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Richard is a principal with Deloitte Consulting LLP and a part of the cross-functional Service Delivery Transformation Practice. He has more than 31 years of consulting experience assisting clients across multiple industries to help define, implement and enhance Global Business Service Organizations. Richard's experience ranges from simple organizational consolidation to Regional Shared Services Center Stand-Up/Outsourcing concurrent with ERP implementation.



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## The value a global process owner adds to an organization

As some organizations evolve from a functional to a process orientation they adapt their service delivery models. The role of the GPO is evolving in parallel.

### How has the role of the Global Process Owner (GPO) evolved over time?

The role of 'process owner' was first introduced, in the early 90's, by Michael Hammer and Jim Champy in their book "Reengineering the Corporation". Since then there has been a gradual evolution of organizations moving from a functional to a process orientation. During this evolution we have seen organizations continually adapt their service delivery models to meet changes in their business as well as the need to demonstrate value to their internal and external customers and shareholders.

Along this journey, the role—and impact—of the GPO has evolved in parallel with the maturity of the organizations in which they reside. Initially the role was grounded in the implementation of new processes; standardization, elimination of non-value added tasks, consolidation of work and automation. But as organizations have evolved and streamlined processes for more efficient and effective delivery, the role has grown into one of continuous improvement, compliance and adoption of new capabilities.

This evolution was driven by the realization that GPOs can deliver greater enterprise-wide value when appropriately empowered and enabled. From this standpoint, we have seen leading organizations evolve the role of the GPO across three dimensions: reporting lines, area of responsibility and style.

- **Reporting lines:** We now see GPOs reporting into service center leadership, global business services leaders, geographic leaders and even the C Suite. The reporting relationship of the GPO depends very much on the organization within which they work—especially with regard to their level of ambition, degree of emphasis on a process-driven culture and ability to leverage technology.
- **Area of responsibility:** The role of the GPO also looks different when the areas of responsibility are expanded. Responsibility for the global, end-to-end process including all aspects of talent, process and enabling technology looks different from a role focused on process improvement across a subset of activities.
- **Overall style:** We have seen the overall style of the GPO evolve from activist and facilitator, to coach and enforcer, and then to strategist and leader. Where the GPO sits on the spectrum of activist to leader depends very much on the maturity and culture of the organization and the relative emphasis it places on the process model.

Organizations increasingly recognize the potential enterprise-wide value that GPOs can contribute. In coming years, GPOs will likely play a key role in further aligning their organizations, setting their strategic agenda and reinforcing their company brands and culture. However, their success will likely be heavily dependent on leadership teams' ability to find and develop the right talent and create a governance landscape where the GPO can effect change.

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