Lessons Learned from Rewriting and Enhancing the Texas Legislature’s Bill Drafting System

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2003
19,085 legislative drafts
9,232 bills/resos filed (both chambers)

2017
23,506 legislative drafts
10,672 bills/resos filed (both chambers)
Basic Drafting Process

Member Office

Draft Requested

Drafter Assigned & Folder Created

Attorney Drafts In Word

Document Printed & Sent for Review & Editing

Word Doc & PDF Delivered to Office

XML Doc Reviewed

XML Doc Updated to Match Printed Doc

Word Doc Converted to XML Doc

Folder Sent to Document Production
Lesson #1

Create a shared vision; review it often
Lesson #2

Understand your context

- Who
- What
- Why
- Where
- When
- How
Lesson #3

*Evolve* your system with purpose
1. Create a shared vision; review it often
   - Agree on why the system is changing and the value to be provided
   - Be clear about priorities
   - Discuss how the business process might be changed
2. Understand your context
   - Review the business process of all stakeholders in detail
   - Don’t let the technology dictate the business process
3. *Evolve* your system with purpose
   - Make small, evolutionary changes to reduce risk and gain information
   - Keep current system available as a safety net