

# Improvement Science *in a Minute*

## How to Create a Process Map



A process map is a powerful tool for creating a window into the day-to-day work of systems as they try to achieve their purpose. Process mapping uses a set of symbols to represent each step and decision point in a given process.

### Steps for Creating a Process Map

1

*Define boundaries*

2

*Show steps using basic symbols and use action words for major activities*

3

*Follow the flow through decision points to completion before returning to alternate paths*

4

*Review the diagram and add important information to build understanding*

### Common Symbols Used to Create Process Maps

A rectangle with rounded corners: **Terminal** symbol showing the start/end of a process

Arrows represent the **Direction of flow** for a process

A rectangle indicates that an **Activity** is being performed. A description is usually displayed inside the rectangle

A **Document** symbol represents a document that is either an input or an output of a process

A diamond represents a **Decision Point** in the process

Yes

No

A rectangle indicates that an **Activity** is being performed. A description is usually displayed inside the rectangle

A rectangle with rounded corners: **Terminal** symbol showing the start/end of a process

A circle is used as a **Connector** Symbol is used to show a branch or extension of a flow diagram

# Example: Process for Catching an Airplane

