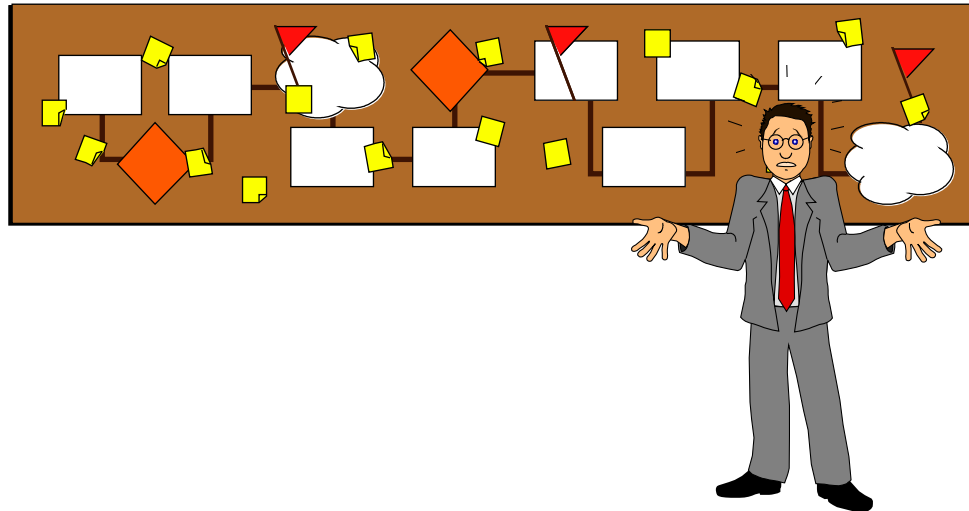


# BROWN PAPER PROCESS FLOW ANALYSIS



# Items covered in this section

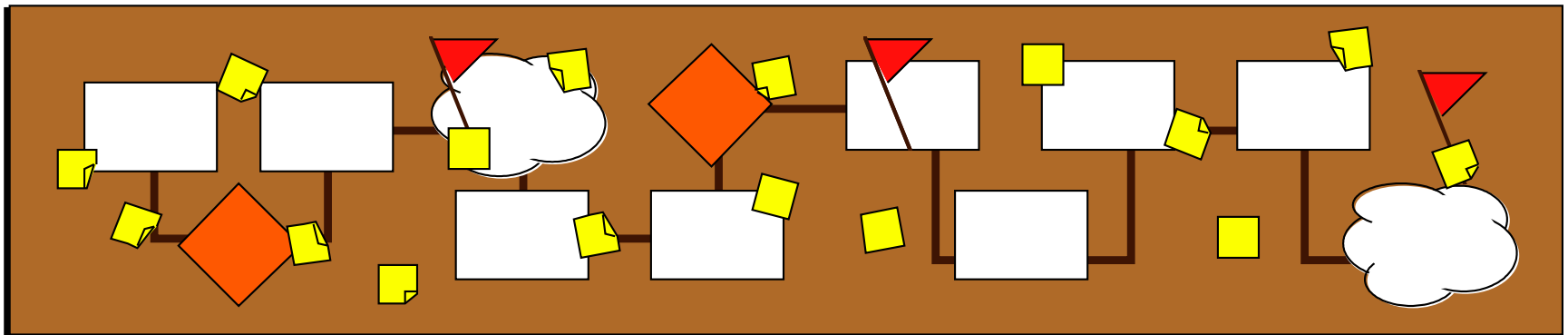
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- What is the Brown Paper Process
- Why use it and how it differs from traditional process flows
- End product
- How to build, critique and present a Brown Paper
- Helpful Hints

# What is a Brown Paper?

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- A Brown Paper is a visual display of a process, series of processes and / or system, its strengths and opportunities
- Brown Papers provide a picture of an entire process showing actual steps, decision points, documentation and interfaces
- It is a process. The Brown Paper Process involves work process analysis and documentation, client involvement and participation, critique and assessment of opportunities.



# What is a Brown Paper

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- Brown Papers identify and gain support for changes:
- Describe the process as it currently works
- Show the “big picture”
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Capture the complexity associated with key issues
- Tie activities to specific quantifiers
- Develop area ownership of diagnostics and results
- Are used to identify studies quantify opportunities

*Brown Papers are a critical momentum building event.*

# What is different about the Brown Paper Process

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Document a business process from end-to-end

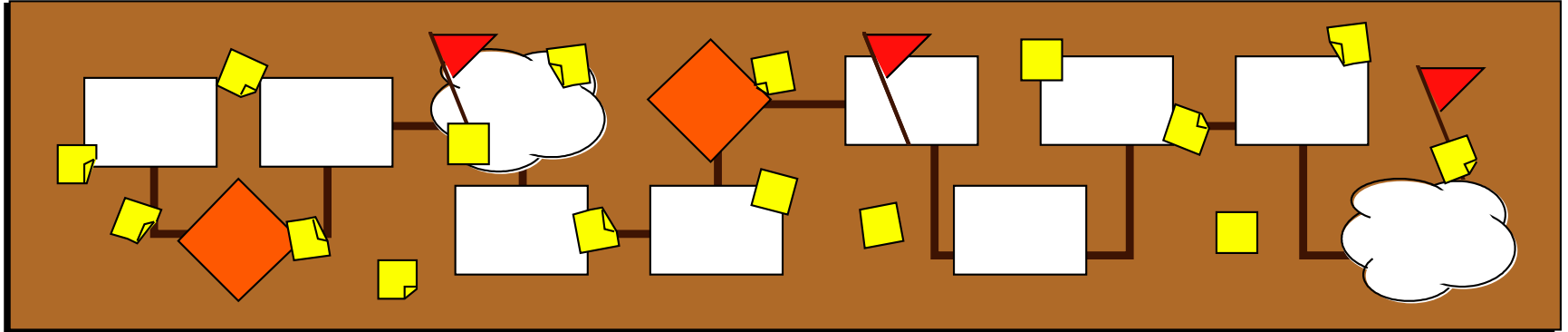
- Are self-explanatory
- Use illustrations / icons
- Include “live” documents
- Make the documents traceable from step to step
- Capture important data, such as:
  - Volume
  - Cycle time
  - Quality
  - Quantity
  - Other

# *Change Leadership/Process Improvement*

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- Build momentum in the organization(s) studied
- Create client involvement and ownership
- Identify existing processes and / or systems
- Identify opportunities for improvement
- Build consensus

# Brown Paper Deliverables



The brown paper process results in the brown paper itself, a summary of findings and a list of opportunities

## Strengths

---

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Findings

---

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Opportunities

---

# Constructing Brown Paper Process Flows

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Before you start creating a Process Flow...

- Decide what the Brown Paper will be used for and level of detail needed:
- Secure a conference room or working area that lets you roll-out or hang the paper
- Schedule working sessions with key content experts & customers
- Obtain supplies (colored post-it notes, scissors, glue sticks, spray mount, masking tape, brown paper, pencils, markers, ruler, etc....)



# Constructing Brown Paper Process Flows

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## When Constructing a Brown Paper Process Flow...

- Based on preliminary discussions, prepare a rough draft on a sheet of paper
- Get the participants to do the work
- Capture how system really works, not how it is supposed to work
- Ask questions while they are constructing the paper
- Keep them moving; don't let them deliberate too much
- Always ask: who else should see this, or who else is involved in the process?
- Integrate “presenting back” what is on paper; this helps clarify the process and facilitates knowledge transfer
- Separate “building” the current process from “critique” of the process. Build it first, then critique it LATER!

# Constructing Brown Paper Process Flows

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When Constructing a Brown Paper Process Flow...

- Include a title of the process in the upper left-hand corner
- Have an organizational chart on the left hand side-highlight who validated it
- Have a list of creators / reviewers in the lower left-hand corner
- Use live documents
  - screen printout with data fields completed
  - memos
  - reports
- Use masking tape to attach all items first pass; they may need to move later
- Use creative icons / graphics

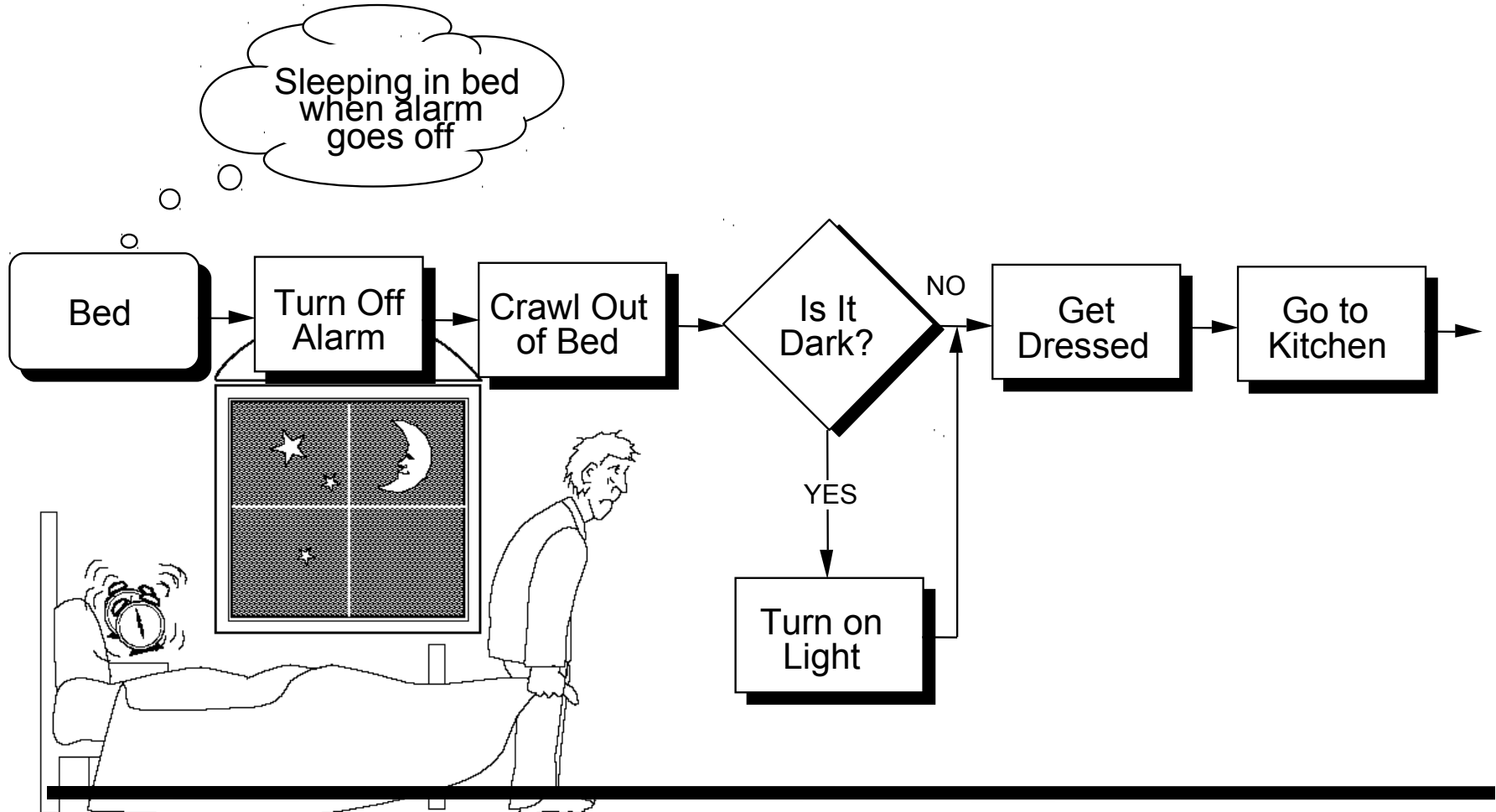
# Constructing Brown Paper Process Flows

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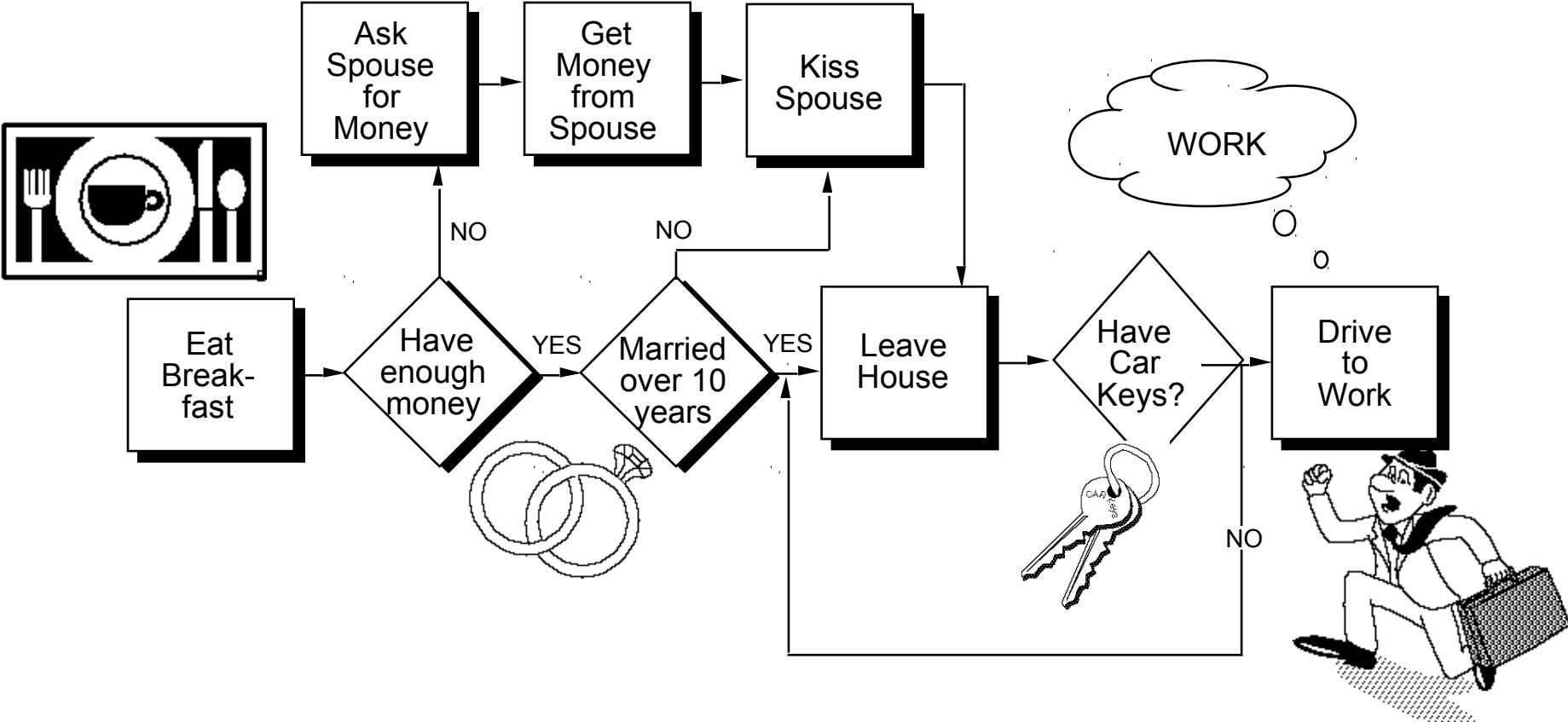
Upon Completion of a Process Flow..

- Reference opportunities with numeric codes
- Post brown paper in informal place so more people can see it
- Summarize findings on strengths and opportunities, post on Brown paper
- Present and validate

# An example of a “current” process



# An example of an “current” process (cont.)



# Some standard Brown Paper symbols

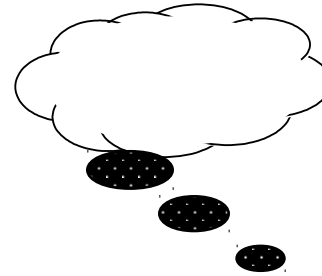
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TASK - Actual task performed

EXAMPLE - Type a Form  
Review a Form

Should be 5 words or less  
Start with Action Verb



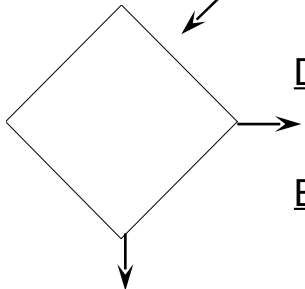
OUT OF AREA/INTERFACE

DRAW ATTENTION

COMMENTS/EXPLANATION

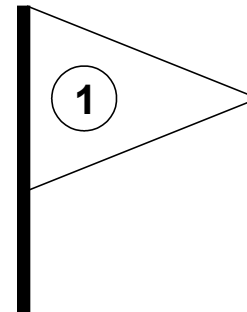
EXAMPLE - Inputs from  
Strategy Development  
enter here

*INDICATE WHAT  
% OF VOLUME  
TAKES WHICH  
PATH*



DECISION - Stated as required  
a Yes or No answer

EXAMPLE - Is the form complete?



MAJOR OPPORTUNITY

EXAMPLE - How to reduce the  
73% re-work at this step

Quantify opportunity if possible

# Quantify the processes

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- Volumes:
  - Inputs & outputs
  - Backlogs
- Time frames:
  - Time line across the bottom of the paper
  - Cycle times
- # of people performing tasks
- Other pertinent information:
  - Sources, where does it come from
  - Next operation as a customer outside the Process itself
  - Productivity, Quality and service levels
  - Rework
  - etc.

# Specific opportunities to look for

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- Dead zones - places where work sits, gets held up (bottleneck), or gets lost
- Lost time - people looking for work
- Rework loops
- Checkers checking the checkers - too many approval layers
- Duplication of work
- Broken interfaces
- Value added vs. non-value added activities



# Method to be used when presenting the Process Flow

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- Define the work process flow:
  - Purpose of the flow (why did we do the Brown Paper)
  - Legend describing brown paper icons
- Describe the client involvement:
  - Participation from people in various functions
- Describe the process analyzed:
  - Identify the process
  - Describe the beginning and end point of the process
  - Describe major blocks of activity in the process
- Describe strengths and opportunities:
  - Key comments made by participants
  - Solicit input from the audience
  - Summarize strengths and opportunities

*Presentation of the process can be anywhere from five minutes to one hour depending on the objectives of the presentation - Client does the presentation*

# Method to be used when presenting the Process Flow

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- Don't present the Brown Paper as a finished product. It is always a Work-in-Process. "To the best of our knowledge at this point" is a good way to define the process.
- When presenting critique points, don't use absolute statements or words like "it doesn't exist" or "there is a lack of"; instead, use "we couldn't find", "we didn't identify". The reason is that there is always a possibility that somebody we didn't talk to is doing it or has it.

*A successful presentation of a Brown-Paper is 70% on the content of the Brown-Paper itself and 30% on how we present it.*

# Helpful Hints: Construction Tips

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## 1. Plan on several iterations of the brown paper

- Verbal walk through with knowledgeable resource(s)
- Construct rough draft - using post-it notes and icons. Check for accuracy
- Construct Brown Paper - creatively display opportunities that appeared in rough draft (ex: rework loops, time lags, multiple hand-offs, etc.)

## 2. Phase-in client involvement

- Start with *key content* people
- Validate flow with *cross-section of people directly involved* in the process
- Solicit comments from *as many people* as possible: key content directly and indirectly involved in the process. Make sure you have a good representation of functions and levels

# Helpful Hints: General Guidelines

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1. *Use correct icons and follow brown paper standards (marker colors, post-it note colors, etc.) to create the rough draft. Use masking tape to attach things to the rough draft brown paper*
2. *Disagreement about how the function is completed is OK. It is probable that different people perform the same function differently; that is a significant finding!! Try to capture both*
3. *Make not knowing the answer to every question OK. In the process of asking questions needed to identify the flow, it almost always happens that a question will be asked that no one can answer off the top of their heads*
4. *Be sure participants understand that the steady stream of questions is not an attempt to trick or humiliate them. Sometimes participants get rattled when every answer they provide is greeted with another question*
5. *Ask for hard & live copies and completed examples. All key documents should be obtained with "live" information, if possible. Ask for a printed copy of significant computer screens if the function is "on-line" or interactive between user and system*

# Helpful Hints: General Guidelines

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6. *No value judgments (yet). The process of creating the initial brown paper should be a fact gathering exercise. The evaluation of the information comes later. At this point, all ideas are good ideas*
7. *Identify one stream of activity and do it start to finish: then integrate other streams with it. Experience has shown that participants may become confused when trying to understand and document several different flows. By choosing one and taking it start to finish, similarities and differences can more readily be identified, and the meeting more easily controlled. Note: the group typically will need to be reminded of this several times*
8. *Start process steps with an action verb. State the action taken or task performed at each step*
9. *Write explanations directly on the brown papers. The only paper attached to the brown paper should be "live" documents and their post-it note critique*
10. *Specify percentages "yes" or "no" for decision points. Each time the process can split into more than one path, document the frequency or percentage each path is taken*
11. *Use arrows to show the flow*
12. *Rule of thumb: The brown paper must be understandable without lengthy explanations*

# Helpful Hints

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- Elements of Good Process Work Flow:
  - Involves client
  - Captures process: formal, informal, emotional
  - Highlights opportunities for improvement
  - Documents gaps and areas of conflict
  - Details all critical activities
  - Flows in a simple/self explanatory manner
  - Shows “live” documentation
  - Captures all perspectives
  - Identifies important data elements/systems
  - Communicates with the help of icons and humor

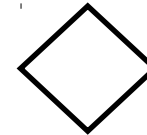
# Brown Paper Standards

- Border brown paper w/clear tape
- Fold 3-6 inches of brown paper back on both ends; tape on back side of brown paper (adds stability)
- For double-wide brown papers, tape seam on back; top paper overlaps bottom paper in front by 2-3 inches
- Use placement shown on the next page for brown paper visuals
- Use “Verb-Noun” format for activities (e.g., answer phone; deliver document; enter record; request data)
- Use “Question” format for decisions (e.g., is form complete?)
- Green Post-it™ Notes = Strengths  
Yellow Post-it™ Notes = Clarification  
Pink Post-it™ Notes = Opportunities

## Icon Key



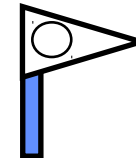
Activity performed- stated in verb noun format



Decision- stated as a Yes or No question



Out of area interface

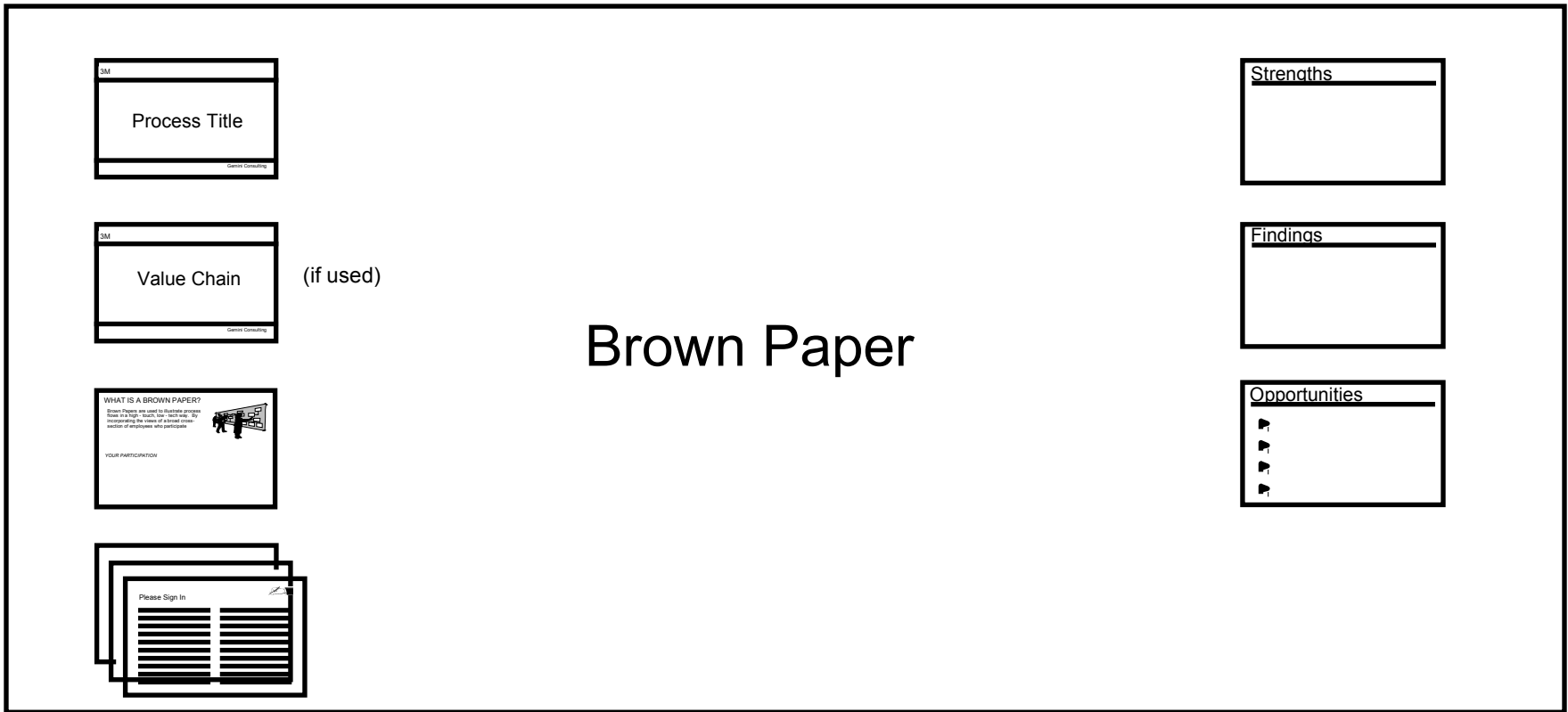


Red Flags - These correspond to the opportunities presented at the end of the brown paper

# Brown Paper Standards *(continued)*

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Post visuals on Brown Paper as shown below





# Brown Paper Standards (*continued*)

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- Draw lines, arrows and percentages directly on the brown paper in *black* marker. Fill in arrow heads, and use a ruler to draw the lines
- Use block letters and *blue* marker for all activities and clouds.
- Cloud icon can be used to represent another process, function or geography not covered in this brown paper; it can also be used to represent information that influences this brown paper
- Attach live documents directly to brown papers (e.g., reports, letters)
- Use picture icons for additional creativity
  - “Watch” to show time
  - “In box” to show paperwork Back-up
- Quantify data where ever possible
  - Volumes
  - Percentages (decision diamonds)
- A brown paper is complete when it has been validated / signed by the relevant process owners, users, etc.
- After brown paper is complete, use red numbered flags to identify opportunities. Post a flag on the brown paper for each opportunity