

Business Process Mapping

Business process mapping is a visual representation of work processes. Process maps show the relationship among the steps required to complete a product or service, and can be expressed as flowcharts or as *Business Process Modeling and Notation (BPMN)* symbols.

Business process maps are concerned with business activities, purpose, standards for success, roles and responsibilities, and when and where different steps will occur. Business process mapping promotes transparency, not only for those within the company, but also for all stakeholders, especially those involved in compliance.

Business process mapping is often mistaken for business process modeling. When professionals perform business process modeling, they are more interested in how the processes are performed, and who (or what department) is performing them. In this way, they focus on analyzing and optimizing the business process architecture through reviewing the processes and considering the company's goals and requirements. A business's process architecture details the entire enterprise's set of processes. Often termed a "blueprint," the architecture is typically used to align the company's processes with their objectives. Modeling is more about how processes flow, while mapping is about what is in existence.

The Scope and Purpose of Business Process Modeling

Business process modeling is part of project planning for a wide range of project types. Businesses may choose to map their processes because they are conducting strategic planning, developing new metrics for reporting, outsourcing or simply improving on their existing processes.

Process maps inspire professionals to consider how to make their organization more effective by thinking through their workflows. When you map a process, you must diagram it out in a way that achieves a shared understanding. The scope of business process mapping will show end-to-end activities, inputs such as materials or labor, and the linkages.

Organizations use business process modeling for different reasons, but primarily it's a formal approach to quality management. Overall, businesses want to become more effective, so when all of the company objectives are measured and compared, it becomes possible to align them with your company's values and capabilities. With aligned objectives, your organization can behave as a single entity with interconnecting parts, which significantly increases the value of your end-product or service. Other purposes of building business process maps include:

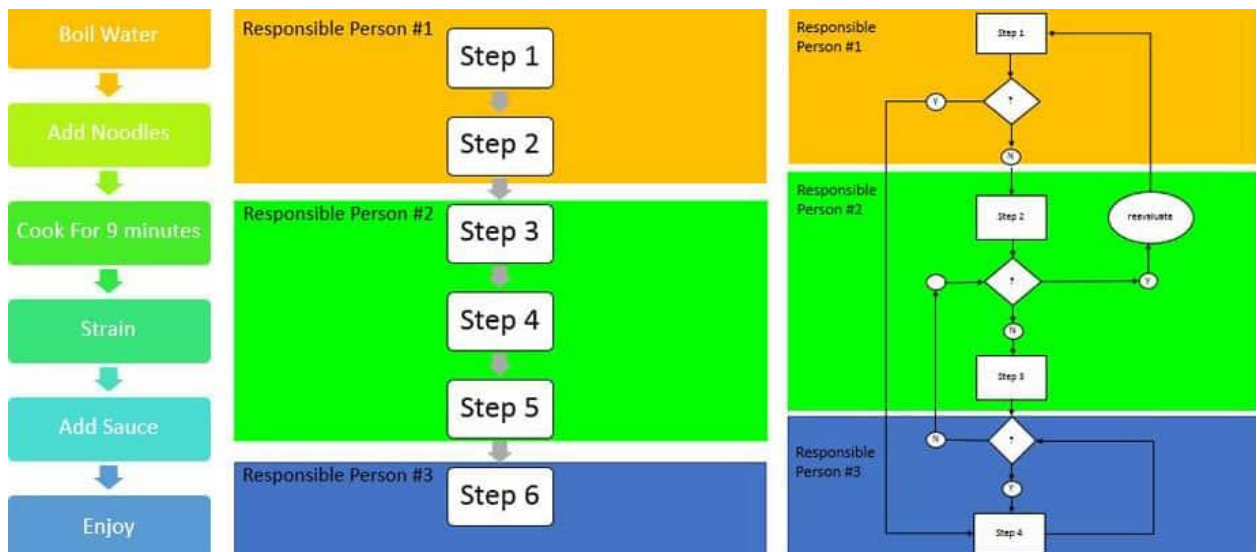
- Process standardization
- Employee onboarding and training
- Process improvement
- Communication
- Compliance with regulating agencies (e.g. International Organization for Standardization, 2002 Sarbanes-Oxley Act)
- Internal auditing

As you can see, several of these purposes, directly lend themselves useful when considering outsourcing and require selecting a HR Services and/or Technology Provider.

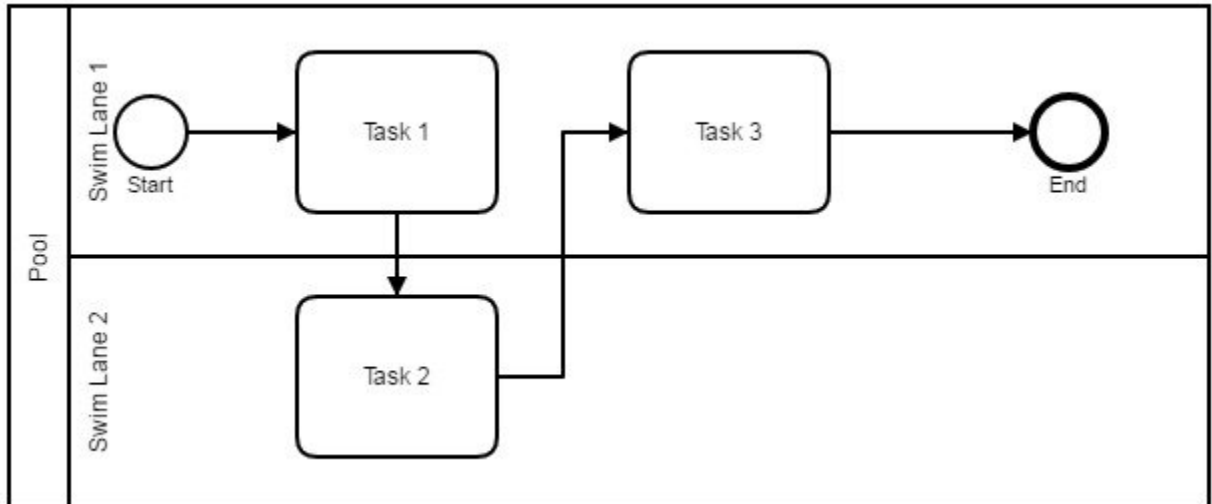
Types of Business Process Maps

You can create business process maps for project plans, details, documents, products, roles, locations, strategies, or interactions, at varying levels of detail. We've outlined the most common types of business process maps in the list below.

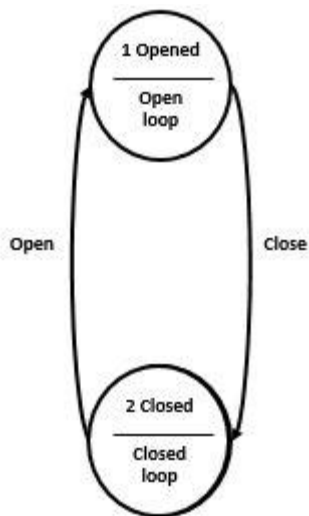
- **Flowcharts:** These are graphic illustrations of your process. Three types of flowcharts are popular: top-down flowcharts, deployment flowcharts, and detailed flowcharts. Top-down flowcharts show the steps of a process, clustering them together in a single flow. Deployment flowcharts are a top-down flowchart expanded to include who is performing each task. Detailed flowcharts are an expansion of both the top-down and deployment flowcharts, showing as many details as possible.



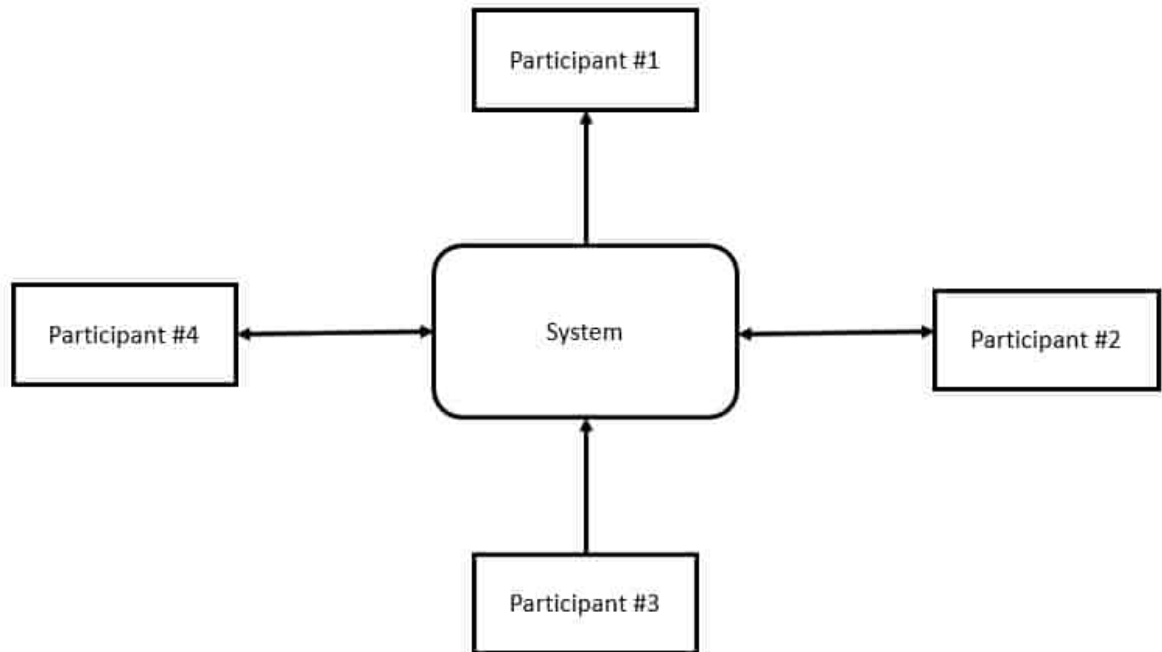
- **Swimlane Diagrams:** These diagrams, also known as cross-functional maps, detail the sub-process responsibilities in a process.



- **State Diagrams:** These diagrams show the behavior of systems in the Unified Modeling Language (UML), describing the states of component.



- **Data Flow Diagram:** Similar to a flowchart, this diagram focuses solely on the data that flows through a system.



- **Value Stream Mapping:** Part of Lean Manufacturing principles, value stream mapping demonstrates the current state and helps to design the future state of a process, focusing on taking products and services from their beginning to their completion.



There are many reasons that companies choose to map their business processes, including increased visibility, decreased errors in processes, and the ability to identify risk. To properly transform your organization into a sustainable one, you must understand how we begin to map business processes. These following principles should be present in every mapping project:

- Define the scope of the project itself, with the boundaries, start, and end points.
- Look at the big picture - the intent of the process.
- Define each step clearly.
- Get feedback from everyone in your organization who is involved in the process.
- Strive to be complete in your accuracy, especially with the map of the “as-is” process.
- Strive to keep the sub-processes simple.
- Test the process with accepted metrics. Metrics should measure the time, volume, rates/costs, equipment, and any added value.
- Work from output to input, backward.
- Create ownership with single points of contact where feasible.
- Redesign processes to be customer-centric.
- Use technology to enable your processes.
- Decrease inefficiencies in the hand-offs.

Business Process Mapping Framework

To map your business process, first identify your business’s ideal processes. Then, define the purpose of the map. Analyze the process, optimize it, and then document the process while identifying problem areas. We’ve expanded on these steps below:

1. Identify your organization’s best practices: As in the principles of good business process mapping, your organization should agree on what is mapped and the scope of each. The process should be easily understood as mapped by someone who is not close to it. Each process should also have a series of questions posed to it that answer why it is being done and what goes into each detail of it. Finally, apply metrics as a basis for measuring the success of each process.

2. As-is in process design: Specifically define the purpose of mapping the process. Ask where the process initiates and ends, and determine what the opportunity of fixing it could become. After selecting a process, determine all the steps in it, as well as inputs and outputs. Establish the systems, roles, and time involved. Select a mapping technique. Interview the contributors for the roles they play in the process, looking at every duty and decision point.

The following are the specific criteria that you are looking for in every process. Responsibilities, Objectives, Activities, Inputs, Outputs, Customers, Risks and controls, Key performance indicators.