a strategy into an operational vision. What needs to be done to translate the strategy into a practical operational environment and the associated linkages, to build a robust and highly efficient and solid operation?

Why does this skill matter?

There are two key issues in this space. Firstly, most organisations don't take the time to step back evaluate and plan, and secondly when they do are not able to turn it into an operational view. Being able to clearly translate a strategy into an operational plan is a real differentiator and generally what people are looking for but not able to articulate.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

You know what good looks like and have a clear view of the end state model. You are able to translate the strategic view into clear and measurable building blocks and can bring the real world operational experience into view. You are able to question key parts of the strategy as the policeman of the operational environment where things need to be robust, efficient and stable.

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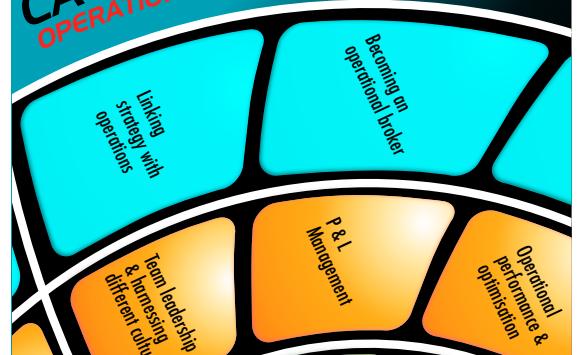
What does mastery in terms of an Catalyst look like?

The master Catalyst is able to see things through the eyes of the customer, almost reverse engineering what good looks like. This is taking what was on paper as a strategy and operationalising it.

A master has very strong skills in business process and is able to navigate through the system and organisation and suggest improvements to either fix or enhance an existing process

They are like a private banker, they understand as much about the customer's environment as they do about their own and are able to act as a broker between the two to make things happen and gain trust and credibility.

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2. Becoming an operational broker

Looking through the eyes of how something should work, this skill is about being able to pull together all the elements of an organisation to ensure something works in an optimal way. The focus in this area is on knowing what good looks like and having the skills to pull together multiple organisations and functions in order to create, improve or fix the operation environment, through challenges, faults or issues with solid route cause analysis.

Why does this skill matter?

Operations can be a thankless task, no one ever congratulates you for keeping things up and running but the key part of this segment is to enable this to happen.

Operations need to be solid and stable so the goal is to always look for ways of improving the environment, process and services.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

People that are good at this work from the outside in never in a silo. They have very strong interpersonal skills and an eye for detail. They are always looking at ways to improve and simplify what happens in the Operations eco space. They understand the importance of being transparent, and building strong ties across multiple functions and are the champion for service. Their mantra is “ how can we learn from mistakes and improve what we do”.

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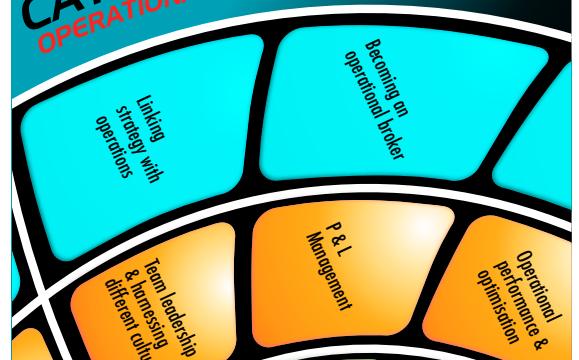
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3. Business process management

This is an advanced skill around Business process, not just from a perspective of understanding the Business process and making improvements to optimise, but having the knowledge to be able to understand the cost of each step and being able to design a full automated workflow in order to significantly reduce costs and improve operational efficiency using BPM.

Why does this skill matter?

This area is not very well understood but mastered can provide the highest efficiency and costs savings and massively reduce errors and risks that occur due to woefully inadequate processes and organisational flaws. There are two areas that make the biggest difference. Firstly improving the process to streamline efficiency and secondly automating as much as possible to eliminate common human mistakes and in efficiencies of process. Cost savings and efficiency gains can be substantial.

What am I doing if I'm good at this?

I am a subject matter expert in this. I can correlate each part of the process from both a cost and efficiency point of view. I am very comfortable design or improving processes but equally skilled at designing solutions that drastically automate as much as the process as possible. I can then develop and implement a business case and implementation plan to ensure these savings and efficiencies are really achieved in the short and medium term.



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