

A Recipe for Success in Process Improvement



Have you chosen the right ingredients?

Effective process improvement is like a recipe for a great dish. It takes the right combination of fresh ingredients and a skilled chef to bring it all together.

Does your company need to make process improvements but doesn't know what ingredients to use? Are your ingredients stale, or do you lack the expertise on your team to *prepare* the improvements?

Here is a list of ingredients you can use as a recipe for ongoing process improvement success.

1. **Modern process symbols (OMG BPMN[®] & DMN[™])**
2. **Process Editor, Simulation, Decision Manager, & Collaboration Portal (Signavio)**
3. **Process Classification Framework[®] (APQC PCF)**
4. **Industry Performance Benchmarking (APQC)**

The Business Process & Systems Group at Brown Smith Wallace is the chef that can combine these ingredients into a 5-star meal for your company. See the next page for examples of these ingredients blended together in a recipe for success.

Are your ingredients fresh?

Flow charting began almost 100 years ago and some companies are still using the same basic symbols. Many companies continue to map complex processes with basic office software tools. These tools are fine for high-level presentations and very basic process models, but they lack the full features and advantages of a modern BPM suite.

Today's complex business processes and distributed workforces require *fresh* modern tools. Using Signavio, you can quickly create process models in BPMN and decision models in DMN. This is much faster than the old method of capturing processes with sticky notes followed by a long conversion to electronic form.

Unlike basic flow chart symbols, the rich BPMN[®] and DMN[™] symbol sets from the Object Management Group capture and convey much more of the process details. While there is a learning curve, the long-term benefits far outweigh this investment, including the fact that the models can become real-time executable parts of your business operations.

The Signavio Process Editor also has many other capabilities that basic drawing packages do not. It can run simulations of process models and calculate time, costs and highlight constraints. It also has a Collaboration Portal feature whereby staff can easily view and enter comments on process models. This is done without needing separate seat licenses or training on how to draw and maintain the models.

Are you organized and standardized?

Process improvement initiatives typically begin by mapping the current business processes. Many companies will need 25 – 75 process maps, so standardized naming conventions are key in creating a process model library that is easy to use and understand. APQC's Process Classification Framework[®] is ideal for this purpose. Process models can be named to align to the PCF and then stored in a directory structure created within Signavio. This makes them far easier to find and understand.

Are you keeping pace?

If you are not measuring performance in an objective way, then you really don't know if you are falling behind your competitors. APQC has an extensive set of KPIs to measure yourself against, allowing you to compare the process performance statistics of your current operations to industry standard benchmarks. This enables us to rank the areas of your operation most in need of improvement, so we can focus our business process improvement initiatives.

Success Stories

At Brown Smith Wallace, we have used this recipe to deliver these successes:

- At a large wholesale distributor, we captured their current business processes in 65 process models at 5 levels of the PCF. These were used as requirements to help them select a new warehouse management system.
- At an outdoor power equipment distributor and dealer, we captured 26 process models at 5 levels to help them redesign internal processes and to select a new ERP system.
- At a large public library organization, we captured 17 process maps at 5 levels in order to document their branch cash controls and accounts receivable processes to support internal audit and process controls.
- At a regional quick serve restaurant chain, we created 3 process models to capture their current accounts payable and general ledger processes which were highly manual. These were used to highlight waste and high operational costs which led to the selection of new software to automate much of these processes and lower costs by an estimated 30%.
- At a company that reprocesses scrap metal, we created 20 process models to support an internal audit of the order to cash and inventory cycles. We identified 18 gaps in controls and documented these by adding annotations and missing tasks to the process models.
- At a large healthcare provider, we collected data on their procurement and accounts payable processes and used benchmarking that showed a 49% reduction in operating costs and a payback period of less than 3 years from a \$1 million investment in automating their Purchasing and AP functions.

About Brown Smith Wallace



Brown Smith Wallace is a Top 100 CPA firm with a growing staff of more than 300. The Advisory Services practice has 55 professionals who deliver consulting services to many business sectors in the areas of business process improvement, IT security, software evaluations, data analysis, and internal control reviews. With more than 25 years of process and systems experience, we have the expertise to map and analyze processes, apply lean techniques to identify and eliminate waste, perform benchmarking and help you build a high-ROI business case for justifying process improvement initiatives or system replacement projects.

Please visit our website at brownsmithwallace.com/bpi and contact us for more information on our service offerings.

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About Signavio



Signavio is the world's first integrated platform combining both Business Process Management (BPM) and Business Decision Management (BDM). The solution provides an ideal environment for modeling, analyzing and improving your business processes and decisions. Signavio offers both On-Premise and SaaS based solutions for modeling business processes and decisions using BPMN 2.0 and DMN 1.0.

Established in 2009 with offices in Berlin, Singapore and the Silicon Valley, the company stands out through its technical innovation and is a pioneer in the area of collaborative process design. Signavio's solutions are designed to be intuitive and easy to use, allowing all employees to engage in and benefit from process management. This makes it possible for any organization to achieve process excellence.

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