



# PROCESS-MAPPING ACTIVITY

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## Objective

To identify opportunities for process innovation.

## Method

Read the description of process mapping below and then undertake a mapping exercise on a 'live' situation. For example, how could you improve customer experience in a bank, a shop, a restaurant? Try and map the current process and then explore how it could be improved through rethinking the process?

## PROCESS-MAPPING

(sometimes called Process Flow Diagram, or Process flow Chart)

Many organisations have benefited from process innovation - re-thinking how work is done. It helps to see work as a process - to look for ways to take out all forms of waste and try to find opportunities to do things better and faster. Everything, from making a cup of tea to building a house can be seen as a process and things often go wrong often because there is no-one managing all of the steps.

Everything we do can be seen as part of a process. Performance is, in part, a consequence of how well each part of the process works and its relationship to the whole process. Process improvement focuses on introducing changes continuously that achieve the greatest potential benefit for (internal or external) customers.

*What is it?*

A Process Map is a schematic diagram that represents processes as sequences of time-based activities. It considers the whole process – paying particular attention to interfaces between different types or stages of processes. There are three levels of process map - The High Level Process Map ("30,000 feet overview"), "Medium image" / Detailed Process Map and the "Micro Map".

*What does it do?*

A Process Map lays out clearly the step-by-step flow of a process by tracking the flow of material, information and/or service through all its steps. It provides a hierarchical method for displaying processes that provides a visual representation of the workflow either within a process - or the whole operation.

*Why bother?*

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A process-map:

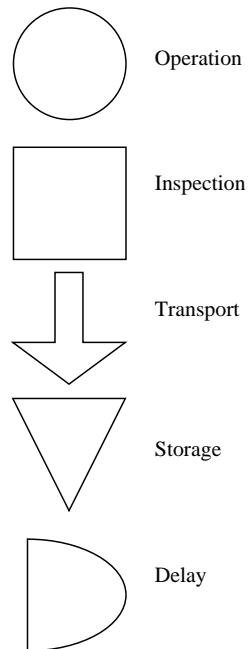
- Helps us to picture the sequence of activities in a process
- Assists us understanding complexity
- Clarifies misconceptions and fills gaps in knowledge
- Determine actions that will reduce or prevent problems
- Reveals opportunities for improvement and/or process innovation.

*How is it used?*

Like any versatile tool, there are many variations of Process Flow Diagram. If it helps, each activity can be placed in one of the following five activity categories.

- |            |   |  |
|------------|---|--|
| Operation  | - | the main steps in the process  |
| Inspection | - | a check on quality or quantity                                       |
| Transport  | - | movement of people, material, information, etc.                      |
| Storage    | - | a controlled storage such as filing, which is not a delay            |
| Delay      | - | a temporary storage, delay or hold up between consecutive operations |

Since the only category that adds value directly is the Operation, the objective is to redesign the process to eliminate or minimise the other four. The symbols used to represent these activities are shown below.



There are five key steps in constructing and using a Process Map:

1. Confirm the scope of the process, paying particular attention to the start and finish points.
2. Determine and list the steps required to carry out the process. Each action step should be named as a phrase containing a verb and a noun.
3. Draw a Process Map using the symbols above.
4. Mark the places on the map where there is waste, delay or other kinds of problems occur.
5. Ask, “where could we innovate in this process to improve it?” For example, eliminate stages, combine or change the sequence of activities?