Process improvement

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1 Question

How do I improve my processes?

2 Answer

First and foremost, to improve any process you need to start by writing the process down. All the steps or things you need to consider should be written in a document. This will allow you to review this document over time and improve it as you find ways to make the process better.

When you perform the process, look at your document and see whether you are applying all of the steps you wrote down. Identify the steps that are more critical than others, in which order you complete them, how long it takes you to accomplish them, whether some steps are sometimes relevant, etc. You want to capture information about the process as you are going through it in order to identify sources of improvement. If a step takes the majority of your time in a process, ask yourself whether this is expected and whether it would be possible to optimize or automate this step in order to reduce the time spent on it.

If possible, share your processes with others. Have them share with you how they would go about doing the same things you do and take notes. Some of the things that may be different between you and others are the order in which you accomplish the steps, which steps you consider critical and how much time is spent on each step.

Even though some of the processes you follow on a daily basis may appear trivial to you, you might end up realizing that those processes are quite complex in nature, especially if you need to write them down.

Try playing around with doing steps in parallel vs doing steps sequentially and see which one is more efficient.

In order to improve your processes, you need to define what it is you want to improve. In my case, I want my processes to be efficient (doing things right) and effective (doing the right things). Compared to myself, a process is improved if I need less time to accomplish it while producing the same quality of results or if for the same amount of time I produce higher quality of results.