

BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT. IMPROVEMENT OF INTERNAL CERTIFICATION PROCESSES

Marjetka Kastner¹
Mirjana Ivanuša Bezjak
Mojca Babuder

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to expose the processes which are important to run into the organizations.

Consumers around the world increasingly demand products and services that are simultaneously good for the economy, for the environment, and for society — the triple bottom line of sustainable growth.

Based on your existing systems, the Sustainable organization certificate demonstrates that you have implemented and documented processes with some elements of international standards (ISO 14001 and ISO 27001).

A Sustainable organization implements sustainability strategies that provide them with economic and cultural benefits attained through environmental and social responsibility and intensive care for employees. This rising demand is creating new pathways for businesses and governments to drive change for the global good. Developed countries are also home to sophisticated consumers whose choices drive business decisions worldwide and are increasingly aware of the triple bottom line of sustainable growth.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Processes play a crucial role in organizations as they provide structure, efficiency and consistency in carrying out tasks and achieving organizational objectives. Overall, processes are essential for organizations to operate efficiently, achieve their goals, maintain consistency, manage risks, and adapt to changing environments. By establishing effective processes organizations can enhance their performance, customer and employee satisfaction and long-term success (Arabi, 2007).

Among some essential roles that processes fulfil in organizations are Efficiency and Productivity, Consistency and Quality, Clarity and Accountability, Risk management and Compliance, Scalability and Growth, Continuous Improvement, Customer Satisfaction, Decision Making and Agility and Knowledge Management (Alrowwad et al., 2020).

Efficiency and productivity help streamline workflows and eliminate unnecessary steps or bottlenecks, leading to improved efficiency and productivity. Well-designed processes ensure that tasks are completed in a standardized and optimized manner, reducing wasted time, effort and resources.

Consistency and quality establish standardized procedures and guidelines for performing tasks, ensuring consistency and quality in the organization's outputs (Cooke, 1994; Frohmann, 2004). By following established processes, employees can consistently deliver products or services that meet or exceed customer expectations.

Clarity and accountability provide clarity on roles, responsibilities and the sequence of activities required to accomplish specific tasks. This helps employees understand their responsibilities and be accountable for their work (Schoorman et al., 2007). Clear processes also facilitate effective coordination and collaboration among team members.

¹ Corresponding author: Marjetka Kastner
Email: marjeta@llacademia.com

Risk management and compliance process enable organizations to manage risks and ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and industry requirements. Processes can include checks, controls and approvals that help mitigate risks, ensure data security and adhere to relevant standards or regulations.

Well defined processes lay the foundation for scalability and growth within organizations. As the organization expands, processes can be replicated or modified to accommodate increased workloads, additional departments or new business units. Standardized processes also facilitate knowledge transfer and on boarding of new employees.

Continuous Improvement processes provide a framework for continuous improvement and learning within organizations. By monitoring and analysing process performance, organizations can identify areas for improvement, implement changes and optimize their operations over time. This continuous improvement mindset fosters innovation and enhances the organization's competitiveness (Levin & Cross, 2004).

Customer satisfaction process directly impact customer satisfaction by ensuring consistent delivery of high-quality products or services. Well-designed processes consider customer needs, preferences and feedback, allowing organizations to meet or exceed customer expectations. Customer-centric processes contribute to enhanced customer loyalty and positive brand reputation (Stephenson, 1998).

Decision making and agility processes provide valuable information and insights for decision making. By capturing data, metrics and feedback related to processes organizations can make informed decisions, identify areas requiring attention and allocate resources effectively. Flexible processes also enable organizations to adapt quickly to changing market conditions or internal dynamics.

Knowledge management serve as a mechanism for capturing and sharing knowledge within organizations (Mavuso, 2007). They facilitate the transfer of best practices, lessons learned and expertise among employees, ensuring that valuable institutional knowledge is preserved and leveraged. This promotes learning, innovation and knowledge continuity.

2. THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS BASIC COMPOSITION

Organizations often consist of various departments of functional units, each with its own specific role and responsibilities. The specific departments within an organization can vary depending on its size, industry, and structure (Grego-Planer, 2019).

It's important to note that the specific departments can vary significantly depending on the organization's industry, size and structure. Some organizations may have additional departments specific to their sector, such as a healthcare organization having a medical services department or retail organization having a

merchandising department, military offices have some defence departments etc.

We will introduce some common departments found in many organizations:

- 1) Human Resources (HR): The HR department handles matters related to recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, performance management, employee relations, compensation and benefits, and overall workforce management.
- 2) Finance and Accounting: The finance department is responsible for managing the organization's financial resources, including financial planning, budgeting, financial reporting, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, and financial analysis.
- 3) Operations or Production: The operations department oversees the organization's core activities, such as manufacturing, production, service delivery, and process optimization. It ensures that products or services are delivered efficiently and in line with quality standards.
- 4) Marketing and Sales: The marketing and sales department is responsible for promoting the organization's products or services, conducting market research, developing marketing strategies, managing advertising and promotional campaigns, and handling sales activities to generate revenue (Bush 2016).
- 5) Information Technology (IT): The IT department manages the organization's technology infrastructure, including computer systems, networks, software applications, data management, cybersecurity, and IT support for employees.
- 6) Research and development (R&D): The R&D department focuses on innovation and new product development. It conducts research, experiments, and analysis to drive product improvements, explore new technologies, and stay ahead of market trends.
- 7) Customer Service: The customer service department handles inquiries, complaints, and support requests from customers. It plays a crucial role in maintaining positive customer relationships and ensuring customer satisfaction.
- 8) Administration or Operations Support: The administration department provides support services to the organization, including facilities management, office administration, procurement, logistics, and administrative support to various departments.
- 9) Legal and Compliance: The legal department ensures that the organization operates in compliance with relevant laws and regulations (Keil, 1989). It handles legal matters, contract management, intellectual property protection and risk management.

- 10) Strategic Planning or Business Development: This department is responsible for long-term strategic planning, market analysis, identifying growth opportunities, mergers and acquisitions, partnerships, and overall business development.

3. WHAT BASIC PROCESSES ARE CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION REGARDLESS OF ITS COMPOSITION

In general, organizations consist of various processes that help them function and achieve their goals effectively. Here are some basic processes commonly found in organizations, but there's also some specific processes and their implementation may vary depending on the nature, size, and industry of the organization (Figure 1).

Communication: Effective communication is essential for coordination, collaboration and sharing information within an organization. This process involves exchanging messages, ideas, and feedback through various channels such as meetings, emails, phone calls, and digital communication tools.

Decision Making: Decision-making processes involve analysing information, evaluating options, and choosing the best course of action to address organizational challenges or opportunities. Decision making can be hierarchical, where decisions are made by higher level authorities, or participatory, involving input from multiple stakeholders.

Planning: Planning involves setting goals, defining strategies, and developing action plans to achieve desired outcomes. It includes assessing the current situation, identifying priorities, allocating resources, and establishing timelines. Planning helps organizations anticipate future needs and align efforts towards achieving objectives.

Organizational Structure: This process involves designing the organizational structure, which determines how tasks, responsibilities and authority are distributed within the organization. It includes defining reporting lines, establishing departments or functional units and specifying roles and responsibilities.

Human Resource Management: Human resources processes involve activities related to managing and developing an organization's workforce. This includes recruitment, selection, training, performance evaluation, compensation and employee development. Human resources processes ensure that the organization has the right with the right skills to achieve it's objectives.

Operational Processes: These processes are directly related to the organization's core activities or production of goods and services. They may include manufacturing processes, service delivery processes, quality control, supply chain management and customer relationship management. Operational processes are specific to the nature of the organization's industry or sector.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Organizations need processes to monitor and evaluate their performance and progress towards their goals. This includes setting performance indicators, collecting data, analysing results and making necessary adjustments to improve performance. Monitoring and evaluation processes help organizations measure success, identify areas for improvement and make informed decisions.

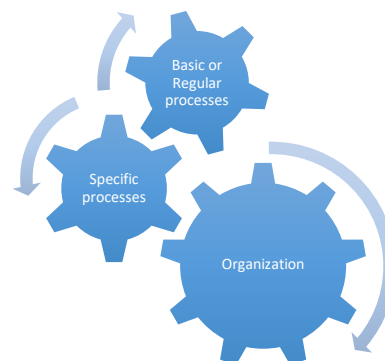


Figure 1. Processes in organization

Continuous improvement: Organizations should have processes in place to foster a culture of continuous improvement. This involves identifying opportunities for innovation, gathering feedback from stakeholders and implementing changes to enhance efficiency, quality and effectiveness.

4. THE IMPORTANCE OF KNOWLEDGE IN ORGANIZATION

Knowledge plays a vital role in organizations and is considered a valuable asset. To effectively harness knowledge, organizations often implement knowledge management practices, including knowledge sharing platforms, communities of practice, training programs, and knowledge documentation. By valuing and leveraging knowledge, organizations can enhance their performance, drive innovation and remain competitive in dynamic business environments. Among reasons why knowledge is important in organizations is: **Decision Making** where knowledge provides the foundation for decision making. It enables organizations to make better choices by drawing on insights, expertise and lessons learned from past experiences. Knowledge helps in evaluating alternatives, assessing risks, and considering various perspectives before making strategic or operational decisions. On the other hand with knowledge we can solving problems. Organizations face numerous challenges and problems on a regular basis. Knowledge equips employees with the necessary information and expertise to identify, analyse and solve problems effectively. We can also prove that sharing knowledge within teams and departments enhances problem-solving capabilities and accelerates the resolution of issues. Of course we can approve that innovation and adaption is essential for

fostering and driving organizational growth. By leveraging existing knowledge and encouraging the generation of new ideas, organizations can develop

innovative products, services and processes (Manes, et al., 2021).



Figure 2. Competitive advantage

Knowledge also enables organization to adapt to changing market conditions, technological advancements and customer preferences. Knowledge is also a key driver of learning and development within organizations. By sharing knowledge and providing access to resources, organizations empower their employees to acquire new skills, expand their knowledge base and continuously improve their performance. This fosters a culture of learning, growth and professional development.

Knowledge is also a sticker for collaborations and teamwork. That means when employees have access to relevant knowledge and expertise they can collaborate more effectively share ideas and work together towards common goals. This enhances productivity, creativity and overall team performance. Results show that organizations with knowledge have competitive advantage and effectively manage and leverage their knowledge and make strategic decisions that differentiate them from competitors (Figure 2). It allows them to innovate, deliver superior products or services and create unique value capturing valuable propositions (Novak, 2009)

Most of leaders know that the organization is good as the people it keeps. Knowledge serves as the organizational memory, capturing valuable insights, lessons and experiences. By preserving and sharing knowledge, organizations avoid reinventing the wheel and benefit from past success and failures. This knowledge continuity ensures that valuable expertise and institutional knowledge are retained even when individual employees leave the organization. (Allen, 2003).

With all these knowledge components organization is on the highest level in customers' eyes. Why? Because it makes customer satisfaction. Knowledge about customer's needs, preferences and feedback is crucial for delivering personalized and satisfactory experience. By leveraging customer knowledge, organizations can

tailor their products, services and interactions to meet customer expectations (Musumali, 2019). This leads them to higher customer satisfaction, loyalty and positive brand reputation. What else an organization needs?

5. CREATING A KNOWLEDGE MAP IN THE ORGANIZATION AS PART OF BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

In today's fast-paced business world, organizations are constantly seeking to improve their processes and increase their competitiveness. One area that has gained significant attention in recent years is knowledge management. Knowledge is recognized as a critical asset for organizations, and effective management of knowledge can lead to significant benefits such as increased innovation, reduced costs, and improved decision-making. One way to manage knowledge effectively is to create a knowledge map in the organization as part of business process improvement.

Creating a knowledge map in the organization as part of business process improvement is a crucial step towards achieving success in any organization. A knowledge map is a visual representation of the knowledge assets of an organization, including the people, processes, and technology that support the organization's goals. It helps to identify the knowledge gaps and opportunities for improvement in the organization's business processes.

A knowledge map is a visual representation of an organization's knowledge assets and how they are connected. It provides a comprehensive overview of the knowledge resources available within the organization, the locations where they are stored, and how they are used. A knowledge map can be used to identify gaps in knowledge, redundancies, and areas where knowledge is not being effectively utilized. It can also help identify

potential areas for improvement and provide a framework for knowledge sharing and collaboration. The process of creating a knowledge map involves several steps. The first step is to identify the knowledge assets within the organization. This includes both explicit knowledge, such as documents, reports, and databases, and tacit knowledge, such as skills, expertise, and experience. Keil, F. C. (1989). Once the knowledge assets have been identified, the next step is to map them. This involves creating a visual representation of the knowledge assets and how they are connected. The knowledge map can be created using a variety of tools, such as mind mapping software, concept mapping software, or even a simple spreadsheet.

After the knowledge map has been created, it can be used to identify areas for improvement. For example, the map may reveal that there are redundancies in certain areas or that certain knowledge assets are not being effectively utilized. This information can be used to develop strategies to address these issues and improve knowledge management within the organization. The knowledge map can also be used to identify areas where collaboration and knowledge sharing could be improved. By creating a framework for knowledge sharing, the organization can leverage its collective knowledge to drive innovation and improve decision-making.

Creating a knowledge map in the organization as part of business process improvement is a valuable tool for effective knowledge management. It provides a visual representation of the organization's knowledge assets and how they are connected and can be used to identify areas for improvement and develop strategies for knowledge sharing and collaboration. The use of a knowledge map can lead to significant benefits for organizations, including increased innovation, reduced costs, and improved decision-making.

In addition to the benefits mentioned previously, creating a knowledge map can also help facilitate knowledge transfer during employee turnover or succession planning. It can also assist in identifying key knowledge experts within an organization and their specific areas of expertise.

The process of creating a knowledge map typically involves several steps. The first step is to identify the knowledge assets within the organization, including both explicit and tacit knowledge. This can be done through interviews, surveys, and other data collection methods.

The next step is to organize the knowledge assets into categories and subcategories based on their relevance and importance to the organization. This can be done using a variety of methods, such as mind maps or hierarchical diagrams.

Once the knowledge assets are organized, the next step is to identify the relationships between them. This can be done by mapping the connections between different knowledge assets, such as identifying which pieces of knowledge are required to understand others.

Joseph D. Novak's book, *Learning, Creating, and Using Knowledge: Concept Maps as Facilitative Tools in Schools and Corporations*, provides a comprehensive guide to using concept maps as a tool for knowledge mapping. Novak argues that concept maps are an effective way to organize and represent knowledge, as they allow individuals to visualize complex relationships between different concepts.

In the book, Novak provides detailed instructions on how to create concept maps, including tips on selecting appropriate concepts, creating meaningful links between them, and using visual cues to enhance understanding. He also discusses the use of concept maps in educational settings, noting that they can be used to improve student learning and assessment by providing a way to measure understanding of complex ideas.

Furthermore, Novak discusses the value of using concept maps in corporate settings. He notes that concept maps can be used to identify gaps in knowledge and develop strategies for improving knowledge management within organizations. By mapping out an organization's knowledge assets, it becomes easier to identify areas where knowledge is lacking and to prioritize knowledge management efforts.

Overall, Novak's book highlights the value of using concept maps as a tool for knowledge mapping in both educational and organizational settings. By providing a visual representation of knowledge, concept maps can help individuals and organizations learn more effectively, promote communication and collaboration, and prioritize knowledge management efforts.

Finally, the knowledge map should be reviewed and updated regularly to ensure it remains relevant and up-to-date.

Overall, creating a knowledge map is a valuable tool for improving knowledge management within an organization. It provides a comprehensive overview of an organization's knowledge assets and can assist in identifying gaps, redundancies, and areas where knowledge is not being effectively utilized. By leveraging the power of a knowledge map, organizations can improve decision-making, reduce costs, and drive innovation. Behavior, 62, 134-154.

In general, developing a knowledge map is a useful tool for enhancing knowledge management inside a company. It offers a thorough picture of a company's knowledge assets and can help find gaps, duplications, and places where knowledge isn't being used properly. Organizations may enhance decision-making, lower costs, and stimulate creativity by utilizing the potential of a knowledge map.

6. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER - THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING IN ORGANIZATIONS

As mentoring has been in existence over a number of centuries; various theories on the origin of mentoring have been put forward by different people. Some scholars familiar with the original work of mentoring

believe that the true origin of the modern use of the term more likely comes from the work of 18th Century French writer Fenelon, also an educator. African scholars have however noted that mentors were commonplace in Africa, long before the ancient Greek Civilization (Mavuso, 2007).

In any group, there are people with more experience and knowledge and those with less. Connecting these two groups is vital to the smooth running of any organisation, so the formal and informal knowledge can flow easily between people, connecting them between themselves and the organisation's cause, best practised through mentorship. The main goal of mentoring is a quality development of an individual on personal, business and career levels. Mentorship is greatly valuable when it comes to hands-on, quality transfer of knowledge, but it can also help the people within the organisation feel a sense of belonging and guidance (Allen et al., 2009).

Within organisations can be present formal and informal modes of mentoring both with different advantages. The organisation establishes a formal mentoring structure, including specific guidelines and goals, with designated mentors and mentees. In informal mentoring, however, the mentor and mentees usually meet spontaneously and decide how to work together. Members of the organisation can also become more productive and at ease with their work since they receive hands-on advice from real-life experience and lessons from mentors (Crocitto et al., 2005). Mentorship can save money for the education of employees and time searching for good resources because mentees learn directly from a mentor and their experience (Cascio & Aguinis, 2008).

6.1 Mentorship for entrepreneurs

If we move on to smaller organisations and individual entrepreneurs, we can see a great demand for mentorship in that area as well. Every person has at one point dealt with loneliness and isolation in some area of their life. Entrepreneurs and self-employed individuals are at even greater risk than most, as the covid 19 pandemic has shown us. Isolation and the absence of a feeling of belonging can kill the creative and business drive we all depend on to run our business. From this immediate need, an idea of mentorship was born within a small non-profit organisation in Slovenia. One entrepreneur started connecting with other like-minded individuals who felt the same need: to connect, educate each other and learn and, most importantly to support each other where needed. Entrepreneurs are incredibly curious individuals, and often we also need to share all the knowledge we gather.

Information and knowledge have also never been more accessible as they are now. With the rise of online classes and programs, one can get so easily lost in what is genuinely quality content. In response to this, organisations have started seeking out individual and curated mentorship and guidance. Mentors can recognise individual's or group's unique needs and advantages. Every human being is different. Our

learning styles, tempos and confidence vastly vary from individual to individual, but when we can adapt to the needs of a specific person or a group, their potential starts coming alive (Allen et al., 2009).

For example, the before mentioned entrepreneurial organisation Podjetni became a specific tool that brings together those who offer knowledge and those who seek it. The organisation went through a process of research and experience to create

- a series of events that focus on connecting mentors and mentees,
- an online platform where mentors in almost every area can be easily highlighted and reached,
- a system that offers individuals free consultations from all the mentors,
- educational academies and programs based on the mentorship values for a qualitative transfer of knowledge. (Buckley, 2001).

Mentorship also saves time. Instead of listening to broad educational classes on foreign study cases and examples, mentorship directly addresses the immediate needs of an entrepreneur. Mentors will help a person on their own work, so they can walk out of the door with already-applied results. An organisation like Zavod Podjetni, which connects multiple mentors, means a person can painlessly switch from area to area depending on their need. If they first need help with branding, they can later move on to direct sales and content writing with a different but in familiar and certified system.

6.2 Qualities of mentors

No matter who and what they are teaching, there are specific attributes a mentor has to embody. A mentor has to be a stable and continuous force in someone's life on who the mentee can always depend and look up. They give guidance and assignments and challenge the mentee, but they do not do the work for them, so they can properly learn. When the mentor learns mentees life and business situation, their goals, challenges and ambitions, they can guide them if they ever stray from the mentees desires path (Wanberg et al., 2003). An individual also often just needs someone who will listen and offer a shoulder, and that is where the mentor guides as a therapist figure who helps them holistically. In the end, mentor also acts as a guardian since a mentees are often in vunrable position of learning and growing (Kane, 2022) The mentor has to be emphatic to them, but they should never get involved personally into an individual's story.

Mentorship is becoming more recognised and sought after every year, in areas of personal and business growth (Mullen & Noe, 1999). Small and large organisations are recognising the benefits of quality mentorship, which helps them save time and money, but also create deeper and more personal connections to the knowledge in the organisation.

7 TOOLS FOR MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF PROCESSES IN THE ORGANIZATION

There are several tools and techniques available for measuring the performance of processes in an organization. The selection of specific tool depends on the nature of the process in an organization. The selection of a specific tool depends on the nature of the Process and the organization's objectives.

It's important to select the most appropriate tools based on the specific needs and objectives on the organization. Additionally, organizations may choose to combine multiple tools and techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of process performance and drive continuous improvement.

We will focus just on some commonly used tools for measuring process performance.

Very good tool for measuring is also Life Learning Academia certificate system. The process guide board team through the activities and questionnaires. When organization complete all the requested activities and fill all the questionnaires can show the results. Actually this is the

Current stage of the organization. This bigger picture shows all the gaps which need to be filled. Process last among 4- 6 month.

Another very important tool is Key Performance Indicators (KPI). KPIs are quantifiable metrics used to assess the performance and progress of specific processes or activities. KPIs should be aligned with organizational goals and can vary depending on the process being measured. Examples of KPIs include customer satisfaction scores, on-time delivery rate, process cycle time, defect rate, revenue growth and employee productivity.

Balanced scorecard is strategic performance measurement framework that considers multiple perspectives, including financial, customer, internal process and learning and growth perspectives. It provides a holistic view of the organization's performance and helps align process measurement with strategic objectives.

Process Mapping involves visually representing a process flow to identify bottlenecks, inefficiencies and areas for improvement. By mapping out the process steps and analysing the inputs, outputs and interactions, organizations can measure performance and identify opportunities for optimization.

Employee Feedback and performance evaluations can provide insights into the effectiveness of processes. Regular feedback, performance metrics, and performance appraisals help measure individual and team contributions to process performance (Hjorland, 2003).

Customer Feedback and Survey is valuable tool for measuring process performance from the customer's perspective. Surveys, focus groups and customer satisfaction metrics can provide insights into the

effectiveness of processes in meeting customer needs and expectations.

Data Analytics and Business Intelligence tools: Advanced analytics tools and technologies, such as data dashboards, predictive modelling and data mining, enable organizations to measure process performance by analysing large volumes of data. These tools provide real-time insights, identify trends and support data-driven decision making.

Six-Sigma is a data-driven methodology aimed at reducing process variations and defects. It utilizes statistical tools and techniques to measure process performance, such as process capability analysis, control charts and defect rates. Six Sigma focuses on improving process quality and achieving near-perfect performance levels.

Lean Manufacturing/Lean Six Sigma: Lean methodologies, often combined with Six Sigma, focus on eliminating waste and maximizing value. Tools such as value stream mapping 5S and Kaizen events are used to to measure and improve process performance by streamlining workflows, reducing lead times and enhancing overall efficiency.

Benchmarking involves comparing an organization's performance against industry best practices or competitors. By measuring key process metrics and comparing them to external benchmarks, organizations can identify performance gaps and set improvement targets.

Process Audits involve systematic evaluations of process adherence, compliance and effectiveness. Audits can be conducted internally or by third-party experts to measure process performance, identify non compliance issues and recommend improvements.

8. CONCLUSION

Processes are vital components of organizations, serving multiple essential roles. They provide structure, efficiency and consistency in carrying out tasks, leading to improved productivity and quality. Key processes within organizations include those related to communication, decision making, planning, human resources management, operational activities, monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement.

By establish all described processes organizations can enhance their efficiency, productivity, customer satisfaction and overall performance. Processes also contribute to risk management, compliance, scalability and knowledge management within organizations. For organizations is also important to regularly review and improve their processes to adapt to changing environments, technological advancements and customer expectations. With well-designed and effectively implemented processes organizations are better equipped to navigate challenges, seize opportunities and achieve their strategic objectives.

Good processes provide a way to communicate and apply consistent standards and practices within the business, it helps the employees what needs to happen

and creates a path for growth. Good processes save time and increase overall efficiency and take are built around

the customer and users' needs. The most important thing is to manage employees on properly manners.

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Marjetka Kastner
Life Learning Academia,
Domžale. Slovenia
marjeta@llacademia.com

Mirjana Ivanuša Bezjak
Izobraževanje in
poslovnosvetovanje,
Maribor, Slovenia
ivanusa.mirjana@gmail.com

Mojca Babuder
Zavod Podjetni,
Sežana,
Slovenia
zavod@podjetni.si
