



Achieving Results Through Processes

Your Questions Answered

Everybody in an organisation follows processes. Unfortunately, many of these processes are not designed from the outset and are almost invariably not documented.



Q: So what is meant by a process?

Processes can be defined in many ways, such as the following:

- 'Directives to communicate established methods for performing and administering work'
- 'Mode of Conducting Business'
- A specific way to perform an activity
- The flow of work that links people together to produce a defined output
- Implementation of Policies
- A document describing a specified sequence of actions within a process (WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, HOW, WHY)

Q: So, how does a process differ from a procedure or a work instruction?

A process involves more than 1 person and can be understood at different levels of complexity, so a "High Level" process might be "Operate the business", one of its sub-processes might be the

"Procurement process " and a sub-sub-process (often called a procedure) might be "Purchase Stationery".



Work instructions are essentially procedures that:

- Are specific in nature.
- Detail a task (HOW to).
- Are directed to one job function.
- Support one part of a procedure.
- Reference standards.
- Invariably have a specific output.
- Are necessary where the method is critical to the result.
- May be combined into Manuals (e.g. for an operational activity).

Q: Why will documenting your processes help your company?

If process are not documented, there is a lack of clarity about "WHO does WHAT, WHERE, WHY, WHEN and HOW".

Q: So what are the benefits of documenting your processes?

The following are some of the key benefits:

- You define WHO does WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, HOW and WHY.
- You can identify where processes are breaking down.
- You can assess the value of each activity in the process.
- Accountability, Authority and Responsibilities are defined for the people involved.
- The boundaries between processes are defined.
- Critical process flows are defined.
- The process can be measured.

- Dependencies between processes are identified.
- Processes can be changed in a controlled way.
- Process costs are known.
- Quality of the deliverables improves.
- Resource requirements can be identified.
- Processes can be replicated.
- It becomes easier to establish whether processes are capable of doing what they were designed for.
- Cycle times are reduced.

Q: So how should you go about documenting your processes?

The best way to go document your processes is to use the following 6 step process:

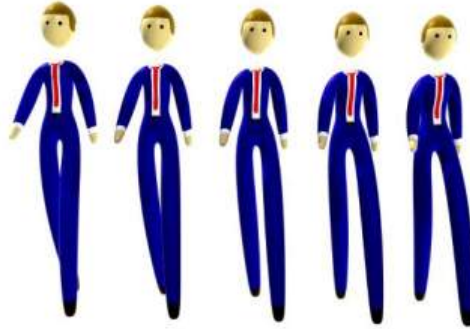
- Step 1: Define the high level Business Process map
- Step 2: Decompose each Process into Sub-Processes (NB: Some sub-processes will be based on Life-Cycles, such as Development, Maintenance etc and will need further breakdown to lower level sub-sub-processes)
- Step 3: Select a Sub-Process to document
- Step 4: Map the Sub-process (Capture the information needed to draft the initial Process Definition).
- Step 5: Review the draft and update as required until approved
- Step 6: Implement the process, train the users and support while in the early stages

Team Roles

Do you work as part of a team?

Do you know what roles you take on in a team?

Many of us take on several roles in our teams, so why not see where you fit, by identifying yourself with the following roles:



Coordinator:

You coordinate the team in meeting its goals and targets and you are pre-occupied in achieving objectives.

You are dominant, but not domineering and you instinctively trust people unless proved otherwise.

Driver:

You drive the team's efforts and are very often self-elected. You are full of nervous energy, impulsive and impatient, easily frustrated, quick to challenge and quick to respond to challenges.

Rows are over quickly and then forgotten. You do not hold grudges.

Creator:

The ideas person.

You have an original and radical approach to problems and obstacles and are the most imaginative and intelligent in the team and can bring new insight to a line of action.

You do, however, ignore details and make careless mistakes.

Evaluator:

You are serious and a natural critic and can see flaws where others can't. You are objective and are good at assimilating, interpreting and evaluating large amounts of data.

You can be lacking in warmth, imagination and spontaneity, but your judgement is seldom wrong.

Implementer:

The practical organiser who can convert plans into objectives. You get upset when plans change suddenly. You need stability.

People come to you because you know what is supposed to be done.

Investigator:

You go outside the team and bring back information and ideas. Unlike the Creator, you build on other people's ideas. You are relaxed, sociable and enthusiastic and you are a good improviser.

You may relax too much and are prone to putting things down as quickly as you pick them up.

Communicator:

You are the most sensitive person in a team and react to the emotional undercurrents in the team. You are a good listener and you like to build on other people's ideas.

You are sympathetic, loyal and understanding and if not present in the team your absence is greatly missed.

Finisher:

You worry about what might go wrong and need to get involved in the detail. You have a sense of urgency, but you can lower the team's morale by worrying too much. Your instinct to follow through makes you an important member of the team.

Handling Confrontation

Confrontation gives us a picture of two people with their foreheads pressed against each other.

However, not all confrontation is bad and as business managers we need to know how to handle confrontation.

The following addresses how to collapse the barriers that prevent confrontation and then use some techniques on how to confront positively.

Confrontation is perceived as a threat, so we need to start by recognising the internal tensions arising from the threat.

We overcome the avoidance of confrontation by looking at the consequences arising from the threat. By doing this we have taken control and are now in a position to build confidence in confronting.

6 Step Process – NO FEAR

Now - Don't wait, DO IT NOW (Unless anger is at boiling point, in which case wait until you have cooled down).

Open - Be open about why you are confronting and be clear about what outcome you want. Be honest. Listen to the other party and use "I" statements, such as "I would like to know why you told my manager about this problem". Don't use phrases like "What did you go and do that for?"

Feelings – Express your feelings in a way that is not aggressive.

Effect – Describe the effect on you or on others, but don't quote what others have said. This will only create further problems.

Alignment – Stay in alignment with the other party. Respond with respect to what they say and do it honestly. Use "and" instead of "but". Return to common ground to show commonality rather than differences.

Request – make a request, clearly stating what you want. Use SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time bounded).

Using NO FEAR will enable you to confront more effectively.

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