

Assignment - Construct a Process Flow Diagram

Select a meaningful process from your own workplace (present or past) to diagram. The quality of process chosen and level of thought you put into it will be counted. In deciding which process to select, please use this rule of thumb regarding the quality of the process you choose: If the process steps seem obvious at face value, with no clear benefit or purpose to completing a process flow diagram (i.e., searching for process improvements) and it seems just an exercise in listing steps, it likely will not make for a good quality process choice. Instead, try to find a process where you genuinely have to work some to define the steps to better understand the process. If you would like to run an idea by me, please do.

Your process flow diagram needs to be typed. You don't have to worry about using the correct symbols (such as diamond, circle, square), but you can if you know how. You can make all your steps appears as circles or squares if you want, as long as they are labeled in some detail.

You can use any software of your choice, as long as it is in a file format that I can open. You can create diagrams in both Word and Excel. You can also use a free online software tool called Gliffy (gliffy.com). I will provide directions for using Gliffy as we approach this week of homework. It's very easy to use, and students have loved it. Upload your diagram as an attachment to the dropbox in D2L. If you create your diagram in Gliffy, post the URL (web link) for the diagram in a Word file with your name on it, and upload that to the dropbox.

Indicate at the top of your page, in addition to your name, etc., what process you are diagramming. You should diagram your process by constructing a "Standard Flow Diagram" like the example in the Power Point example located in Module 5. Your process flow should have at least two yes/no decision points and the topic should not be a personal one as in the example.

Be sure you pick a process from a business manager's perspective, not the customer's; as in how would you analyze a process if you were the manager of this operation

Remember, when diagramming each step of the process, be sure to include both a verb and a noun. Example: if you are flowing a process for accounts receivable in your company, don't just say "Invoice" or "Aging" for some of your steps. Please say: "invoice is generated," or "generate invoice;" or for aging, say: "Aging of Accounts is prepared"

When you have completed your diagram, write an analysis assessing the potential for improving the process you selected. You may want to choose a process that you think is partially flawed to begin with, so you can address how you think it can be improved. Turning in a paper with a flawless process is okay, as long as you go through the analysis and tell my why

It is very easy to pick up jpgs and pdf files of already completed flow diagrams and use one of those as your own assignment. They are available everywhere. On the net, from your own work places. This assignment needs to be created from scratch by you for only the purpose of this class. Please don't be tempted to copy and paste a flow diagram image you get from somewhere else and then type in your name at the top. Or don't be tempted to use a flow diagram that was created at your work by somebody else. If you personally have created a flow diagram at work in the recent past and want to use it, then contact me before the due date to be sure this will work

All steps should sound like they are written in your own voice and as though you know exactly what they are and why you put them there. If you use software other than Gliffy, Word, or Excel, please state what software you have used to create your diagram.

Just remember that I've seen hundred of flow diagrams and can spot when someone tries to pass off one already created as their own. Any suspected academic dishonesty in this assignment will be handled per the syllabus.

Using the Drawing Feature in Word or Excel

In Word, if your drawing tools are not already showing, go to the upper right corner of the top task bar, right click in an empty space. This pulls up a menu of tool bars that are possible to expose. Click on "drawing" if it isn't there already. You'll know it's showing if you see a bar that starts with "AutoShapes," a line, arrow, box, circle, text box, etc. For this assignment, all you need to do is create several text boxes and connect them with arrows. Scroll your mouse over the icons in the drawing bar until you find the text box button. It's the small icon with lines and an A in the upper left corner. Click on that and then drag your cursor to wherever you want to put in your box, and type in the label for the box. Once you have your boxes created and positioned, click on the arrow icon and drag your cursor from where you want the arrow to start and to where you want it to end

The same principles hold true in Excel. Use the help button in either program to learn more about drawing and/or inserting text boxes. This should at least get you started.