



Health Plan Resource Development

Realizing the potential of the Health Plan Analyst

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In today's competitive Health Plan market, it is vital to ensure that the people supporting your core administrative system are embodied with the knowledge and competencies necessary to meet the demands of your customers.

Identifying, measuring and maintaining the appropriate resource knowledge and system competency levels allow your management team to spend less time aligning work with the appropriate resources, and more time managing and implementing new products and features to achieve organizational goals and objectives.

Configuring the system right the first time, is proven to improve customer satisfaction, increase efficiency and reduce costs.

The best instrument to support the identification, measurement, and maintenance of resource proficiency, is generally not found within most organizations or standard training programs. A resource development program that provides the tools, content and curriculum is **crucial** in order to develop extraordinary resources to support the configuration needs of your Health Plan.

IVSTech has designed a program specifically for Health Plans that focuses on:

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- *Lowering cost by minimizing the need for rework, as well as the cost associated with on-shore/off-shore back-office support*
 - *Systemically improving the competencies of existing resources*
 - *Identifying, evaluating, assessing and developing new resources/staff*
 - *Increasing the proper usage of core systems, and improving the quality of the your Product delivered to your customers*
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IVSTech has developed the **customizable** Resource Development Program (RDP) specifically to meet your needs.

Integrated with our proprietary Talent Manager Resource Assessment (TMRA) solution to automate the programs' process and content delivery, our program contains over 12 years of hands-on health plan industry content and experience in the configuration of the Facets™ System.

IVSTech can deliver a long-term solution to address your demands for Resource Development in your Health Plan.

June 16, 2017

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INTRODUCTION

Are you sure that your Business System Analyst resources are current and operationally knowledgeable on your core administrative system? Odds are that many of the resources you depend on to manage and maintain the configuration of your Health Plan's core administrative system, have a dated set of knowledge and/or have not actually been properly trained from an operational perspective at all.

The management and operation of the Health Plan's core administrative system, such as Cognizant's Facets™ Extended Enterprise, utilized by many of today's Health Plan and Third Party Administrator (TPA), requires a stable and knowledgeable roster of Business System Analysts (BSA) at the helm.

These resources must be knowledgeable in Health Plan / TPA operations and possess the competency necessary to configure clinical aspects of claims processing, administration of benefits, reimbursement of providers, application of care management, management of membership and enrollment, compliance, reporting, HIPAA EDI transaction sets and SQL/data analysis. In addition to this formidable set of topics, they also require a sound understanding on how these functional areas of the system and business interact.

It is vital to the success of your organization to have your core administrative system properly configured.

From a resource/staff development perspective, this complex mix of operational, industry and system knowledge is difficult to measure, manage and cultivate. Many organizations have developed formal training programs to help BSAs understand Health Insurance operations and/or the core administrative solution; while other organizations intentionally or not, rely on tribal knowledge, informal communication, on the job training or even supplementing knowledge with contracted specialists to manage resource knowledge. These approaches, in actual practice, tend to be **ineffective**, **unsustainable** and **costly**, from both an operational and employee satisfaction perspective.

To effectively confront this problem faced by your Health Plan or TPA, **we will help to transform** the problem into an opportunity by outlining the details of this obstacle, providing a repeatable system and content based solution, and also leverage our experience supporting health plan system, people and processes over the past 12 years.



OVERVIEW

Today's Health Plan requires competent resources that can expand their knowledge of Health Plan systems and apply the competencies that are crucial for them to be an asset to the organization. Selecting a partner that, not only understands the Health Care market and its challenges, but also recognizes that the essential operational resource competencies needed for success should be a priority in your organization. The **IVSTech** Resource Development Program (RDP), powered by the TRMA (Talent Resource Manager Assessment) system provides the program, content and complimentary system to develop extraordinary resources to support your Health Plan configuration needs.

Within this article we will examine how a systems approach to resource development can be applied to the Business System Analyst role. By delivering a greater amount of **transparency** to system and operational proficiency through a standardized evaluation process that measures current state and opportunity for improvement, the Resource Development Program, supported by the TMRA, can ensure existing and potential resources, can demonstrate capabilities well beyond what is currently available to Health Plans today.

To study this common impediment facing most Health Plans and TPAs utilizing Facets™ or similar applications categorized as core Health Plan Administrative systems, we will cover the following topics:

- Examining the Problem
- Discuss the benefits of addressing the problem
- Present the IVSTech solution to the problem
- Share a TPAs Experience with our Solution
- Provide a conclusion



THE PROBLEM

During the implementation of the core processing system, resources are typically provided with end to end training on the Health Plan's core administrative solution, such as, the Facets™ Extended Enterprise. This preparation, when combined with an experienced implementation partner, aids the Health Plan or TPA to standup the system and begin operations on the new solution.

Following the implementation, the reality of day-to-day operations leads to challenges cultivating existing resources to advance their skill sets, and adding new resources to the BSA team with sufficient knowledge to properly support the business.

Over the past twelve years **IVSTech** has worked with a variety of Health Plans and TPAs across the United States. While interacting with our clients, we have observed some common trends related to BSA resource staffing practices, training, knowledge and culture. Within the Facets™ client base we also observed the limited resource development programs that focused on resource specific roles and responsibilities to efficiently support the organization.

To articulate this problem, we will discuss Training vs. Resource Development, Knowledge Culture, Standardized Measurement, Processes and Content and the benefits of change for Health Plans and TPAs.

Resource Development is much more broad and deeper in scope and includes the intent for ongoing improvement.

Training vs. Resource Development

One characteristic that is quite common among Facets™ users is the focus on Training rather than Resource/Staff Development. Within the context of our examination, Training is the action of teaching a person a skill or type of behavior. Often, training is one size fits all, and for the sake of efficiency, is rather generic in nature and not focused on the resource's specific role in the organization. Typically, the training provided to the BSA team during the implementation of Facets™ is focused purely on setting up the system, and not on how to properly configure the system to meet short and long-term goals and objectives from an operational perspective.

By contrast, Resource Development is much more broad and deeper in scope and includes the intent for ongoing improvement. Development is more flexible and is more open to including real-world content that can only be delivered through years of experience in the field of systems configuration.



Resource Development includes the delivery of this content and entails measuring current resource comprehension of not just a single skill, but the complement of skills needed to support the assigned role.

This focus on Training is not an indictment of these organizations, but rather highlights the complexity of the competencies necessary for the role of BSA tasked with managing a flexible and therefore complex enterprise solution. Managing this solution without a deep understanding of the proper as well as improper usage of the solution can, and usually does, lead to long-term issues with configuration and maintenance of the system.

Knowledge Culture

Within most organizations Knowledge Culture can be categorized into a blend of two definitions, Formal Training and Tribal Knowledge:

- **Formal Training Program** – Formal training provides a skill or function with specific instruction usually general in nature and not based on role or actual use of the system. These programs have their benefits, but can also be so generic that resource growth is limited. Most often, new staff are provided this sort of training, which is a good foundation, but the training is rarely on-going and results in the inability to effectively perform day to day tasks.
- **Tribal Knowledge / On the Job Training** – Leveraging resources that have been at the heart of the system configuration since the implementation is common place for, “this is how things are done” and, “if you have questions, give me a call”. While such resources are invaluable to your operations, there is a risk of creating Armored Car resources.

Such resources own key pieces of knowledge about the business and configuration, and, if they leave the organization, place the stability of on-going system configuration and maintenance at risk.

Newer resources might receive some formal training, but most often gain knowledge through peer to peer interaction and on the job training. This approach can often lead to the paradigm of “we do it this way, because that is the way we have always done it”, and quite often the more complex items stay with the limited group of resources and never are transitioned to other BSAs.

The Problem – The circumstances outlined above create a difficult environment for management to ensure the BSA team can adequately support not only day to day operations, but also the ever growing



list of projects and special initiatives. Without a structure Resource Development program it is difficult to assess if the resources responsible for the design and configuration of the Facets™ System have the level of competency or breadth of knowledge necessary to support the **ongoing** operation of the system and the changing requirements of your customers.

Furthermore, the inconsistency of how resources are trained and configure the system, leads to maintenance issues that decreases the value of the system and speed to market for your Health Plan offerings. All of this can be compounded by introducing expensive third party resources with unverified expertise in your solution and business.



Standardized Measurement, Processes and Content

Part of the reason that organizations struggle with Resource Development specifically around the Facets™ system is that no standardized process and content solution is available to the industry to evaluate BSA on their proficiency within key systems, processes and solutions utilized by many Health Plans and TPA. With this lack of standardization and development, organizations have been forced to depend on expensive supplemental contract and consulting resources, not just for new initiatives, but also to maintain current business. Validating supplemental resources to ensure that they also have the necessary skills and knowledge is an entirely different, but related issue.

The total cost associated with the absence of BSA competency evaluation and development are not only measured in the cost associated with the over utilization of contract labor, but can also be measured in re-work, and customer dissatisfaction. Incomplete knowledge from the BSA, be it a staff employee or contractor, can lead to an enormous amount of re-work that is often not tracked accurately during the examination of resources, contracting supplemental staff and budgeting.

“We never have the time to do it right, but always have to make time to do it over”

The lack of standardized measurement, processes and content also contribute to the resource competency and compensation inconsistency, as aligning resource capabilities to compensation is difficult to manage without sound metrics and standards.

Benefit of Change

All the above factors have both a quantitative and qualitative cost to the organization. At the very least the stability of the BSA resources you depend on to support customers is difficult to measure, and therefore, virtually impossible to maintain. The identification and retention of competent resources with the necessary skills and experience is imprecise at best. Addressing this challenge and introducing quantitative and qualitative process and measures allow for a more predictable resource pool, increased quality, reduced turnover, reduced contracted labor cost and will allow management to better focus on the what, rather than the how.

THE SOLUTION

The Resource Development Program (RDP) was created by **IVSTech** using a systems approach to identify aptitude and cultivate resources with the skills needed to support health plans. The model is designed to identify, evaluate, quantify, develop, and retain skilled resources. The systems approach to developing qualified resources will provide these candidates with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to be successful in supporting your health plan.



The value of this development program is demonstrated by providing Health Plans the ability to identify, evaluate, train, improve and retain qualified resources. Using the Talent Manager Resource Assessment Solution (TMRA), each resource is given a pre-assessment to evaluate their competency level and assist in identifying the skills and knowledge that require development. The curriculum of the program can then be refined to focus on the specific resource competency areas that require improvement.

Our structured approach to Resource Development for each system module follows a common path to ensure that the content provided to resources is pertinent to their role, and the evaluation is in-line with the content provided in a repeatable yet customizable way. We begin with evaluating the Health Plan Requirements to determine the modules necessary for a successful program. To begin this process, we perform the following steps:

- 1) Perform a high-level Pre-assessment that is used to identify the resource competency levels to identify the modules to incorporate into our customized planning process.
- 2) Upon completion and evaluation of the Pre-assessments, we are then able to identify the modules as well as the resources where the competency levels need improvement
- 3) Based on the modules and resources identified, we are then able to perform the planning activities and curriculum development in coordination with the Health Plan.
- 4) Having the planning time-line in place, we then begin with a kick-off for management and attendees that provides detailed information on how the program works and the supporting systems and processes that are necessary for the success of this Program



- 5) Upon the completion of the kick-off, and for each module included in the program, we have established a customizable process to inject general as well as health plan specific content into the program based on the needs of **your** health plan. Whether there is a need to include supplemental materials by Line of Business (LOB), such as Commercial, Medicare or Medicaid, or specific processes, such as Plan Benefit or Billing Design, we can accommodate this need through our content inventory that we refer to as the IVSTech Resource Development Playbook.
- 6) Each Module, along with its associated Playbook materials follow a consistent, proven methodology that includes an introduction to the module, an overview of module contents, real-life scenarios, resource development, a summary of the module, a practice assessment, and a module assessment utilizing the TMRA.
- 7) Upon the completion of the module assessment, a TMRA report is generated to evaluate the attendees based on the assessment results. These results are then shared with management to analyze and determine the new level of competency and where additional improvement may be needed.
- 8) At the point in time when all in scope modules for the program are complete, a comprehensive TMRA assessment is assigned to the attendees to evaluate each attendee's progress and identify areas for improvement (Post-assessment).
- 9) Upon the completion of the Post-assessment, a TMRA report is generated to evaluate the attendees based on end-to-end RDP Assessment results. These results are then shared with management to analyze and determine the new level of competency as well as module level knowledge retention and where additional improvement may be needed in all areas covered during the program.
- 10) **IVSTech** then provides a final report that includes the Pre-Assessment, Module Assessments, Post-Assessment results along with feed-back, recommendations and next steps that are then reviewed with management to complete the delivery our program.

IVSTech believes that with this **real-world** content based resource development, along with its process to identify, evaluate, quantify, develop, and retain skilled resource and a systems approach to developing capable resources will provide your BSA with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to support your business and customers.



A TPAs EXPERIENCE WITH OUR SOLUTION

The experience of a large national TPA will help illustrate the powerful nature of our TMRA / Resource Development Program (RDP).

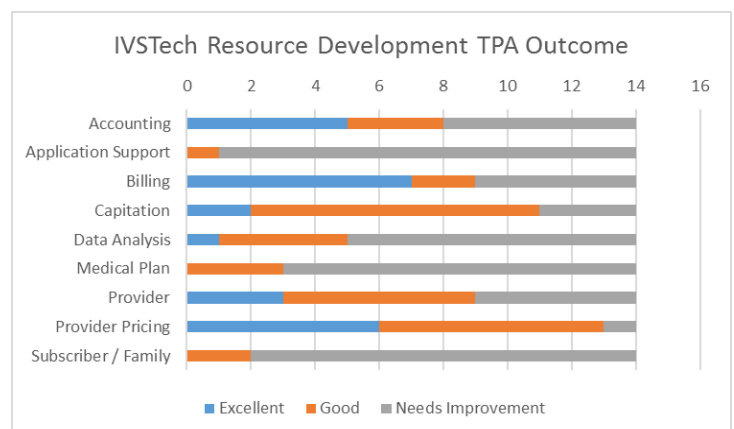
The TPA has a large BSA team to support both project and day to day operations around the Facets™ system. Like many Facets™ centric BSA operations, the team was comprised of highly experienced resources who have been supporting the system for years, and newer resources at the beginning of their career as a BSA.

Management found it difficult to balance the work load across this pool of resources, as some resources were only experienced in specific modules, and there was no standardized measurement for module competency. **IVSTech**, working with the Management team, deployed our Resource Development Program. The program included the following:

- Pre-Assessment – The pre-assessment helped determine participation in the RDP and to refine curriculum scope.
- Resource Development – Facilitated BSA focused sessions on identified modules. Sessions included both lecture and hands-on lab activities based on real work activities BSA encounter as part of their role.
- Module Assessments – Module specific evaluations to test the proficiency of resources following instruction.
- Post Assessment – Full end to end evaluation of participants against program defined scope and objectives.

The chart on the right represents one of the key deliverables provided following the Post Assessment.

We were able to identify at a resource, role and module level where there was opportunity to improve the team, and as a result better support internal and external constituents. Each Health Plan and/or TPA is unique in their own way, and have resources of different competencies and competency levels accordingly. Using the



Resource Development Program, IVSTech could focus on the resource development needs of this TPA based on what they needed to meet their goals and objectives.



Each module was performed in a consistent format including instructional as well as hands-on labs utilizing real-life scenarios that provided our users with examples that can be used as guidelines for their own configuration needs and requirements. These users were then assessed and evaluated to determine their competency level after each of the modules were complete.

This roadmap now provides the TPA with an understanding of the competency levels of their resources including the areas of the system where they are strong as well as the areas that need improvement.

Key Findings

OUTCOMES OF OUR TPA THAT COMPLETED THE **IVSTECH** RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM:

- THERE IS NOW A VERY STRONG UNDERSTANDING OF PROVIDER MODULES, INCLUDING PROVIDER, PROVIDER PRICING AND CAPITATION.
- OUR TPA IS ALSO STRONG IN OTHER AREAS, SUCH AS, ACCOUNTING AND BILLING
- WE CAN SEE CLEARLY THAT THE AREAS OF LOW COMPETENCY LEVELS, WHERE WE KNOW THERE IS A NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT, INCLUDES APPLICATION SUPPORT, DATA ANALYSIS, MEDICAL PLAN/BENEFITS AND SUBSCRIBER/FAMILY MODULES



CONCLUSION

In summary, Health Plans and TPAs are successful when there is an alignment between resource competencies and allotted tasks. Capable resources that understand how to configure the system right the first time, is proven to improve customer satisfaction, increase efficiency, reduce costs and allow management to focus more on what needs to be accomplished rather than the how to accomplish the task. Resource capabilities and knowledge are not static, but rather an ever-evolving competency improvement process.

Having a Resource Development Program in place as compared to Training Program, not only strengthens the workforce, but provides a platform for continuous improvement throughout the organization. Systems approach, standardized processes, role based real-world content, quantitative measurement can provide a pathway for your success.

What kind of Training Program (Training Culture) do you have in place at your Health Plan? How might it benefit your Health Plan or TPA to have a structured, proven Resource Development Program in place for your workforce? The IVSTech Resource Development Program can provide this for you and much, much more.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

If your organization is interested in additional information on our Resource Development Program, or any of our broad range of professional services and tools that are specifically focused on serving Health Plans, please contact us at info@ivstech.com or visit our website at <http://ivstech.com>.

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