

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation is complete and walks the user through setup, configuration and deployment of the Appian tutorial application. • Document is accessible – jargon and other terms are either defined in text or linked to from elsewhere. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User instructions are buried under other text. • The documentation needs more of an overview than it has. • Pre-requisite information for completing a process needs to be listed before the process itself. • Warnings and call-outs need to be moved to more user-friendly areas. that is, before the process that the warnings or call-outs refer to. • Application steps are confusing: certain steps are bundled into other steps as opposed to being distinguished as their own steps.

Strengths and Weaknesses

On the surface, the document is complete. It walks the user through the setup, configuration and export of a test application in the Appian Designer Environment. Jargon and other terms are either defined in the text itself, or hyper-linked so that users can click on them for a more in-depth understanding.

However, under the surface, the document has some serious problems. User instructions are buried under other text that can be moved to follow those instructions. As an example, in the first step, “Create the Appian Tutorial Application,” the text “The Appian Tutorial Application is the reference application that is used in all of Appian’s tutorials. This means you can reuse this application as you work through other tutorials,” can be moved elsewhere, such as to an overview section.

The overview section that currently exists is very sparse. A fuller overview section should be written. This overview should cover *who* the doc is intended for, *why* they’re building this Appian tutorial application and *what kind* of application the tutorial application is. As part of the *who* section, there should be a prerequisites list: as an Appian client developer, I should know X, Y, and Z before I embark on this tutorial. The text listed in the previous paragraph would also fit neatly in the *what* portion of the overview section.

While user instructions are buried under other text that can be moved elsewhere, those user instructions need to be preceded by pre-requisite information for the process itself.

For example, “It is important to note that the security of the application object is unrelated to the security of each of the objects contained within the application. This means that you will need to set security permissions for every object in an application in addition to the application object itself. See Application Security information about security permissions

for the application object.” This text can be moved up to the middle of the first paragraph under “Add Security to the Application.”

Warnings, call-outs and notes also need to be moved to more user-friendly areas. “Notice that we used a prefix, *AT*, in both group names. It is a best practice to use a short, unique prefix...when naming all objects related to the application,” can be moved to the **Name** section under the **Create Group** step.

Even if call-outs for notes and best practices are moved to the relevant section (as opposed to the bottom of each section), there are issues with how the steps themselves are laid out. There is a process at the end of the “Create a Process Model” step that should be moved to its own step called “Publish the Process Model.” The step for adding security to the process model should then be moved between these two steps. This way the steps follow a logical conclusion – the developer creates a process model, adds security to it and then publishes it so that users can interact with it.

Suggestions For Improvement

Suggestion 1: Move user instructions to the beginning of the process text. This prevents user frustration and ensures that they are able to easily follow the instructions as presented.

Suggestion 2: The overview section can be expanded. This expansion should include sections that answer *who*, *what*, and *why* for users. This way, users know that they are in the right place to find the answers they’re looking for.

Suggestion 3: Move any pre-requisite information between the process title and the user instructions. This way, users are away of any pre-requisites that need to be completed before performing the steps outlined in the instructions below.

Suggestion 4: Move warnings and call-outs to more user-friendly areas. Each of the green note/notice sections can be condensed and moved to the relevant step in the process it precedes.

Suggestion 5: Distinguish processes so that each process completes one item. For example, the steps for publishing a process model can be moved to their own section. This way, the steps are interpreted by the user as their own process and not glossed over as part of the previous section.

Suggestion 6: Copy-edit the document thoroughly. The current Flesch reading level is around 58, which means it is fairly difficult to read. Cutting down sections of the text will make it easier to read.

For example:

“It is important to note that the security of the application object is unrelated to the security of each of the objects contained within the application. This means that you will

need to set security permissions for every object in an application in addition to the application object itself. See Application Security information about security permissions for the application object.”

can be cut down to:

“The security of the application is unrelated to the security of its components. You need to set security permissions for each component object as well as the application itself. See Application Security information about security permissions for the application object.”

This cuts the quoted text down by 33% and is much easier to read.