

Keys to Successful System Implementation: Process Analysis



Why is process analysis important to a system or technology implementation? Process analysis adds structure and vision to your system implementation, and it helps to determine where you are (current state) and where you are going (future state). Process analysis ensures that the technology you implement adds value.

Objectives

The primary objective of the pre-implementation process analysis is to determine your “current state,” which will then assist in defining the “future state.” It is imperative to understand your existing situation before you can determine where you want to be. For example, a roadmap would not be of much value if all you know is where you want to go but don’t know where your starting point is.

Focus & Outline

Process analysis focuses on how we execute a task or group of tasks to attain best practice performance. In Figure 1 below, we outline the basic principles of how to approach process analysis and design to yield both a successful implementation and benefits realization.



Figure 1: The Value Management Process

As you can see from Figure 1, the inverted pyramid represents the most important aspect of achieving value (both quantitative and qualitative). We start with the organization’s initiatives, then move to process mapping. The idea here is to remain focused on the processes that relate directly to a technology initiative your organization wants to carry out. If a process does not directly relate to one or more of the initiatives, then it is defined as a later priority.

After process mapping the current state and with a clear understanding of the functionality of the technology, defining benefits becomes much more apparent. Process mapping determines areas of opportunity that will eventually lead to benefits realization. As can be seen below in Figure 2, when processes are analyzed while they are being mapped, it is common to identify some areas that require improvement and other areas that should be completely eliminated. These are identified in “red” in the diagram for easy recognition. This is accomplished by asking the questions: Why do we do this? and Does it need to continue with the new enhanced functionality of our new technology? If there is not a good reason for performing a task or group of tasks, it should be considered for change.

If you follow this process, potential benefits will be defined. These potential benefits will remain “potential” until you design a process that will achieve these benefits and you measure your progress. Any future state designs should include improved processes to streamline bottlenecks, eliminate non-critical steps, reduce errors, reduce redundancy, etc. The future state design should be a derivation from the current state.

Emergency Room Triage Process Workflow - Current State

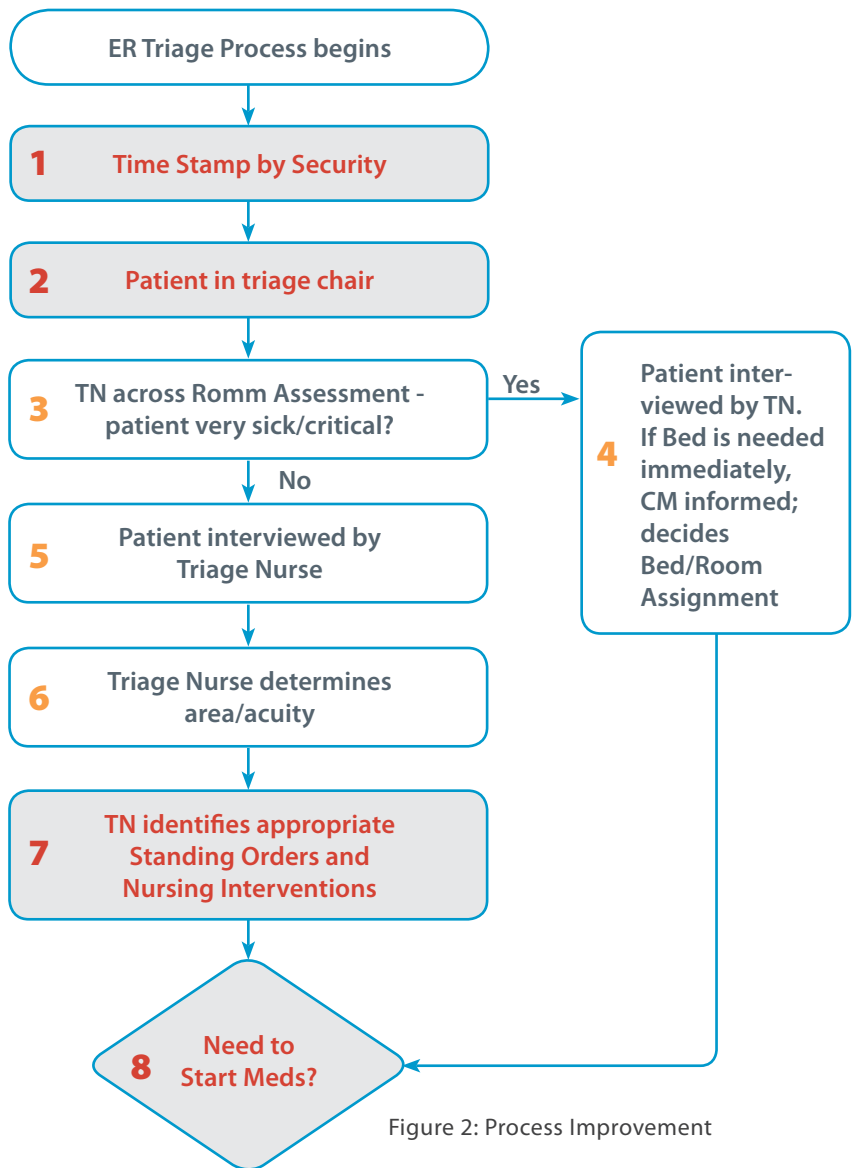


Figure 2: Process Improvement

When you know how your future state should look, it is crucial to understand how you will know when you are there. In other words, you may have a starting point and a finishing point but not a road map that will get you there most efficiently. To accomplish this, it is recommended that a group of core Key Process Indicators and Key Metrics be defined. The use of these measurements is two fold: first, they measure incremental success (or failure), and second, they create the “road map” you need to get to your end process. With measurements in place you will have the ability to define where you want to be at any point during the transition and most importantly, if you get off track it is better to know sooner rather than later. Figure 3 below depicts an example value measurement process.

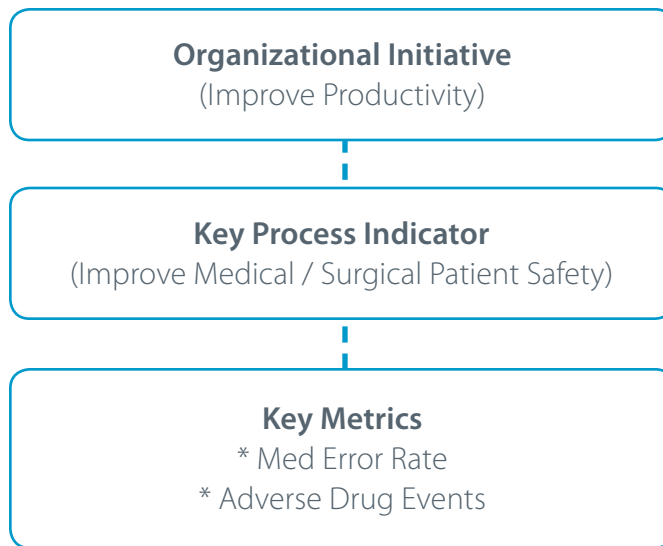


Figure 3: Value Measurement

Barriers and Risks

As you move forward in your efforts to achieve the desired results and improvements, you will most certainly encounter barriers. The following is a list of potential barriers that you may encounter during the change process. By understanding and anticipating the barriers and risks you may encounter, you can proactively manage the change process. Listed below are a few common barriers and/or risks that you may want to consider early in the project.

- 🕒 **Data Availability** – Will the data required be available for the proper measurement? You must anticipate the need for data availability, both historical and present, and have a plan to make this information readily available.
- 🕒 **Biased Agendas** – As with any organization, staff, physicians and executives will have their own agenda. This is a common issue with change and benefits management and should be anticipated. It is recommended that a common vision be developed within the leadership of the organization including medical staff leadership.

- **Time Allocation** – One of the most common reasons for failure to achieve benefits is not allocating time to work on it. It must be stressed that change is a priority and that regular meetings with specific goals and assignments are expected.
- **Mid-Level Manager Availability and Accountability** – Mid-level managers must have time to work on this and must be held accountable for change requirements and results.
- **“Buy-In”** – This is the most obvious of the potential barriers, but without buy-in from all parties involved it will difficult—if not impossible—to optimize the benefits. It is recommended that a clear vision be developed on the front end thus minimizing debate later in the project.

Deliverables

When the process analysis is complete, the following deliverables will be provided to the client:

- Definition of key business and/or clinical processes impacted by the system installation and directly related to the organization’s initiatives.
- Assistance with process mapping of the current state business/clinical work processes with highlighted areas of change or elimination.
- Complete list of potential benefits (both ROI/VOI) as related to individual service areas and those that are inter-service benefits.
- Complete list of Key Process Indicators and Key Metrics required to measure outcomes.
- Assistance with process design and mapping for the future state business/clinical work processes.
- Assistance with barrier anticipation and management.
- Outline for a proven change management technique.
- Benefits Roadmap that will outline specific strategies and tactics to optimize benefits realization.

Assessment Timeline

Timeline: Maximum 4 months (640 man hours) depending on facility size.

Action Items:

- Take action – the savings & benefits are there to be achieved.
- Start with an Assessment and then determine if the results are worth achieving.
- Remove “old habits” and replace with effective processes.

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