



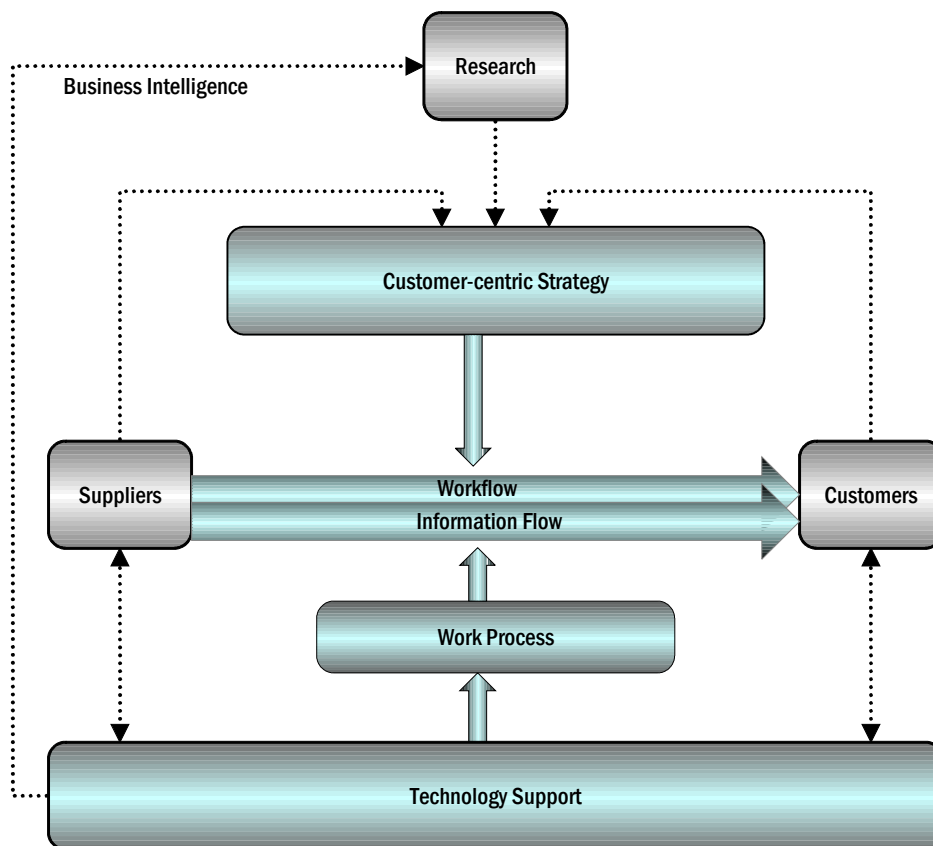
## High-Yield Methods

*for customer-aligning business strategies, process & technology*

# PROCESS IMPROVEMENT FOR NON-MANUFACTURING ENVIRONMENTS

*Why Visual Workflow is the preferred approach*

**W**hy is business process design for *non-manufacturing* areas so important? Why does aligning business process with business strategy and technology with process matter so much? Rather than answer verbally, we'll let this picture provide much of the answer.





The workflow and information flow elements of business process determine what work is done how and how well. They're the gears that must mesh to move companies forward. When *improperly* aligned, they take down the bottom line, even erase it. When completely out of alignment, they can take down the whole company, in a hurry.

Oh, and one other reason. Even in manufacturing companies, the majority of employees hold non-manufacturing jobs. And the financial gains from process aligning non-manufacturing functions can readily match or exceed the gains from manufacturing process improvement.

Yet we continue trying to align entire companies using business process approaches designed specifically for the manufacturing—approaches either not fully optimized for non-manufacturing areas or in some cases even counter-productive when applied outside of manufacturing. Why? Basically, because manufacturing-based approaches are all we've had to work with—until recently.

### ***New methods bring new success***

Visual Workflow fills this void. HYM designed VW specifically for use *outside* of manufacturing—where more variable work environments coupled with low frequencies, low repetition and empowered employees don't fit the manufacturing mold. The following chart will help you fully appreciate the degree of difference between the respective settings.



Variable Environments	Manufacturing Environments
Low repetition	High repetition
Decision-based business process	Fixed business process
Adaptability critical	Consistency critical
Hundreds of key workflows	Dozens of key workflows
90% of defects up at higher workflow level	Majority of defects down at lower, work process level
Majority of work activities highly interdependent	Work activities more standalone
Invisible defects	Visible defects
Most defects in “seams” between functions	Most defects at work station or function level
Empowered staff	Compliant staff
Resist “external” input	Accept “external” input
Business process <i>is</i> the work	Business process <i>guides</i> the work
Fully joined workflow & information flow	More detached workflow & information flow
High-dependence on application software	Lower dependence on application software

Clearly, process design in non-manufacturing environments deserves an approach optimized for these settings. And Visual Workflow was not only the first new approach to answer the call—but VW remains the process industry leader for application in variable environments.

To further reinforce VW’s uniqueness, let’s compare VW with leading, manufacturing process methodologies according to the specific process design elements required by variable environments, which differ greatly from manufacturing process requirements.



Presence of requisite process design elements for variable environments				
	Visual Workflow	Six Sigma	Lean	Theory-of-Constraints
“MRI-type” workflow scanning system	Yes	No	No	Yes
Focused on cross-functional work and information flow	Yes	No	No	Yes
Couples workflow & information flow	Yes	No	No	No
Uncouples individual work process from workflow	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Drills down to individual work process	Yes	Yes	Lean sigma does	No
Provides systems architecture design	Yes	No	No	No
Develops application software requirements	Yes	No	No	No
Staff owns their own change	Yes	No	No	No
Usable and understandable without prior training	Yes	No	No	Partially

Please do not interpret this chart as criticism of manufacturing-based process approaches. In fact, if we were to repeat this chart but for a manufacturing environment, the manufacturing approaches would have mostly “Yes” answers while VW would have mostly “No” answers.

But the chart does underscore one of our favorite quotes, from Abraham Maslow:

***If the only tool you have is a hammer, then all the world tends to look like a nail.***

If you only know six sigma, Lean or TOC or SPC, you’ll be prone to transport one of these methods into environments where it’s either ill-suited—or at best, not optimized. This commonly occurs when companies roll out a manufacturing approach enterprise-wide following initial success in manufacturing. The falloff in effectiveness ranges from considerable to extreme.



Before you initiate a process improvement initiative off the manufacturing/production floor, you owe it to yourself to conduct your own side-by-side comparisons between Visual Workflow and your preferred, alternative approach. We can almost guarantee it will be an eye opener.

*How does Visual Workflow work? We'll provide some hints by saying we designed VW from the ground up with elements that don't (yet) have acronyms, while also incorporating aspects of Balanced Scorecard (BSC), Theory-of Constraints(TOC) and Activity-based Costing (ABC). But to get the complete Visual Workflow picture, please download our [free "Visual Workflow" white paper](#).*

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