

Bringing operational intelligence to life. Introducing the people working to connect people, processes and technology for seamless healthcare operations.

Operational Intelligence in practice: Stories from Germany with Stephan Bockers



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Within every technology partnership with a healthcare provider, there is an anchor person who connects people, processes and technology. They consult, counsel and steer the partnership along its roadmap, delivering against goals and bringing teams together. In today's strategic healthcare partnerships, that person is the client delivery manager. They're the passionate, hardworking individuals who help forge trust and teamwork to bring operational intelligence to life, through rigorous planning, excellent communication and high quality customer engagement.

In this interview, we meet the customer delivery manager for the extensive Philips and München Klinik partnership. His name is Stephan Bockers.

Stephan oversees one of the largest healthcare technology partnerships in Europe; that between Philips and München Klinik. As the largest healthcare provider in the greater Munich area, München Klinik treats approximately one third of all patients from the city and surrounding areas.

Every year the facilities treat more than 135,000 inpatients from the region, but also from all over the world. The 8-year partnership between Städtisches Klinikum München and Philips involves providing the clinic with new imaging systems and clinical informatics while renewing more than 200 imaging systems throughout the building with Stephan as a key point person.

"It's a great role and active listening is key. I listen to what the customer tells me and we devise ways of working together so we can bring all of our combined solutions and capabilities to the table. In this role you have to be on top of everything, and bring all of the pieces together to keep on track. My mindset and way of working has to be operationally intelligent because our partnership is the journey to connect all of the dots to make the next generation of the operating model of München Klinik possible." says Stephan Bockers, Customer Delivery Manager Professional Services & Solutions Delivery DACH.

What is Operational Intelligence?

Operational Intelligence is the partnership of continually synchronized people, processes and technology. This operating model turns the current trend to think and prioritize technology first, on its head by combining three critical components to create and deliver a healthcare organization's products and services to result in profitability and growth.

What began as an idea about how a hospital system and a technology provider could better work together has become a powerful new way of working for hundreds of Philips and healthcare professionals.



People: Working as one: Philips peoples' skills merge with yours for continual, cumulative improvement.

Process: Operational Intelligence doesn't subscribe to process for process sake; instead, it unlocks intelligent, tailored processes. The opposite to the common one size fits all, Operational Intelligence demands that processes are finetuned and cocreated together.

Technology: Technology is an enabler; Operational Intelligence makes it both connected and interoperable by breaking down silos to provide a comprehensive, ongoing overview of how technology is required and be utilized (by people and systems) now and in the future.

Building a partnership based on trust

According to Stephan, building a successful and effective partnership starts and ends with trust. The client delivery manager is a bit like a Swiss Army knife in that they wear many different hats: they are a planner, communicator and project manager all rolled into one. Working alongside the hospital management, starts by drawing up plans for the phased implementation of new solutions and services, project managing every facet of the partnership across all five hospital sites. He leads board meetings with the hospital management on the project roadmap; planning with clinical department heads around equipment replacement; and, overseeing budgets, scheduling and third party suppliers for building redesigns. Key to a successful kick off is getting mindsets open. As Stephan explains: "I look at my role as getting all minds focused on what is coming down the line. So that everybody is prepared."



360° constant communication is key

München Klinik sits at the center of a city with changing healthcare needs. As a municipal clinic it deals with a range of clinical challenges: ageing physical infrastructure, high personnel costs and technologies and processes that are out of date. Germany is among the top five spenders on health care, both as a proportion of GDP (11.2%) and per person (USD 5,986), according to the OECD. It therefore comes with huge responsibilities.

He continues: "I have a counterpart on the Munich side, and together we lead this partnership with support from the hospital C level. We motivate people to support us so that we can proceed. In every segment of the partnership — whether it is devices, consultancy or IT — we define what needs to be done — by who — and then we get it done together."

"When a major change is coming up, I go in early and talk to the stakeholders to get them onboard. I have face-to-face meetings with heads of cardiology, heads of radiology and we discuss standardizing protocols... this means possibly that it won't be your protocol that is the standard, but someone else's, so that needs to be carefully discussed,"

Stephan Bockers, Philips Managed Technology Services consultant.



A 'needs based' model that needs a linchpin

The partnership between Philips and München Klinik focuses on a "needs-based" model of care, designed to address rising costs and reshape the clinic for its future health needs. The relationship between the two organizations had stretched back many years, so when München Klinik approached Philips to discuss the concept of bigger solutions, there was already a shared understanding.

Even with this previous experience though, any partnership – especially those at scale – presents a huge personal test for a client delivery manager's skills of collaborating, connecting people, processes and technology with one eye always fixed on delivering what is promised in the contract.

Stephen expands: "All aspects of the project are carefully planned and we communicate, act, work - we really are - one team. My counterpart on the Munich side organizes his colleagues on the building and medtech; we have regular updates with the C-level for these four or five hospitals. We have a medical board, which was set up to make decisions around the partnership, but if there's something urgent we have direct communication."

He continues: "Naturally, you start every partnership with an outline of a plan and where you want to go, but a degree of flexibility helps when the plan deviates. The initial plan is not necessarily a reflection of where the partnership will go. In this role, you always have to expect change and be adaptable. As new challenges will come up. Customers will ask you for something, and you need to find a solution. My job is to intimately understand the way they function and how I can add constantly value. This is something I learned quickly and my counterpart has helped as he's been in München Klinik for a long time. He knows the processes and structures to follow."

Why Operational intelligence is about mastering complexity through connection

Stephan's pivotal role connecting both sides of the partnership is reflected in how goals are achieved, costs saved and the solutions installed across all five hospitals that have changed the way care is delivered. This has included a massive construction project at Klinikum Neuoerlach, a redevelopment of radiology department of Klinikum Bogenhausen and a "needs-based" evaluation of ultrasound usage.

At one location Stephan is project managing the building of a hybrid angio environment, which involves redesigning workflows to support patients and staff. On another, they are rebuilding the radiology department, a process which takes a year to complete. An installation of the Intellispace Portal 11 platform has streamlined radiology processes across the health system, allowing faster diagnoses.

"Overcoming isolated radiology departments and collaborating across sites gives more flexibility and, better and faster processes. Eventually, when the München Klinik restructuring is done and new systems and processes are in place, radiology will be one complete picture," he explains.

And behind all of the changes: the negotiations, the teamwork, the planning, the restructuring, is a mindset of Operational intelligence, and the customer delivery manager and his München Klinik counterparts, connecting people, processes and technology and ensuring the partnership stays on track. The delivery manager coordinates the long-term strategic partnerships team and, in our case, the initial governance structure needed modifications to be more flexible and agile.

Stephan explains why the 'working as one' principles of Operational intelligence and it's synchronized approach to connected people, processes and technology is an important – and often underestimated – shift and one that is fundamental to success:

"When we started this our approach was set up to fit in with our customer. We had a governance structure that we agreed with them, we had our working groups, we had a customer delivery manager, we had the medical board, we knew how we wanted to document and report and measure this partnership. But when we tried this approach on the customer side, it didn't work. And so we changed our plans and our core team and started finetuning everything together. Nowadays I have a counterpart on the Munich side, and we lead this partnership together with support from the C level."

That is one of the lessons Stephan imparts to those aiming to join all the dots of a large health system partnership agreement: be open to change, be adaptable, be supportive and agree what is and isn't possible and make it happen together. The benefits will speak for themselves.

As Stephan concludes: "We get together as a team, and both sides put their cards on the table. We discuss what we can do and what we can't – and we fit the two parts of the puzzle together. There's no "them and us", there's only "us" and the shared goals we're working towards. In this kind of partnership, everyone wins and I couldn't imagine going back to the old ways of working. It just wouldn't deliver the meaningful results that being operationally intelligent brings."







Is your healthcare system operationally intelligent?

Being able to fully exploit the digital capabilities that technology can offer healthcare operations optimization, is not solely about selecting the best technology to achieve your goals.

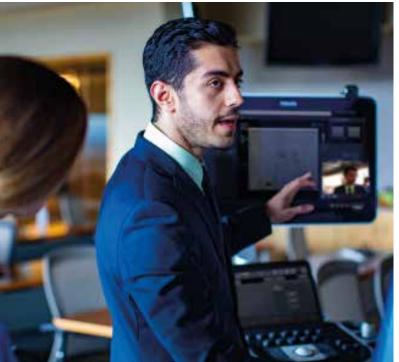
True transformation requires an operating model that combines technologies, people and process in an integrated sequenced way.

Interested to learn more?

Let's talk. Even better, let's collaborate. We'd love to help you translate Operational intelligence for your healthcare operations.

Contact details go here













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