

Personal Productivity Tools



Workflow

“Processes are rolling along (or, frequently stumbling along) in organizations, whether we attend to them or not. We have two choices—we can ignore processes and hope that they do what we wish, or we can understand them and manage them.”

–Rummler and Brache



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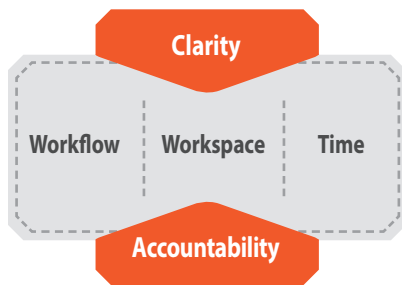
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Improve Workflow



What and Why

We all have workflow processes within our roles and responsibilities. A process is simply a series of steps or activities that produce a product or service.

Understanding, managing, and improving our workflow processes will enable us to do more with less, and perhaps do less with less yet accomplish more. So, improving your workflow is a key element to enhancing your productivity.

How

The following key actions can help you improve your workflow process:

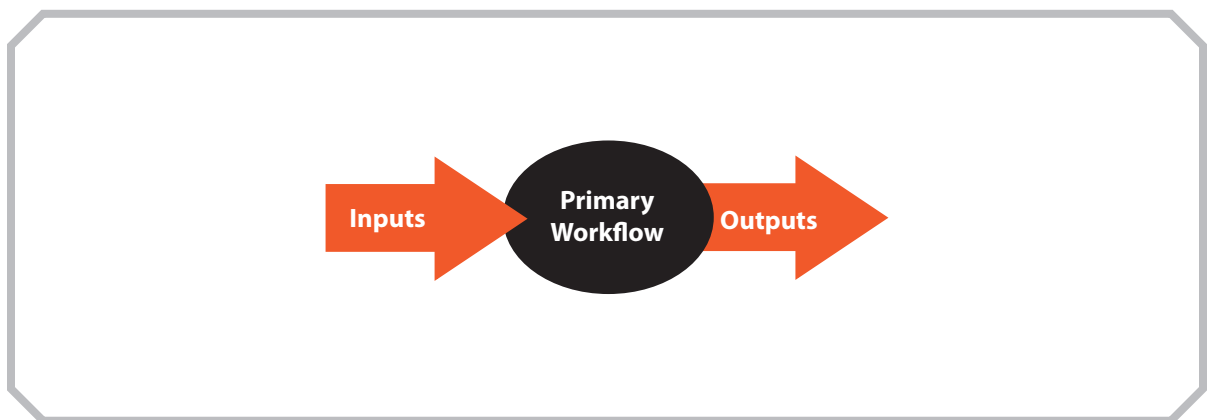
- a. Define your current “as is” workflow process.
- b. Identify improvements to your workflow.
- c. Implement the improved workflow process.

Workflow Process

Overview

The goal of any workflow process is to take the INPUT that has been provided and ADD VALUE to it before delivering the OUTPUT. In your case, the OUTPUT is what you most need to deliver in your role.

INPUT includes such things as information, materials, resources, tools, human effort, and technology.



Begin by determining what it is that the people most important to you need most from you. Then figure out what it takes to get them what they want. That is your primary workflow process.

Then determine your supporting processes. Eating your breakfast, getting to work, planning a project, conducting a meeting, performing any number of work tasks, doing research on line, filling out a report, making a purchase, solving a problem, meeting with a customer, making a sale, giving feedback to an associate. These are all processes that contribute to your primary workflow process.



Workflow Process

Define your primary workflow process.

Basics About My Workflow Process

WORKFLOW BASICS—What are the basic defining facts about your workflow process?

Workflow Name:
Upstream Stakeholders:
Downstream Stakeholders:
Overall Purpose of the Process:

PROCESS OUTCOMES—What outcomes are expected from your workflow process?

OUTCOME:	IDEAL MEASURE:	CURRENT MEASURE:	TARGET MEASURE:

Process Symbols

Legend.

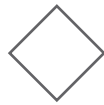
Below is a list of basic process map symbols with a definition of how each symbol is used. It is helpful to be as consistent as possible in creating your symbols and your maps.



Reference – A small circle or oval shape is used to show the beginning and ending of a process. It can also be used to connect one map to the next map.



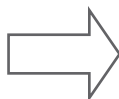
Activity or step – A rectangle is used to depict any kind of task or step in the process.



Decision – A diamond shape is used to show where decision points occur. Typically, the flow will branch into multiple directions or options at a decision point.



Document – A rectangle with a curve on the bottom is used to show when the output from a given step is recorded on paper.



Transport/Movement – A fat arrow is used to show the movement of an object from one step to another or from one location to another.



Flow Direction – A line arrow is used to show the directional flow of the process from symbol to symbol. It helps depict the sequence of steps in the process.



Delay – A large “D” is used to show when there is a delay in the process.










Workflow Process

Example - "As Is"

Workflow "As Is" Process

"AS IS" WORKFLOW—What does your workflow process look like, as it is today?

Reference	Activity or Step	Decision	Document	Transport/Move	Flow Direction	Delay
						










Workflow Process

Example - Improved

Workflow "Improved" Process

"IMPROVED" WORKFLOW—What could your workflow process look like if you made improvements?

A large empty rectangular box for drawing a workflow process.

Reference	Activity or Step	Decision	Document	Transport/Move	Flow Direction	Delay
						

Notes
