HIGH-IMPACT IMPROVEMENTS

Certain types of process improvements come up time and again as big drivers of positive change. The following were identified in a study of 100 projects that generated significant results.

Optimize the front end of the process

- Give clear guidance up front so people who provide inputs into the process know how to get it right the first time.

- Establish a single entry point into a process to replace multiple entry points.

- Simplify and mistake-proof forms so they're easy to follow, fill out, and submit.

- Put important tasks and critical steps earlier in the process.

Consolidate and standardize

- Develop one form to replace multiple forms.

- Consolidate multiple reports into one.

- Create one standardized subprocess to replace multiple subprocesses that have a similar purpose but vary only slightly.

Simplify

- Identify and eliminate rules, conditions, and other requirements that are not actually required.

- Change a numeric threshold so additional steps are triggered less often.

- Reduce the number of reviews, approvals, and sign-offs by supervisors and others.

Streamline

- Use single-person processing – have one person handle a larger part of the process instead of splitting tasks among multiple people.

- Create fast-track processing for certain groups of customers.

HIGH-IMPACT IMPROVEMENTS DETAIL

IMPROVEMENT

IMPACT

Optimize the front end of the process

Give clear guidance up front so people who provide inputs into the process know how to get it right the first time.	Reduces the number of times you need to loop back and ask for corrected or missing information.
Establish a single entry point into a process to replace multiple entry points.	Reduces confusion, duplication, and the extra work that results from having to manage multiple entry points.
Simplify and mistake-proof forms so they're easy to follow, complete, and submit.	Reduces errors, minimizes time-consuming loopbacks to the submitter, and improves user satisfaction.
Put important tasks and critical steps earlier in the process.	Ensures that potential issues are identified and resolved early, thus preventing downstream rework and smoothing the rest of the process.

Consolidate and standardize

Develop one form to replace multiple forms.	Makes it easier for users to understand and complete, leading to fewer errors and less rework to resolve the errors.
Consolidate multiple reports into one.	Saves time for report creators and users, makes the reported info easier to understand and use, and prevents misinterpretations that can occur with multiple sources of information.
Create one standardized subprocess to replace multiple subprocesses that have a similar purpose but vary only slightly.	Reduces confusion over what to do, reduces errors and rework to fix the errors, and improves consistency.

Simplify

Identify/eliminate rules, conditions, and other requirements that are not actually required.	Simplifies the process, keeps the focus on activities that add real value, reduces frustration, and saves time.
Change a numeric threshold so additional steps are triggered less often.	Reduces the workload, reduces delays, and keeps the focus on critical tasks.
Reduce the number of reviews, approvals, and sign-offs by supervisors and others.	Reduces bottlenecks and delays, and allows supervisors to keep their focus on critical tasks.

Streamline

Use single-person processing – have one person handle a larger part of the process instead of splitting tasks among multiple people.	Reduces delays caused by handoffs, minimizes errors through consistent handling, and often gives people a greater sense of ownership and pride in their work.
Create fast-track processing for certain groups of customers.	Increases customer satisfaction, and allows resources to be allocated more effectively by prioritizing key groups.