

Job Aid

Operating Efficiency Essentials



Operating Efficiency Essentials: Plan of Action

Use this plan of action as a living document to track how you can improve one business process. The more honest you are in this document, the better you can prioritize your efforts.

Review Your Business

Here are some questions aimed at helping you assess your business, which you can use while evaluating any problem areas. Please fill in your one-sentence response.

What is the purpose of your business?

Which process has the most need for improvement?

What in your business is your competitive advantage?

Business Process Analysis Question Framework

The objective of this template is to provide a list of questions to ask yourself during any process improvement exercise and track the responses. Identify one process and fill in the response column.

Understanding Your Process		
Process Elements to Define	This category of questions is directed at understanding how the process works	Response
Process Name	How do you refer to this process?	
Trigger Events	What event or action starts this process?	
Process Steps/Activities	What are the steps involved in this process?	
Constituents	Who are the main participants in this process?	
Process Objective	What is the objective of the process?	
Process Status	Is the process effective?	

Defining Business Process Optimization

Process optimization is about boosting efficiency by making tasks simpler, reducing redundant tasks, and trimming wasteful activities. Consider the following questions to take an inventory of your business resources.

	Yes	No
Do you understand your value chain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Is the process built with the customer in mind?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you sometimes forget to bill a customer because it was never tracked or captured anywhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a reliable system for tracking your prospects from first contact through the final sale?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you automate your repetitive tasks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are your employees empowered to make decisions within their roles and responsibilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you incorporated technology into your business processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are all your current business processes aligned with your business strategies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Glossary

Use this glossary as a guide to review key terms and how they show up in the real world.



Definition



Practical Use

Automate

The technique of making an apparatus, a process, or a system operate automatically.

Source: Merriam-Webster

Automation helps you use your technology to execute recurring tasks or processes to replace manual efforts.

Business Efficiency

How much output a business produces for each unit of input.

Source: Simpllicable

Optimizing business efficiency helps your business make the best possible use of resources.

Checklist

A list of items required, things to be done, or points to be considered, used as a reminder.

Source: Dictionary.com

Use a checklist to keep track of your business processes.



Definition



Practical Use

Effectiveness

The degree to which something is successful in producing a desired result: success.

Source: Dictionary.com

Effectiveness tells you the level of quality with which a task or process is executed.

Efficient

Achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted effort or expense.

Source: Dictionary.com

Designing efficient processes will help your business reach its full potential.

Outsourcing

Obtaining a good or service from an outside supplier, especially in place of an internal source.

Source: Dictionary.com

Your business may leverage third parties to perform a task if you don't have the right internal resources.



Definition



Practical Use

Productivity

The effectiveness of productive effort, especially in industry, as measured in terms of the rate of output per unit of input.

Source: Dictionary.com

In order to maximize productivity, you'll want to efficiently and effectively design processes that are often repeated in your business.

Return on Investment (ROI)

A performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency or profitability of an investment.

Source: Investopedia

If you need to invest in a piece of technology, or hire a new employee to execute a task, that's your investment. The return on investment would be the increased productivity from the new technology or employee.

To-Do List

A list of errands and other tasks – often written on a piece of paper as a memory aid.

Source: YourDictionary

Your business is likely to use this list for low priority items, but it can be important in making sure you don't forget anything that needs to get done.