



The Metaphorum Training Programme

Context

Metaphorum is the global members association in the UK to maintain, develop, and disseminate Stafford Beers Organizational Cybernetics.

Metaphorum’s strategic plan is to expand its activities by building operations focused on specific topics, primarily VSM and Team Syntegrity, in addition to its existing activities («Metaphorum 2»).

As a precondition for the undertaking, a part of Metaphorum shall become an incorporated legal entity (MPH Inc.).

The Metaphorum VSM Operations Group shall be part of and report to MPH Inc. and consist of several activities (draft):

- VSM Trainings & Certifications
- VSM Application Research Groups
- VSM Development Projects
- Funded Research Projects
- Coaching & Teaching



The following concept focuses mainly on the «VSM Training & Certification» activities.

Why a VSM certification programme

The adoption of VSM has increased recently. Metaphorum supports this audience growth and wants to ensure that it leads to intensified use of VSM without diluting the principles that make VSM effective.



As part of this initiative, Metaphorum issues a training and certification programme with the following objectives:

- ensure the quality of VSM education.
- create greater visibility for VSM.
- create a transparent market for VSM-related services.

Metaphorum's «VSM Operations Group»

The purpose of Metaphorum's «VSM Operations Group» shall be to:

- disseminate the VSM globally.
- maintain minimum quality standards in VSM training by developing a certification system.
- train and certify a large group of independent VSM coaches/trainers as multipliers.
- develop application know-how of the VSM together with the community of practitioners.
- pursuing funded research projects related to the VSM.
- build and maintain an international VSM practitioners' community.

Activities within this purpose can be initiated and conducted by any member of MPH. Any MPH member can apply as a certified VSM trainer, providing training according to its customers' and region's needs and possibilities.

Management

The initial management of the VSM Operations Group consists of

- Mark Lambertz
- Krishan Mathis
- Martin Pfiffner
- Angela Espinosa, and Jon Walker as two MPH LTD board members to support & coordinate with the MPH board and steering committee.

They will develop a strategy and build the operations up in consecutive years as a free service for Metaphorum.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. The Metaphorum steering board issues appropriate certificates. This will include various levels of VSM training for trainees and further courses for training the trainers. Accredited trainers need to renew their accreditation after N years. The Metaphorum can require the trainer to participate in certain events or continued education, e.g. Metaphorum conferences.
2. Metaphorum provides a training website where trainers can register/advertise their training courses. The trainers are encouraged to announce their training courses on the Metaphorum Training site.
3. Trainers act on their own responsibility as a third party.

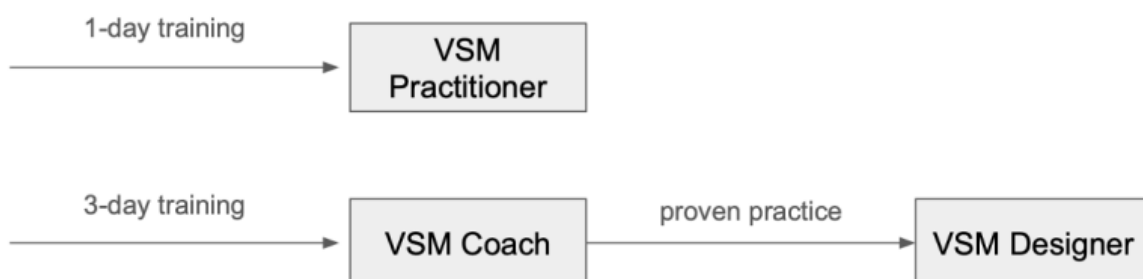


1. They set up courses and a registration process at particular times and locations and train and accredit VSM students.
2. On completion of a course, the trainer reports the course and its participants to Metaphorum Operations Group.
3. Metaphorum issues a Metaphorum graduation certificate through the training company, signed by a Metaphorum board member and by the trainer.
4. MPH includes on its website a list of its accredited trainers, the courses that are offered, and an official list of all the graduated students (footnote: students can opt out of publicly mentioned).
5. The trainers are expected to actively contribute to developing the community and its knowledge base.
6. VSM trainees and trainers will pay a fee to Metaphorum Inc. (see below). Earnings from these activities shall primarily be used to fund services and be reinvested in further activities in line with the group's purpose.

Target groups

Who are the targeted students for VSM trainings?	Why?
Practitioners and academics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Many in Metaphorum already teach at universities while only very few teaches practitioners •Different focus and interest
Organizational Experts (Developers, Designers, Auditors, ...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •e.g., Focus on the Agile Community (looking for solutions) •Non-Business and Business •All sizes of organizations
Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Responsible for an organizational unit •Non-Business and Business •All sizes of organizations

Certifications



VSM Practitioner

Learning Objectives



- a working knowledge of VSM, its history, and its application areas
- being able to participate and contribute to a practical application of the VSM

Requirements

- 1-day training course by an approved trainer

Criteria for certification of VSM Practitioner training courses

- Duration of at least one day (8 hours)
- Learning objectives:
 - Understanding the purpose of the model
 - Understanding the benefits of the model
 - Understanding the model itself and the underlying management principles
 - Understanding different application possibilities of the model
- Closed book test online (can be done as many times as needed, available on the MPH website) (to be developed)
- Didactics: At least one simulation / gamified experience shall be part of this training (Montessori principle: Explain it to me and I understand it – let me do it and I can grasp it)

VSM Coach

Learning Objectives

- Diagnosis with the VSM

Prerequisites

- 3-day onsite training course by an approved trainer
- qualification confirmed by the trainer.

Criteria for certification of VSM Coach training courses

- Duration at least three days (24 hours)
- includes the learning objectives from the VSM Practitioner training.
- Understanding of the VSM theory: 5 Systems, Recursivity, Variety/Complexity management, Interactions between the Systems and Environment (patterns of relationships)
- Ability to apply the VSM theory in the context of an organization (application exercises)
 - Diagnose an organization and implementation of improvements.
 - Basics of designing an organization – understanding the task and potential procedures for a design
- Typical pathologies (pathological patterns) of organizations
- Didactics: Include practical sessions during the three days. Strongly encourage participants to share their real-life cases for group work (use trainer-provided case studies only as a fallback).
- The participant is accepted by trainer.



VSM Designer

Learning Objectives

- Ability to apply and implement the VSM in a design project for an active organization of a given complexity (“30 is the magic number”)

Prerequisites

- active certification as a VSM Coach
- qualification confirmed by the trainer.

Criteria for certification of VSM Designer courses/coached practices

- Consists of a course (e.g. in a blended learning manner, giving methodological inputs) and of active supervising/coaching by the trainer during a real-life application project
- Implementation means not only giving recommendations but successfully guide the implementation.
- Creating a real and proven benefit to the client
- Practice report of the project
- Recommendation of the client
- Accepted by trainer.

Criteria for becoming a VSM Trainer

- Active membership in MPH
- VSM Trainers need to prove their competence to the VSM Operations Management by
 - Recommendation from:
 - MPH or VSM Operations members and/or
 - by an internal (panel) and/or
 - public presentation/webinar to MPH members
 - A track record of publications
 - A track record of practical applications/implementations of the VSM
- MPH or VSM Operations Management members are allowed to join running training at no cost to get an impression of the quality of training. That should be done at least once during an active certification.

Criteria for remaining certified as a VSM trainer

- Trainers are encouraged to participate in others’ courses for peer learning.
- Certified trainers need to renew their certification after two years.
- Metaphorum can require the trainer to participate in certain events or continued education, e.g. Metaphorum conferences.

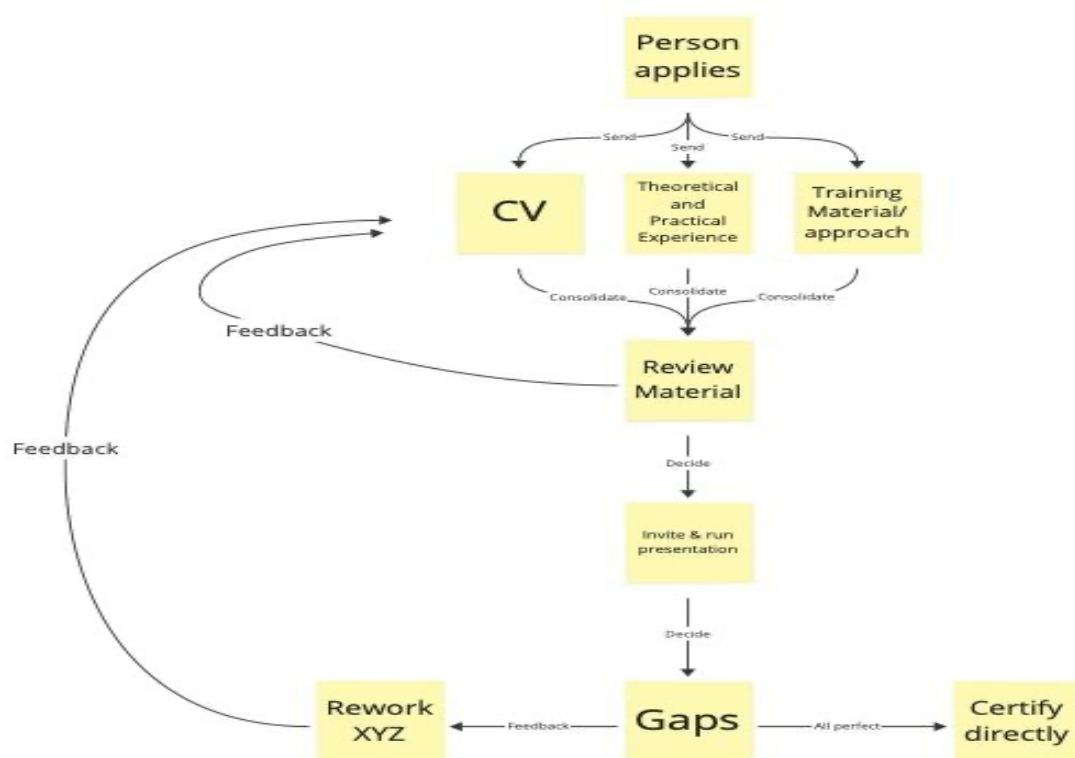
The process to be certified as a VSM trainer

Figure 1 below explains the process for becoming a MHP certified trainer:



1. Apply to become a MPH certified trainer. You need to email us at **????** and provide us with:
 - a. Full cv, demonstrating your theoretical and practical experience teaching the VSM.
 - b. Your VSM training material
 - c. Your VSM training approach
 - d. Recommendations
2. Once MPH Ops has reviewed the above material and a decision has been made, you will be invited to do a mock presentation of the VSM and of your approach to teach it
3. You will receive feedback from MPH Ops management on necessary improvements to you VSM training package (if required). Once improvements have been delivered and approved, MPH Ops will issue the certificate as MPH trainer.

Figure 1. VSM trainer certification stages



Services provided by MPH

For Students (Practitioners)	Webinars (organized by MPH) Metaphorum Conference (organized by MPH) Community exchange and information updates on the website (organized by MPH)
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For Trainers	Certificates for trainers and their courses A platform for community supported training materials like presentations, templates, exercises, case studies, software, etc. Marketing collaterals like sales pitches, information material, etc. to create a customer Option in a later phase: Provide a marketplace for project coaching by third-parties
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Metaphorum services

MPH as policy maker will not itself conduct training for end users/companies due to potential conflict of interest. End users/companies will be served by third-party trainers/consultants, i.e. MPH members.

MPH Training and Certification

The Metaphorum Board delegated to the R-1 “MPH Training and Certification”

- recognizes trainers and training organizations.
- accredits training courses.
- issues certifications by registering certifications and supporting trainers in registering their students.

Issuing a Metaphorum certification

- A recognized trainer registers students at Metaphorum
- Registration includes 2 years of membership, which can be extended
- Registration is marked as “active” and expires after 2 years: after 2 years, either an extension is required, or the certification for the trainer is marked as “inactive.”

Fees and Payments

The Metaphorum board raises fees for the different certifications.

These are currently, starting from January 1st, 2024:

- 100 € for a VSM Coach
- 200 € for a VSM Designer
- 30€ for an intro course

If a trainer registers a certification for the participants of a given course, fees will apply to all students of a given course.

The board can reduce or waive the fees for a course, e.g., for a non-profit community.

Payment process



- Trainee pays trainer for training and accreditation. The trainer pays Metaphorum a fixed price (e.g. 100 €) per accredited VSM trainee.
- After the initial period (which is part of the trainer's payment), the Trainee pays Metaphorum for an extended membership in the VSM community and for further services as defined by the strategy of the VSM Operation Group
- Trainers pay Metaphorum for accreditation of their specific training courses