

# The Benefits of Workflow Analysis



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Workflow analysis is the process of breaking down a workflow's performance. It looks at trends to find areas for improvement. Taking a closer look at a workflow at the task level makes it easier for businesses to adjust processes to improve productivity and efficiency. Through workflow analysis, it's easier to find bottlenecks, redundancies, and the chance to implement more automation.

If you're responsible for your organization's efficiency, you've likely considered business process management, workflow management, and business process automation. Many companies jump on the workflow automation train simply because they don't want to miss out. After all, there are benefits and advantages to it, so why not get started right away?

The problem is that often, diving headfirst into something like this without the appropriate research and consideration means that the end result is something that's not as effective as you'd hoped for. And that's generally because there was no workflow analysis prior to implementation.

There's no real reason to build any kind of automated workflow without knowing the benefits you'll get from it and how your existing workflows can be improved

upon. Any workflows you don't look at go stale and are adopted into a legacy system.

*Workflow analysis should become a regular part of business operations, to ensure efficiency remains consistent as technology and markets evolve.*

## **Benefit #1: Increased Efficiency**

By looking at each aspect of a work process and seeing everything from end-to-end, you can easily identify the steps that can be automated or made paperless. This helps to find inefficiencies and areas where you can upgrade technology. Ultimately, after implementing the changes found due to analysis, you'll end up with more profit. Your company will run more smoothly and get more done in less time, which makes it easier to earn more revenue.

## **Benefit #2: Happier Employees**

Nobody wants to feel like they're stuck with old, outdated processes and technology. If employees take the time to suggest potential areas of improvement, and then nothing is done, they will start to feel as though no one is listening, and no one cares. At this point, they will care less about their job, which causes them to disengage, and maybe even quit. That's the kind of thing that can cost a company a lot of money when left unchecked.

By investing time and money into workflow analysis, you can assure your team members you care and are taking steps to make things easier and better for them. When employees learn that their area of responsibility is something the company cares enough about to make it easier on their team and invest in new tools and technology, they feel appreciated. Ultimately, this boosts employee morale and leads to more productivity, higher engagement, and less turnover.

## **Benefit #3: Happier Customers**

When implemented correctly, workflow analysis can make for happier customers. For instance, you can use workflow analysis to better understand your contact centers operations. Then, when you need need to make choices about technology or hiring, you use the strong workflows as the basis for those decisions. You can

also make decisions that are designed to make those workflows even better. Ultimately, when your customers feel understood and know that assistance is easy to receive via email, live chat, or a phone call, they are that much more likely to remain loyal to your company.

## **Benefit #4: Physical Space Optimization**

You can also use workflow analysis tools to help your facility managers make the most of physical space. If your printers are located too far away from the people who are using them the most, it may be time to move some things around to make it easier on them. Are your rack servers taking up too much room? consider switching them to microserver so you can keep your data center smaller without reducing the overall data capacity you have. With a workflow monitoring tool, facility managers don't have to work as hard when it comes to locating major office equipment, assigning office space, and making decisions about how to implement changes when they are needed.

## **Benefit #5: Easier to Achieve and Maintain Regulatory Compliance**

You can use workflow analysis tools to ensuring that all steps necessary for regulatory compliance logged, and reported as needed. The healthcare and finance industries have to deal with numerous regulations and reporting requirements. Building accountability and step logging into the workflows allows you to create audit trails on demand. This makes it easy to always have information regarding compliance available when it's needed. It also makes creating annual reports much easier.

## **Steps for Proper Workflow Analysis**

### **Step #1: Collect Data**

Collect data (hard and soft) regarding the workflow you want to focus on. Think about:

- The number of items in that workflow initiated over a period
- The number of items finished

- The number of items declined/refused/rejected
- The average time taken to complete each task, along with the minimum and maximum time frames.
- Number of times a task is moved back or is rejected
- The number of times something needs additional information or clarification.

Next, spend time talking with people who use the tools involved in the workflow most often. Are they pleased with the process? What complaints do they have? Is their work getting done on time? What issues do they want to make you aware of?

## **Step #2: Ask Questions**

- What is the purpose of the workflow?
- Who does the workflow serve?
- What defines a good process? Is the workflow designed to minimize errors? Or, speed up the process?
- Do we really need this step?
- Can it be converted from approval to a notification?
- Does everyone have enough information to perform their tasks effectively?
- How can more automation fit in?

## **Step #3: Implement Changes and Monitor Results**

After you've found all the changes from your workflow analysis, implement them into your processes. Notify stakeholders of the change, and let them know if they can expect any downtime... as well as how to handle things in the middle of the change in workflow.

Workflow analysis is more than just a way to identify the need for changes in a workflow. It's also possible to generate reports to determine which workflows and aspects of any particular workflow are most helpful to your organization and its overall rate of growth.

With the right workflow analysis tools, you can ensure you get all the information you need to perform the analysis with as little pushback as possible, to save

money, time, and effort.

The right tool helps you to find the processes that are running well and the ones that need attention. With that information, you can move forward to find out where you should make changes and what you should leave in place... allowing you to reduce costs and make improvements without trial and error.

Ultimately, process improvement helps to streamline and automate various business processes. To do it right, you can't just randomly choose a process and something within it that needs to be changed. Instead, aim to get the optimal process in place from the beginning. Automate wherever possible to reduce handoffs and human error - as this can improve accuracy and avoid costly mistakes.

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