

## How to Make Process Improvement Simple

**Process** - A series of actions, changes or functions bringing about a result, e.g. a manufacturing process or a process of service delivery.

An organization is nothing more than a process or group of processes that add value to someone or something. The most effective organizations have processes that are as simple as possible, documented and easily repeatable.

Process improvement is the biggest way to positively impact a business' profitability and also the swiftest way to harm it if it is not done right. There is no reason to make it complicated and intimidating with fancy methodologies and words. If you can breakdown a process into manageable chunks then you can improve it.

There are three general types of processes:

1. Revenue - what you do for others
2. Operations - internal things you do
3. Supply - what others do for you

In addition, there are three types of improvement:

1. Speed
2. Cost
3. Reliability

When looking for opportunities for improvement, it is important to first identify the 3-5 items in each type of process that produce 80% of the results. After you create this list, prioritize in terms of the impact each item makes on the organization. Lastly, have the discipline to focus on one process at a time until it is as simple as you can possibly make it.

An example would be an online store and more specifically the sales process. The most important aspects would be the quality of the product images on the computer screen, a clear description and an easy, simple way to order.

**Bright Idea:** Just because an item on the list has the most room for improvement does not necessarily mean it should receive attention first. Each item does not make an equal impact on the organization. Give attention to the item that will make the most impact if improved, even if it only requires polishing or fine-tuning.

When improving a process, it is important to consider speed, cost and reliability equally. These compose the three-legged stool that provides balance to your thinking for your process improvement effort. Most people can make a gut decision on what balance looks like for each process.

Referring back to the online store, an example of speed would be a low-resolution image that would load quickly on your computer screen. Examples of cost and reliability would be the value and quality of the internet services company you use to support your online store.

If you can keep it simple, you are well on your way to dealing with process

**improvement with ease.**



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