

Value-adding Integration

Low cost, fast improvement and innovation
concept and methods for products, public services
and rare disease healthcare and research

Frequently asked questions

Frequently Asked Questions - VAI

If you don't find the answer here, please feel free to ask for further information/clarification:

1) *Existing methods are just as good?*

VAI includes some existing ideas, concepts and methods used for investigating and carrying improvements and adds new concepts to them (focusing on VA and interfaces) to achieve better overall results - better products, services and healthcare (for rare diseases) at lower cost. VAI is likely to help where previous improvement efforts have delivered disappointing and/or costly results.

2) *What is new, different or better about VAI?*

VAI uses a common (unified) approach to the improvement of products and processes, and to addressing interface problems; combines adding value and reducing costs.

Focus on interfaces as places where value (to the end/next user) occurs. Better VAI fit at interface creates a new situation with potential for adding more value.

VAI includes additional due diligence and refinement stages in the methodology.

The VAI methodology uses the VAI concept to adapt and improve itself when applied to each situation. Potentially this will achieve better, faster results at lower cost.

VAI provides a mutually beneficial cross-over between needs/solutions of business, public sector, and healthcare and translational medical research (rare diseases).

3) *What are the differences from Lean?*

Adds a value-adding focus intended to achieve better product, service and rare disease healthcare outcomes.

VAI also addresses interface integration issues and existing problems.

VAI uses a different language directly related to subjects being investigated.

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4) *What are the differences from Six Sigma and Quality Improvement?*

Adds a value-adding focus intended to achieve better product, service and rare disease healthcare outcomes.

VAI also addresses interface integration issues and existing problems.

VAI uses a different language directly related to subjects being investigated.

5) *How do you measure or determine value?*

The end-user/patient decides value; evaluated using quantitative comparison or qualitative opinion against cost, beneficial effects or other sources of value depending upon circumstances.

6) *What happens if there are no significant USPs or it is a Commodity product?*

Significant USPs could still be identified using VAI even with commodities

7) *What happens if too many USPs are identified?*

Good news (expectations are being exceeded), rank USPs and evaluate.

Some may not be real 'U'SPs and/or of actual benefit to end-users (or next-users).

8) *Don't USPs cost more?*

Sometimes – calculate value for money (to end-user). USPs require more thoughtful consideration of end-user needs, and especially for services may incur minimal or no additional cost.

9) *How can socio economic criteria (SEC) be included?*

Ranking USPs can include socio-economic evaluation factors and Government policy as part of the evaluation criteria used.

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10) *What are the risks (of failure of VAI process)?*

With any proposed change or improvement there are risks that the end results (if there are any) will not meet expectations. The VAI process includes safeguards, which if followed, should reduce the risk of this happening. However, the following could occur, outside these safeguards:

- (a) Inaccurate and/or inadequate input data;
- (b) Steps 2 (compliance check) and 3 (successful outcome assurance) are not carried out adequately or are completely overlooked;
- (c) Unrealistic expectations for the outcome;
- (d) Low personnel commitment (to success);
- (e) Poor follow-up during implementation stages.

11) *How do you deal with inadequate input data/feedback from end users/patients; they can't understand or explain what is of value to them?*

Focusing on interfaces, particularly on the creation and enhancement of value and problems present, helps to identify useful questions to ask to initiate a dialogue with end-users/patients and to verify feedback received.

12) *Isn't VAI too complex/novel to work (in my organization)?*

Using VAI needs an implementation plan and 'success factors' in place.

Success factors:

- (a) Motivation by stakeholders to achieve successful outcome(s) including innovation;
- (b) Supportive framework (eg, organisation, resources, management of risks);
- (c) Competent and adequate human resources (need to have appreciation of subject through experience, training and analysis/study etc);
- (d) Management deployment to achieve successful outcomes (control, monitoring and feedback of performance/progress, focussing or direction of efforts including responsibilities).

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13) *Is there anything else critical to the success (of VAI)?*

Precision, resolution and empathy in carrying out VAI are also useful, if not essential.

14) *How much VAI is already happening?*

There are many successful (partial) examples – this is well established trend. You have probably done some aspects of VAI (although not describing it as such). Examples of successful VAI tend to be piecemeal and/or partial applications without the use of a systematic methodology and language.

15) *How easy/quick is using VAI?*

Every organization and person is different making it difficult to form generalizations. The concept of VAI is simple and techniques exist to help easy/quick training (for a pilot application or for rollout across an organization).

16) *Will my personnel co-operate?*

Probably because there are obvious benefits, including for them, in particular less work and they can showcase delivering better value and VAI activity. Eliminating interface problems and delivering better end-user value should also boost morale and reduce non-value-adding work.

17) *What are the costs to implement VAI across the organization or for a product?*

The cost to implement in an organization should be low because it can be adapted to the particular application and is a simple concept. Product cost varies – would need to estimate for each use although compared to the alternative of research and development of completely new products it is likely to be low.

18) *Is more background available?*

Much more information is available on VAI, including the underlying theory, reasoning/logic and assumptions made.

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19) *Is there something better we can use?*

Not yet – we need more VAI to be carried out to develop a pipeline of improvements.

20) *How could VAI methods be improved generally?*

Use VAI, adapt to needs/requirements and tell us your priorities, needs and problems.

Further information

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