

## ***Process Mapping... Not Just for Manufacturing***

A Proven analytical and communication tool

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Process Mapping is another tool developed by General Electric to improve their bottom-line business performance. As V. Daniel Hunt notes, "we believe that we know our business processes, but in reality, most managers do not really understand what their processes are or whether they can be improved, simplified, or eliminated."

### **A GE Example from Mr. Hunt**

"At the General Electric Louisville appliance facility, process mapping showed that 'while a fifth of the parts in any given appliance model were unique, only 5% were expensive enough to substantially affect inventory costs. General Electric found that it could speed manufacturing and cut costs by keeping ample stocks of the cheap components while working out a just-in-time program with suppliers to quickly deliver the other parts as needed. The biggest gains came from controlling the sequence in which parts were delivered from a plant's loading dock to its assembly line.'"

### **Where To Use**

Process mapping is used in all areas of organizations, not just for manufacturing. Our processes continue moving along, whether we pay attention to them or not. We have two choices—we can ignore them and hope they will do what we wish, or we can understand and manage them. Here are some examples of possible business process improvements you can make:

- Eliminate duplicate activities
- Combine related activities
- Eliminate multiple reviews and approvals
- Eliminate inspections
- Simplify processes
- Reduce batch sizes
- Process in parallel
- Implement demand pull
- Outsource inefficient activities
- Eliminate movement of work
- Organize multifunctional teams
- Design cellular workplace
- Centralize/decentralize
- More...

Your business is only as good as its processes. Have you established goals for each key process? Have you documented your processes? Are your process goals linked to your organizational goals? Do your processes meet your customer's expectations for performance and quality?

*Deborah Miller, a Project and Process Specialist, has more than 25 years consulting and coaching experience. Deb believes in sharing her expertise with her clients so your staff learns how to manage and coach others—becoming self-sufficient and proficient. Deb is a Six Sigma Black Belt and Lean in Healthcare certified.*

- Process & Value Stream Mapping
- Technical Documentation
- Project Management
- Process Reengineering
- Change Management
- Lean Facilitation