

# Communicating Business Process improvement to stakeholders

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# What is a Process?

## A process is a:

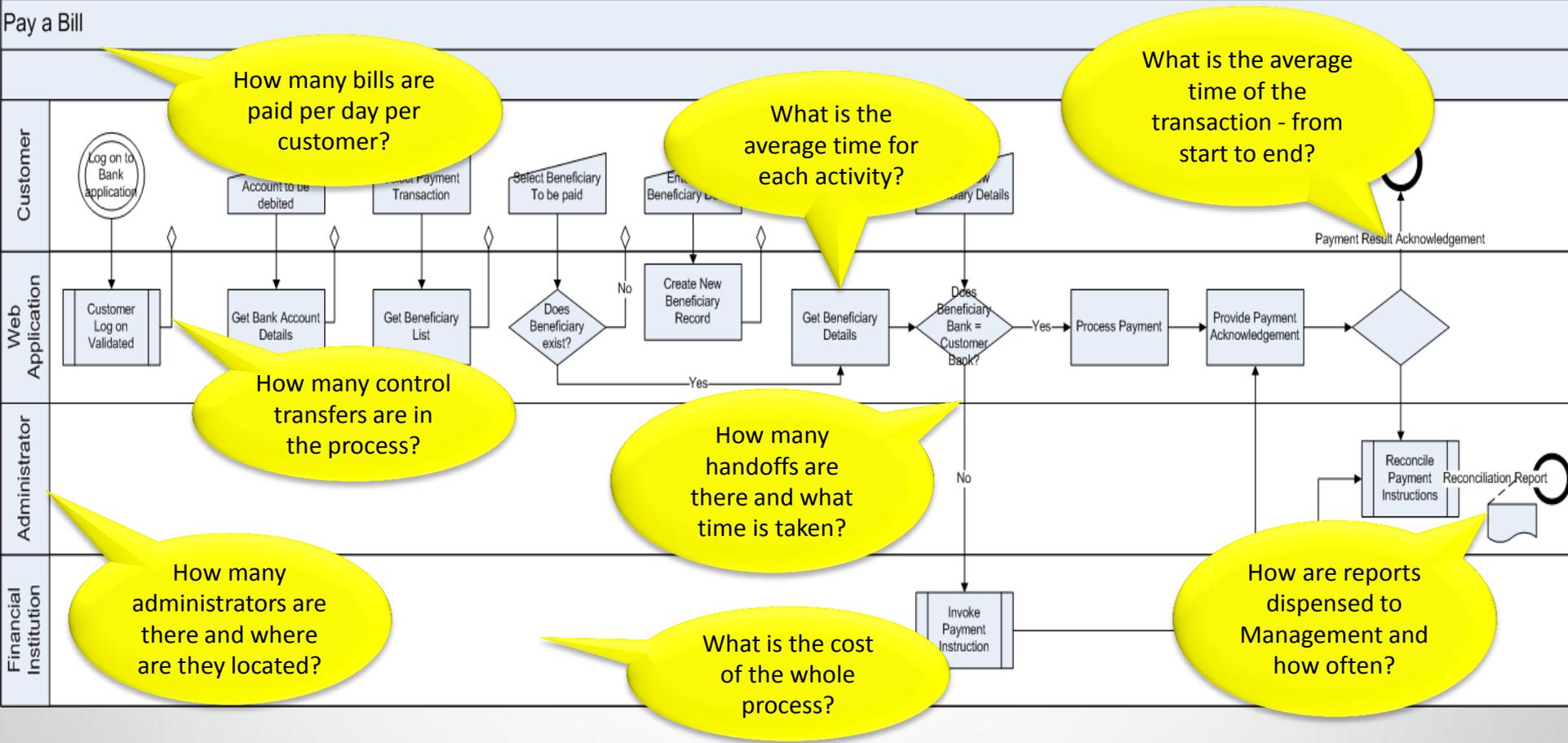
“Series of interconnected actions, steps, or procedures leading to a result.”

“A High-level sequence or flow of tasks performed during production of a product or delivery of a service.” (Ward, p. 326)

A process has a definite start and end. The start is provided by input from someone or a group external to the organisation, such as Customer or a Supplier who has a relationship with the organisation.

A process describes the tasks, decisions (business rules), inputs and outputs, people, and tools involved in a specific process that produces a result.

# Step 1: Define how the process works today?



Use a diagnostic approach and root-cause analysis to obtain consensus from stakeholders as to the root cause of the problem.

## Step 2: Techniques to use to build the As-Is

Plan interaction sessions with stakeholders who are impacted by the process:

Plan the Interaction Types:

1. One-on-One meetings
2. Job Shadowing / observations
3. Facilitated Focus Group Sessions
  - Homogenous groups (common goals) – for example waitresses only in a restaurant
  - Heterogeneous groups (different goals and groups involved in the process) – for example waitresses, chefs, cashiers, management.
4. Scope and provide time estimates for when stakeholders are to be available
5. Obtain Management commitment and buy-in for the work effort.
6. Ensure the business impact of doing the work or of not doing it has been analyzed
7. Focus on the core processes that are critical to the organization's business

Process Improvement is a way of looking at what causes things to happen in a process and using this knowledge to improve performance and customer satisfaction. The focus is on eliminating waste of money, people, materials, time, opportunities, and other resources

## Step 3: Who are the Stakeholders?

**Stakeholders are people or groups who can influence business performance.**

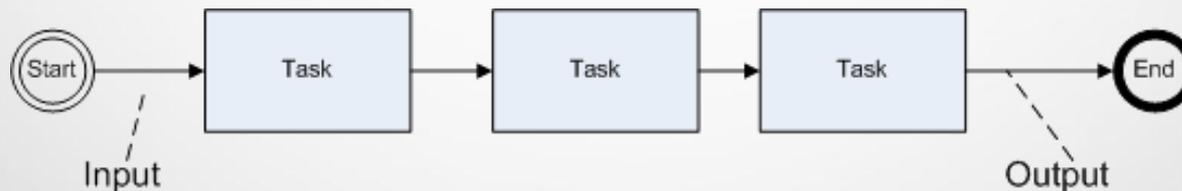
Identify the key roles and responsibilities of the people who can bring about the change for the process improvement

Develop a strategy for dealing with stakeholder resistance to change brought on by the process improvement;

- Involve stakeholders in the As-Is and the To-Be to increase buy-in

The processes identified for improvement should ideally offer a strong chance of success and consider the expectations of stakeholders.

Stakeholders are either directly involved in the process (represented as Actors in a swimlane) or may receive output from or give input into a process. Remember a process exists to create deliverables.



## Step 4: Use modelling techniques

A process diagram will always contain the following elements:

- Start
- Tasks
- Flows
- Decisions
- End

It will also include the following:

- Events - usually initiates or triggers the process
- Alternative paths
- Parallel paths
- Forks and joins
- Actors /Roles / Business Units
- Deliverables
- May be decomposed into lower-level tasks
- Will create, transform, move, or delete a deliverable (the output)
- May be manual or automated (systems or tools used in the process)

Use standard diagramming conventions and notations such as BPMN; UML; IDEF. Compliance with established standards ensures:

- Uniformity within your project and across other projects within your organization
- Enhanced communications with users, colleagues, stakeholders, developers, and vendors

May be referred to as process steps, activities, sub-processes, components, or operations

## Step 5: Use questioning techniques

### What tasks are performed in the process?

- **How** do the actors perform these tasks?
- **When** do they perform the tasks?
- **How** often are the tasks performed?
- **What** triggers the tasks to be performed?
- Determine the sequence of events and how much time each one takes
- Note obvious bottlenecks, issues, or areas for improvement and document them
- Investigate all enablers (items that make the process work)
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the current process
- Start to identify in terms of individual roles the interdependencies and links between activities
- Examine each individual's role in the process – specifically look at competencies and performance, identify non-value add tasks
- Identify system dependencies in the process and what data is accessed when and by whom

When the As-Is has been validated, create a baseline to measure future improvement.

## Step 6: Develop the To-Be

### **Schedule and conduct To-Be process modelling sessions:**

Make sure the sponsor or decision maker is available and facilitates access to other critical resources:

- Facilitate the session and communicate the session objectives
- Schedule more than one session (Max 3 hours per session)
- Use the proper facilities – book a dedicated room, create a ‘safe’ environment and seat participants (“U” shape)
- Ensure you have all the necessary tools, a large white board, flipchart, pens, paper, etc.
- Control access to e-mail, voice mail, and phones
- Know the first 5 things you will do when you start, and the last 5 things before you leave
- Plan time to formally document the outcome of the session, including identified risks, action items, dependencies, issues, etc.
- Prepare to validate the session output at the start of the next session.

## Step 7: Build the To-Be Diagram

1. Take time to educate the stakeholders on the objects/icons to be used in the diagram
2. Identify the swim lanes - start with the initiating event
3. Use “clouds” or “circles” to indicate something that must be detailed or defined later (for example, how the process functions in different locations or when details are unavailable)
4. Identify forks and branches
5. Focus on one path at a time
6. Brainstorm for significant steps or tasks, recording each suggestion on one of the Post-it® notes
  - Focus on “What,” “when,” “why,” and “by whom”
7. Lay out the steps in approximate sequence on the paper or white board
8. Look closely to see whether any important steps are missing
9. Add swim lanes, labelled by actor, and place steps in the right swim lane
10. Reduce continuous sets of steps to a single step
11. Add flow lines between the steps, being careful to account for decisions and multiple flows
12. Try improve the step names to reflect the totality of what happens while that actor has the work
13. Perform an initial validation by walking through a few scenarios and revising the diagram as necessary
14. Add details and ensure all business scenarios are thought of

Remember – stakeholders involved in the To-Be must be decision-makers and have the necessary organisation authority

## Step 8: Establish the To-Be Metrics

- Metrics should be both quantitative and qualitative:
  - Quantitative – time and cost variables
  - Qualitative – ease of conducting business, increasing visibility, improving employee morale, improving customer satisfaction
- Proposed metrics should trace directly to organizational objectives
- The sponsor, the process owner, and all stakeholders must review and approve all metrics

### **Metrics to consider:**

Work-duration and resource rates

Fixed costs (the costs the organisation will pay even if nothing is produced)

- Idle time, set-up time, rent, etc.
- Variable costs - Labour, material
- How many times the process produces the result and includes:
  - Total volume; Proportion of triggers (customer initiated vs. Internal initiated); Proportion of different paths (normal path, alternate paths, and exceptions); Proportion of different results (approved vs. rejected)

Time to Execute the process: Set-up time; total cycle time; Idle time.

## Step 9: Are the right people performing the tasks?

- Job titles – Do they reflect what they actually do?
- Departments – Is the right department performing the right work in the right sequence?
- Locations – Is the process being performed differently in different locations?
- Language – Is language an inhibitor to efficiency?
- Training – Is everyone in the process adequately trained in the process?
- Tools – Do participants in the process have the right tools to do the job?
- Systems – Do systems perform work efficiently as part of the process?

### **Look at:**

- Productivity (volume per cost, volume per time)
- Defect rates (rework per volume)
- Demographics (volumes compared to each other; for example, preferred customer to all customers)
- Speed (volume per time)
- Location (cost per location)

## Step 10: Gap Analysis

When the As-Is and To-Be are completed, perform a gap analysis

1. Brainstorm effective means of closing the gap with stakeholders
2. Analyze process-specific recommendations
3. Conduct cost-benefit analysis
4. Prioritize process-specific recommendations
5. Recommend process-specific initiatives
6. Complete the business case – feasibility study and cost-benefit analysis
  - Identify Risks; up-date the Communication and Implementation plans
7. Obtain approval
8. Implement the new process

## Step 11: Implement the new Process

- Develop and provide job training, as needed, on the new process
- Be sure to:
  - Manage the changeover
  - Consider how day-to-day responsibilities will be transferred from the improvement team to the process owner (develop a transition plan from the old process to the new process)
- Execute the Implementation Plan

Monitor the process improvement to ensure acceptance by everyone and that the benefits as documented in the Business Case, are achieved.

Findings and recommendations from the improvement project must be communicated to stakeholders to ensure acceptance and buy-in of the process changes.

## Questions



**Download this Presentation and White Paper from:**

(<http://orbussoftware.com/downloads/>)



## Sources

*A Guide to the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge®*

*Sharp, Alec, and Patrick McDermott. 2001. Workflow Modelling: Tools for Process Improvement and Application Development.*

*Gottesdiener, Ellen. 2002. Requirements by Collaboration: Workshops for Defining Needs*

*My own practical experience of what works and what does not work as a Business Analysis Professional with a career that spans more than 30 years. The ability to work with Stakeholders, to communicate, lead, influence and model are some of the key skills for a successful Business Analyst practitioner to have.*