

# What is Business Process Management?

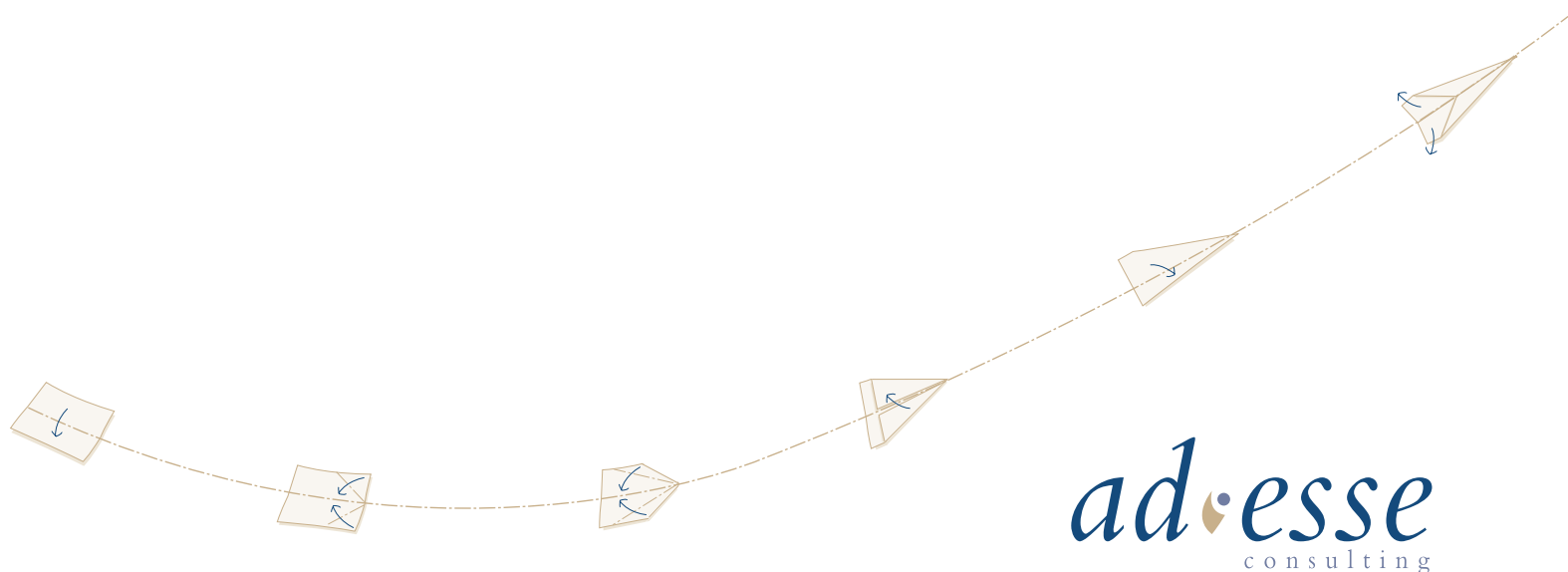
Business Process Management is how an organisation designs, manages and improves processes in order to support its Policy and Strategy. The ultimate aim is to satisfy fully, and generate increasing value for, the organisation's customers and stakeholders.

It means:

- Improving performance by focusing on the key processes that deliver business outcomes
- Capturing and defining today's key processes, but not "mapping for the sake of it"
- Measuring the performance of those processes, using the right metrics
- Understanding quantitatively and qualitatively, how and why processes achieve the results they do
- Designing, or re-designing, processes to achieve new levels of performance
- Applying day-to-day control of processes, by those who operate them

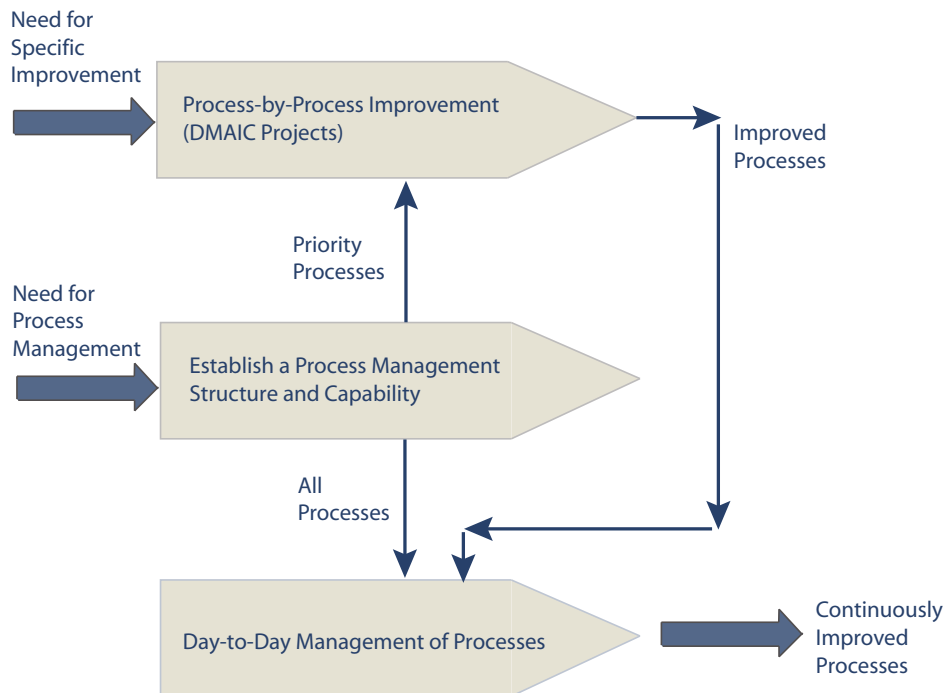
How do you get started with Process Management? For many organisations it seems like a huge task, with the potential for months, or years, of effort with very little return, or tangible signs of improvement.

Our learning and experience with numerous clients over the past few years means we can design an approach that will help deliver some quick wins, but also set the foundations for sustainable performance improvement. Our experience comes from work in manufacturing and service sectors, and from the public and private sectors.



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What does a process managed organisation need? We've found three important capabilities are required:



If you want some quick wins and to demonstrate a return on investment, you need some **targeted process improvement projects**. We often use the DMAIC approach – Define, Measure, Analyse, Improve, Control, but there are other ways to run successful process improvement projects. These projects might also make use of tools and techniques such as Lean or Six Sigma.

You also need to **establish a process management capability**; that means a top-down business process model, process ownership roles, knowledge and skills (including facilitation), a framework for process target setting and measurement, and a way of assessing how healthy your processes are.

All processes need to be **managed on a day-to-day basis**; the nature of the process will affect what that means in practice, but it will always include regular measurement, corrective action and continuous improvement.

## PROCESS CAPABILITY

A process management approach based on Process Qualification or the Capability and Maturity Model (CMM) provides a useful, structured way of assessing the health of your processes. Every process can be “qualified” at one of these five levels:

- Initial** – recognising the existence of key processes and appointing capable Process Owners
- Defined** – understanding the purpose, scope, customers, suppliers and activities
- Managed** – agreeing the standards for operation of a process, and customer and supplier requirements
- Quantitatively Managed** – developing a balanced set of performance indicators and using these to drive improvement
- Optimising** – working towards best practice, through internal and external benchmarking

## WHAT DOES THE JOURNEY LOOK LIKE?

Organisations typically need to move through a four stage process management journey:

- Stage 1: Identification of processes
- Stage 2: Definition of processes
- Stage 3: Management and improvement of individual processes
- Stage 4: Management of the organisation, by process

Very few clients come to us with a wish to “do Process Management”. Most come with a desire to understand how their processes impact on their performance and how to improve that performance systematically.

A key piece of work is the development of a High-level Business Process Model. This hierarchical model provides the context within which ALL process management is carried out. At the highest level, it identifies the organisation’s customer-facing (value chain) processes and its support and enabling ones. For those organisations adopting a Balanced Scorecard approach to performance management, this Process Model is really helpful in identifying the critical processes which are the performance drivers towards achieving strategic goals.

Some visionary senior teams engage in developing this process model themselves, with our facilitation support; recognising the benefits of understanding how their organisation achieves its outcomes.

We also work with Process Owners, senior champions and internal consultants/facilitators to prioritise and plan for process management and improvement. Sometimes, we help develop a customised “process for process management” that provides a roadmap for the organisation to use on its process journey.

Much of our work is supported and enabled by “control-ES” process management software, provided by one of our technology alliances, Nimbus Partners. The software enables us to engage people in rapid capture of processes, carry out rigorous performance analysis and test a range of scenarios for improvement. It’s also the ideal tool to help deploy processes across an organisation and ensure adoption of new ways of working.

## OUR PROCESS EXPERIENCE

Over the years, our team has helped clients to define, measure and improve the performance of probably any business process you can think of.

Customer-facing processes have included:

- Strategic and business planning
- Product and service design and development
- Sales and Marketing
- Product and service delivery
- Customer service and support

In support and enabling processes, we have worked in:

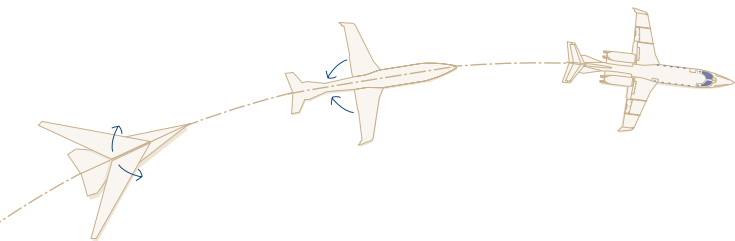
- Human resources
- Financial management
- Procurement
- Facilities and property management
- Information technology
- Project management

Our sector experience is equally wide, covering both private and public sectors, in manufacturing and service delivery.

## OVERALL LEARNING POINTS

Some of the learning from our approach with clients includes:

- Process Capture/Mapping is not process improvement
- Wide-scale staff involvement improves the quality of process capture and increases the chances of spotting improvement opportunities
- Process maps enable you to see some of the problems and opportunities. You can see more with:
  - Process walk-throughs involving the operators/users/contributors
  - Data gathering and analysis
  - Regular Process Owner-led reviews
- You need Process Improvement Projects to achieve real improvement
- Identification of a balanced set of process measures is fundamental to being able to demonstrate and quantify performance improvement



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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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