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As we have argued elsewhere[1], the various process movements break down into three broad traditions: A human performance/Six Sigma improvement tradition, an information technology/automation tradition, and a business management tradition. There has been a major push to combine many of these perspectives, but major disagreements on emphasis still remain, and this year, as in past years, respondents indicated that one of the major problems they face is management confusion resulting from too many different groups urging different approaches to process change.

At their most extreme, you could describe the three positions this way:

- Have consultants design new processes to support new strategies and organize the company around them. (Management Tradition)
- Focus on people, train them, and expect them to evolve the best processes. (Human Performance/Six Sigma Tradition)
- Ignore people, use technology to automate everything and push ahead. (IT/Automation Tradition)

Everyone actually involved in process work knows that each of these positions, in isolation, is impossible and that, to succeed, an organization needs an approach that combines the best elements of each of these positions. In spite of this, it's easy to find practitioners who, while paying lip service to the idea of a mixed strategy, still put most of their emphasis on one or another of these approaches.



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In 2018 we saw a paradigm shift for BPM, moving towards a strategic role supporting organizational and digital transformation efforts. This required BPM professionals re-evaluate their skillsets and methodologies to be more agile and customer-centric. As we move into 2020 and beyond, I see this trend continue to impact BPM professionals in two ways:

1. Emphasis on supporting end-to-end processes and value streams.
2. Focus on people. Either through using well-honed change management skills to take staff along on the journey or using human-centric design to ensure solutions provide value to the end-users.