Making BPMN 2 Accessible to Business Users

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About the Presenter

Joan Pournara

Joan has specialised in business analysis for more than 25 years and is currently involved in Enterprise Business Architecture.

She was the first South African to qualify as a CBAP® (Certified Business Analysis Professional) and has also trained in TOGAF and Zachman Frameworks.

Joan is the Director of Education on the Board of the IIBA®-SA Chapter that she co-founded.

Joan lectures in Business Analysis for ESI-International (an IIBA™ Endorsed Education Provider) and is an Executive Consultant in Business Architecture and Analysis, consulting to organisations at a strategic level and providing mentoring and coaching at a tactical level.

Introduction

Who – the people we have to engage

When and how do we engage – the techniques

Using BPMN to improve engagement

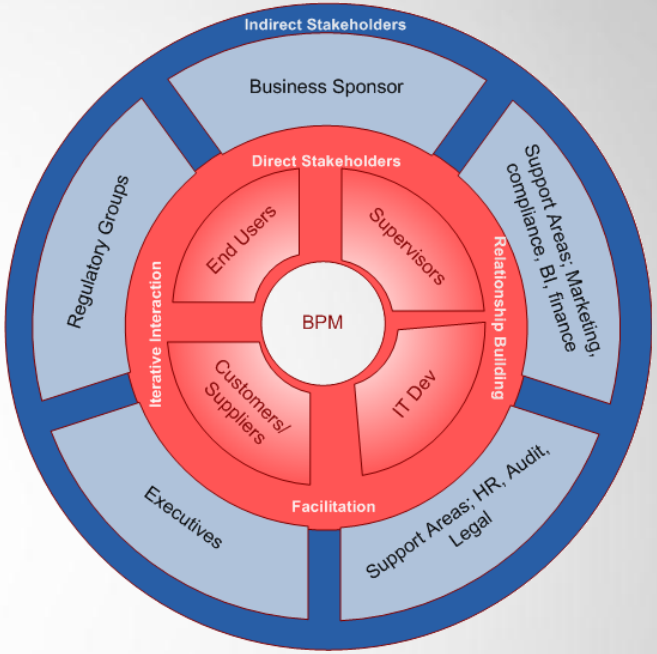
Who – The People We Engage

For any project to succeed, it is essential that the people involved in the process, at all levels, are engaged, all the way through. Not only because their input is vital, but also because they need to be fully 'on board and involved.

Executive and Senior management buy-in is vitally important to ensure that the relevant business resources are available to the Business Analysts working on the project. The Business Executive Sponsor is also the final decision maker during time of conflict.

Without this total inclusion of all people directly involved in the process, redesign will not work.

There are many people a Business Analyst has to engage with and usually whilst working within the project constraints of time, so work with the people who are impacted the most first.



The outside in approach when working with stakeholders

Executives	Snr Management	Middle Management	Supervisors	End Users

Executives know the strategic intent but have less knowledge of the detailed work.

End Users have tactical knowledge but less understanding of future strategy.

Business Drivers for Change

There are many reasons for change. Each project has its own challenges, focus and different groups of people. This requires a Business Analyst to be flexible and to adjust their approach and techniques to suit each stakeholder/group.

When and How Do We Engage -The Techniques

Different techniques are used by the Business Analyst when engaging with stakeholders, all of which are documented in the Business Analysis Body of Knowledge® (BABOK) authored by the International Institute of Business Analysis® (IIBA). Some of which are:

Facilitated Techniques (group sessions):
Focus groups:

- Homogenous groups – best for defining practical job practices
- Hetrogenous groups – best for defining different but related job practices and handoffs,

Joint Application Design Workshops – best for obtaining buy-in from technical and non-technical stakeholders to new process design.

Other Techniques:

- Observation
- Job Shadowing

All are useful at each stage and iteration of stakeholder engagement.

BPM stands for Business Process Modelling/Modeling, Business Process Model, and Business Process Management.

Using the Techniques

'As is' and 'To be' models
The common two perspectives of a modelling exercise - Where are we now?, and Where do we want to be?

The **'as is'** or **baseline** model is an accurate depiction of what actually happens now. Once the model is developed, it is used to analyse and improve the process.

The **'to be'** model is a proposed diagram of how the future process could look, incorporating improvements including measurements. This is used to demonstrate, model and test the new process and then followed by implementation.

When and How Do We Engage – The Tools

As with many other tools and methodologies, be mindful of the need for flexibility and simplicity. Use tools and methods as far as they are helpful, but do not blindly force usage of a tool to fit your purposes. If a tool is inappropriate it could distort common sense, or be too constraining, whether for planning, analysis, communications or implementation.

It may be more appropriate to use simple techniques such as white board, flip charts, brown paper, coloured pens and stick-on-notes when working with stakeholders. Remember it is the responsibility of the Business Analyst to motivate and keep stakeholders engaged, formal documentation of the diagram can be completed after the diagram is completed.

Stakeholders will naturally withdraw from involvement if they have little understanding of the boxes and arrows. Take time to educate stakeholders on the symbols that will be used in the creation of the diagram and make certain everyone is at the same level of understanding and comfort.

We use process diagrams to:

- Document business processes (modelling helps to communicate and visualize)
- Look for opportunities for improvement
- Investigate appropriate measurements
- Validate or identify requirements
- Look for solution assessment

Using BPMN to Improve Engagement

BPMN has become the standard for business process modelling. The BPMN effort started two years ago with a charter to create a notation for business people to use. BPMN is different to UML and Business Analysis Practitioners must know the difference between the two notations and when and how to use the correct notation. The UML effort started several years ago when it was adopted to support Object Orientation Development Methodology. UML was set to standardize modelling for software development.

Much has been written about Business Process Modelling thus the focus of this webinar is to provide guidance around the basic business process modelling notation shapes/symbols and principles.

Business Process Modelling is more than just building a diagram to show sequence of activities, process models are representative of business reality and therefore business knowledge must be structured and represented correctly in the usage of shapes to be of any value to the business.

Process Definition:
Series of interconnected actions, steps, or procedures leading to a result.

- High-level sequence or flow of tasks performed during production of a product or delivery of a service." (Ward, p. 326)

Developing the Models in Practice

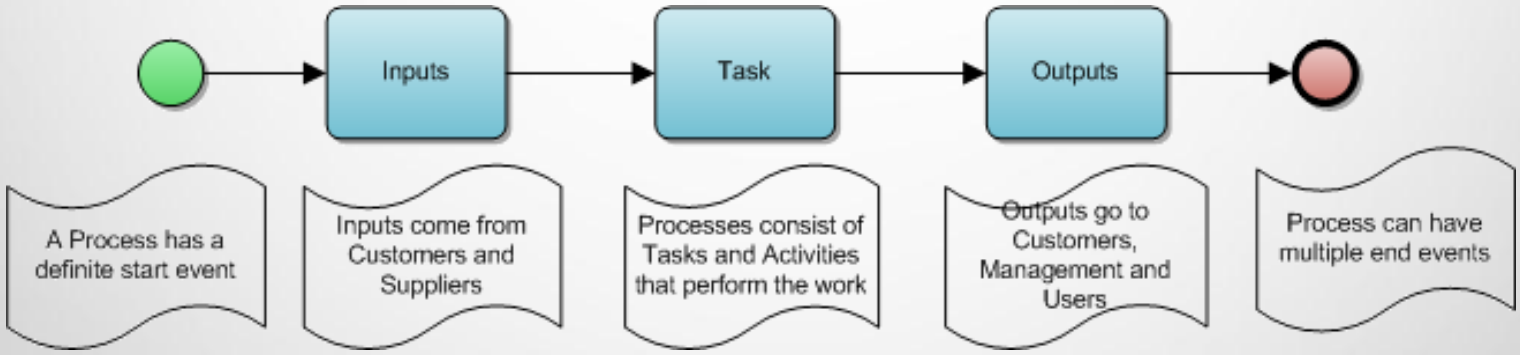
1. Identify / define the process to be scrutinized
2. Produce an 'as is' or baseline model that includes the measurements and metrics such as volume, time, number of times the process is executed, number of hand-overs, time taken for hand-overs, etc.
   - **First iteration**
     The first draft of the model will involve a lot of positioning and repositioning of events and activities, so make sure you use a method that is flexible and easily changed. Use a flipchart, pens and some sticky notes or a whiteboard and a rubber. If you're working with a group of users, everyone needs to be able to see it.
   - **Second iteration**
     Once you have established an agreed sequence of events, you can create it as a flowchart using generic software or specialised proprietary software.

   At this stage, you will need to check your model with the users by carrying out 'live' observations of the sequence in practice. People in focus groups or meetings invariably either forget their exact actions or say what should be happening rather than what does happen!
3. Design the 'to be' model working with the stakeholders and asking questions such as; “where are the pain-points?”; “which tasks do not add value?”, etc. Improvements are identified and agreed upon.
4. Test and/or simulate and implement the 'to be'.
5. Continuously update and improve the new model.

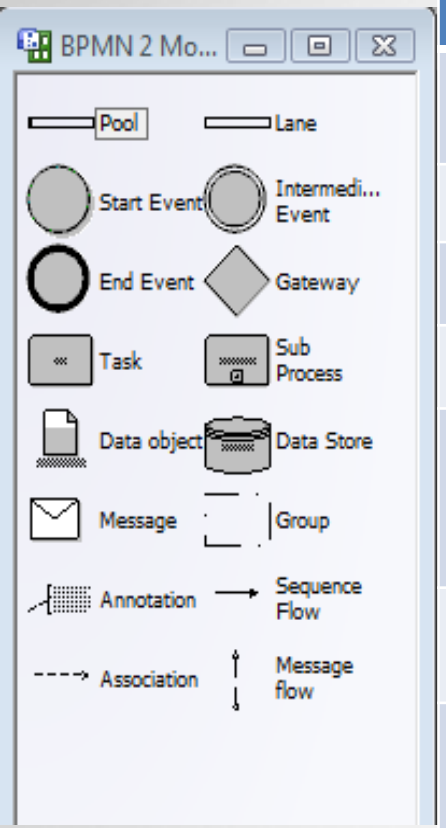
Start the Modeling Process

The following information is necessary before you begin to construct the model:

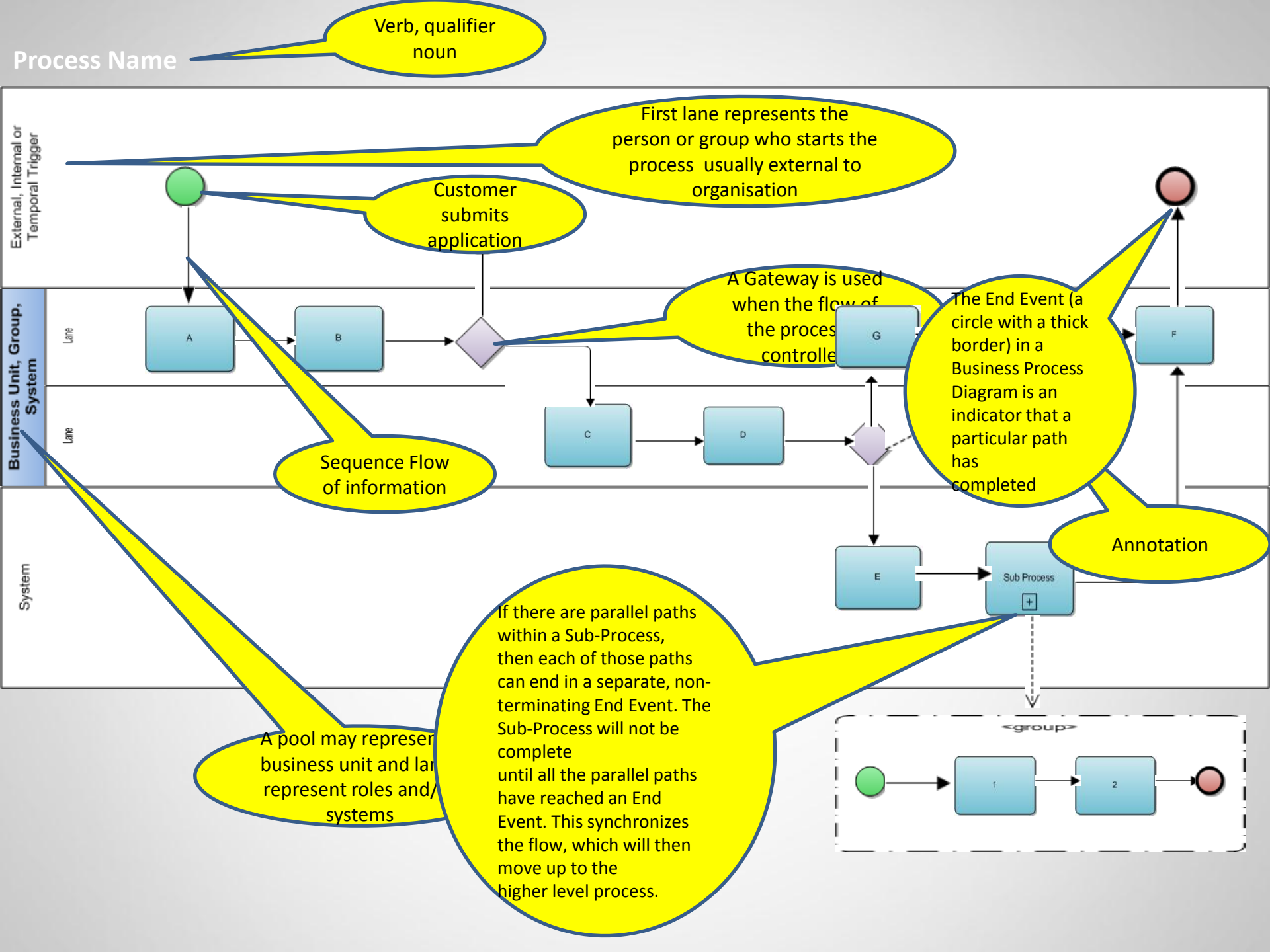
- The start and end points (customer trigger and customer required output). Events could be External, Internal or Temporal.
- The activities that are performed.
- The order of activities.
- The people or system that perform the activities.
- Business and Processing rules.
- The documents and forms used and exchanged between functions and from customers and suppliers.
- The desired outcome of the process (following the 'Happy Path') as well as expected outcomes from variation or exception processing.



BPMN Symbols and Descriptions

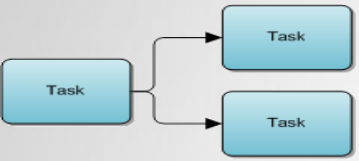


Start Event	An event is something that starts a process and affects the flow of the process. Each event is a trigger and will cause an impact (result). There are 3 types of events based on when they affect the flow: Start, Intermediate and End. Events are usually External to the organisation, or may be Internal or Temporal (Time based).
End Event	An end event indicates the end of a path in the process. A process may contain multiple end events, identifying different end states.
Message	A message arrives from an External, Internal or Temporal event and triggers the process.
Task/Sub-process	A task is an atomic activity that is included within a process. A task is used when the work in the process is not broken down to a lower level of process detail. An activity is the lowest level.
Collapsed Sub-process	The details of the sub-process are not visible in the diagram. A plus sign in the lower centre of the shape indicates that the activity is a sub-process and has a lower-level of detail.
Gateway	A gateway is used to control the divergence and convergence of multiple sequence flow. Thus, it will determine branching, forking, merging, and joining of paths. Gateways can be OR-Split; OR-Join or Asynchronous Join. These imply that only one of the paths will be followed, so the rule of whichever path is completed first applies. An AND-Join (Synchronised tasks) implies that it can only be carried out after all leading paths have been completed. Forks are sometimes names AND-Splits.
Data Object	Data objects are considered artefacts because they do not have any direct effect on the sequence flow or message flow of the Process, but they do provide information about what activities require to be performed and/or what they produce.
Flow	Uncontrolled flow refers to flow that is not affected by any conditions or does not pass through a gateway. The simplest example of this is a single sequence flow connecting two activities. This can also apply to multiple sequence flow that converge on or diverge from an activity. For each uncontrolled sequence flow, a “token” will flow from the source object to the target object.
Annotation	Text annotations are a mechanism for a modeller to provide additional information for the reader of a workflow model.
Message Flow	Message flow is used to show the flow of messages between two entities that are prepared to send and receive them.
Pools and Lanes	A pool represents a participant in a process. It is a container for partitioning a set of activities from other pools, usually in the context of B2B situations. A lane is a sub-partition within a pool and will extend the entire length of the pool, either vertically or horizontally. Lanes are used to organize and categorize activities within a pool.


Process Name
Verb, qualifier noun
External, Internal or Temporal Trigger
First lane represents the person or group who starts the process usually external to organisation
Customer submits application
Business Unit, Group, System
Lane
Lane
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
A Gateway is used when the flow of the proces
controlle
The End Event (a circle with a thick border) in a Business Process Diagram is an indicator that a particular path has completed
Sequence Flow of information
Annotation
System
Sub Process
A pool may represer
business unit and lar
represent roles and/
systems
If there are parallel paths within a Sub-Process, then each of those paths can end in a separate, non-terminating End Event. The Sub-Process will not be complete until all the parallel paths have reached an End Event. This synchronizes the flow, which will then move up to the higher level process.
<group>
1
2

Using BPMN to improve engagement

Processes are rarely linear, they often involve some decision that will determine which tasks will take place based on the result of that decision or condition. After the decision is made, the process will fork along one or many alternative paths.



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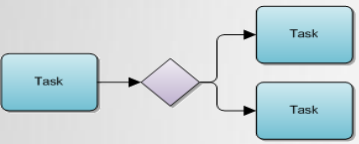
Parallel Split	The Parallel Split pattern is defined as being a mechanism that will allow activities to be performed concurrently, rather than sequentially. A single path through the process is split into two or more paths so that two or more activities will start at the same time.



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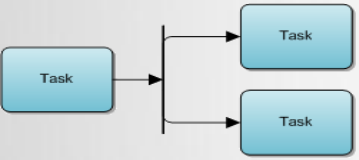
Controlled Parallel Split	A gateway controls the flow based on dependencies or conditions. Information will proceed following either one or the other paths.



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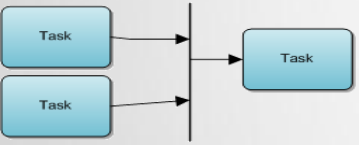
AND Parallel Split	The bar indicates that all outgoing control flow from the bar will create a set of parallel flows. The target activities for each of those flows will be available to start at the same time.



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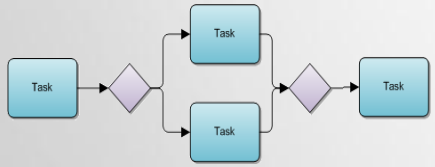
Parallel AND Converge	Where there is parallel processing, each path must complete before the process . This synchronizes the flow, which will then move up to the higher level process.



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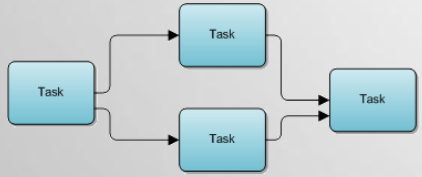
Merge	As a standard practice, a Business Process Diagram provides a simpler mechanism for the Simple Merge pattern: multiple incoming Sequence Flow. An Exclusive Gateway can be used if desired.



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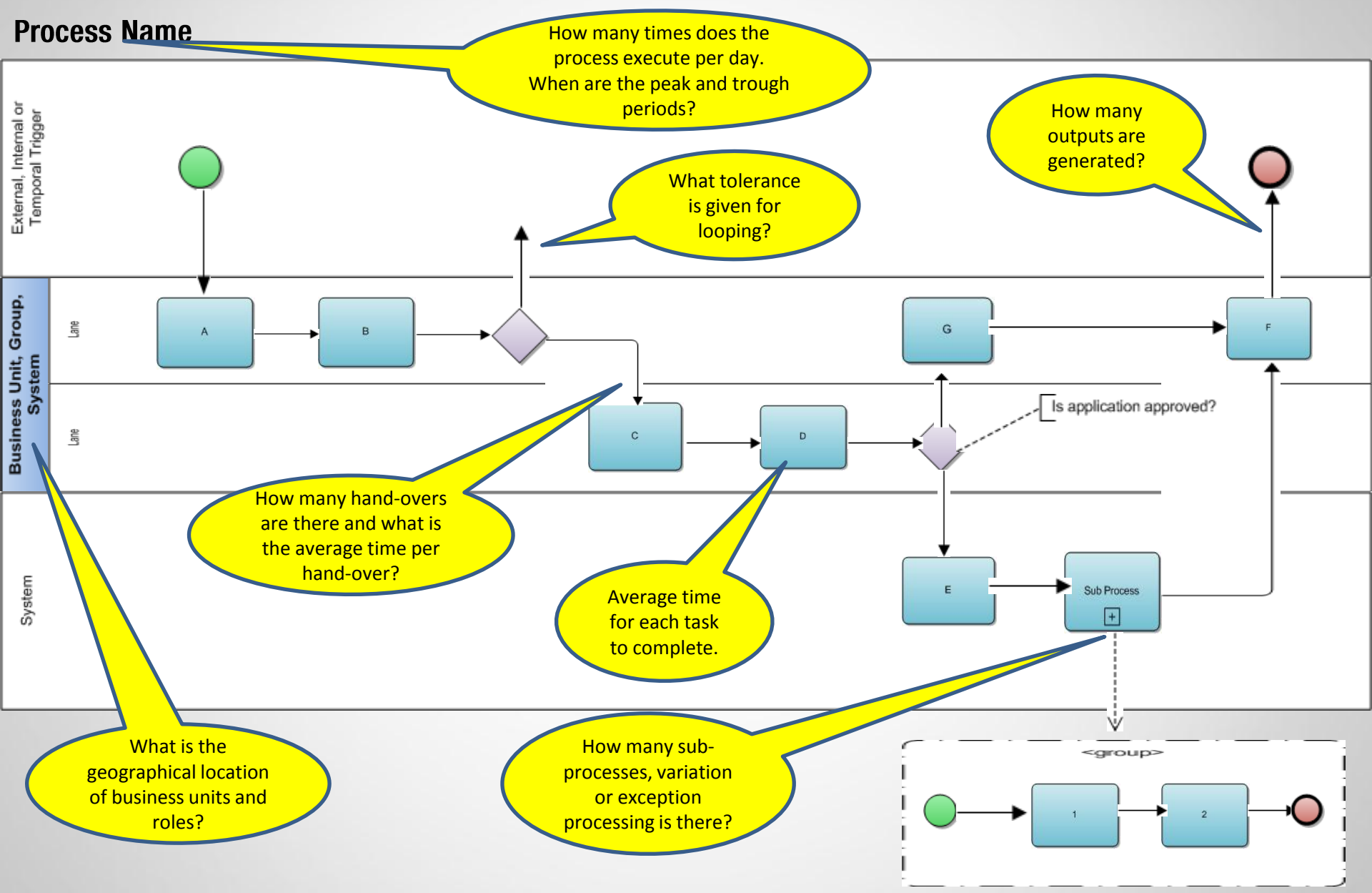
Simple Merge	Since the Multiple Merge pattern involves an uncontrolled flow situation, the BPMN solution will not employ a Gateway. BPMN allows multiple incoming Sequence Flow into an activity and this will provide the location of the Multiple Merge.

Analysing with Measurements



Conclusion

Business Process Modelling by implication focuses on processes, actions and activities, etc. Resources feature within BPM in terms of how they are used in the process. People (teams, departments, etc) feature in BPM in terms of what they do, to what, and usually when and for what reasons, especially when different possibilities or options exist, as in a flow diagram.

Business Process Modelling is cross-functional, usually combining the work and documentation of more than one department in the organisation.

Business Process Modelling is to an extent also defined by various computerized tools or software which are used in applying its methods. These methods and the standard features within them continue to evolve, which means that we should keep an open and curious mind as to how BPM can be used, and what people actually mean when they refer to it.

Business Process Models cannot be built in isolation of the people involved in the process. Therefore the use of visualisation using a Portal or similar website medium is important for ongoing communication and interaction with Users.

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Do you have any questions?

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