



Australian  
National  
University

# Improving our processes

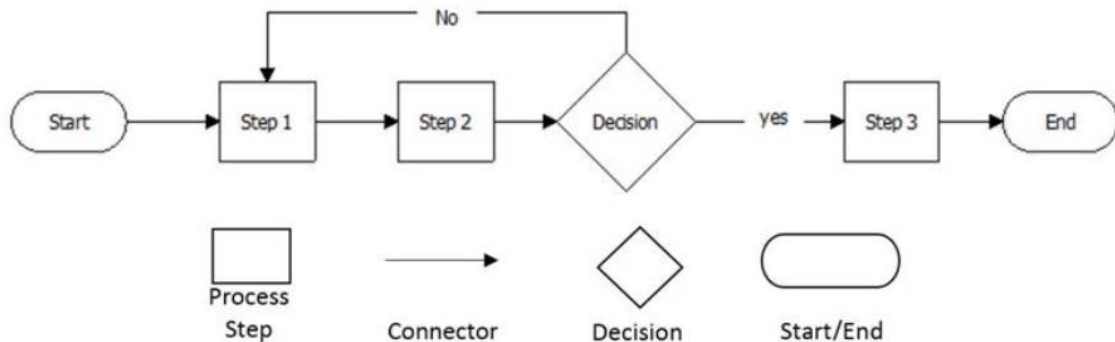
Process mapping and improvement  
techniques

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SIRT03

## What is process mapping

Process maps are a graphical representation with illustrative descriptions of how things get done. They capture process steps, people in the process, inputs and outputs in their present form and allow major areas of strengths and weaknesses in the existing process to be identified.



## Why create process maps?

Process maps:

- help you uncover wasteful activity and help you deliver to expectations.
- provide the necessary information to determine who, what, where, why, and when activities are undertaken
- facilitate improvements (effectiveness and efficiency) in a process. Its easier to pin point specific areas that need changes when using an image, such as bottlenecks, delay points, capacity constraints.
- are more effective in helping others to understand activity being undertaken than oral or written reports. Visual illustrations through a process map help to understand pain points quickly.
- are helpful in preparing a performance baseline for existing services
- are an essential first step while automating processes.

## How do I start?

Process mapping is initiated by identifying key services and activities in your area. Various conventions exist that can be used to map services (Business Process Modelling Notation (BPMN), Flow-charting, Value Chain Mapping etc.). Each individual service or activity is then mapped, typically while seeking answers to the following questions:

- What are the key processes needed to provide the service?
  - How many steps are there?
  - What is the sequence?
  - What are the different possible pathways within the process?
  - Who are the various actors performing process activities?
  - What are the various inputs and outputs?
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- Are there decisions involved?
  - Does the process span across various IT systems?

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- How many hand-offs are there? (e.g. where students are handed over to another department of the university)

There are several resources and videos online that can take you through a step-by-step guide on how to process map and transform your services. [Please see the Additional Resources section below for some suggestions.](#)

## How to use process maps to optimise and improve services

Once processes are mapped, waste, duplication, inefficiencies, and challenges can be identified. Future state process maps can be designed and implemented, to achieve improvements. The opportunities to improve services are identified, typically by seeking answers to the following questions:

- Could some tasks be carried out by one person instead of several people?
- Is there any duplication of work?
- Are there any bottlenecks?
- How much error correction/rework is being carried out?
- How long does each step take?
- What is the approximate time between each step?
- Which tasks help to achieve the purpose and which ones do not?
- Can those that don't add value to end users be removed?
- Are we doing the right things in the process?
- Are we doing things in the right order?
- Is the right person doing it?
- What information do we give to people at what stage and is the information useful?
- Should some tasks that are performed as part of another process be performed here?

## Additional Resources

There are many resources available as a guide on how to map processes and improve them:

**LinkedIn Learning** (free to ANU staff)

- [Business Process Modelling](#)
- [Simplifying Business Processes](#)
- [How to map the current process](#)
- [Customer Experience: Journey Mapping](#)
- [MS Visio 2016 Essential Training](#) (a useful software tool to help digitally map processes)

Also refer to the following artefacts and guides in the Service Improvement and Redesign Toolkit:

- SIRT01- Removing Waste from our Work
- SIRT02- ANU Service Principles Toolkit

For further assistance or advice, or for help with process automation / process redesign opportunities in your area, please contact [Planning & Service Performance](#)