Creating a Standard Operating Procedures Library[☆]

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Abstract

This Project will create a library of standard operating procedures (SOP) documents. We have begun working on articulating each of our daily business processes. Each SOP is intended to function as a set of step-by–step instructions on how team members can complete their jobs regularly and consistently — or, "detailed, written instructions to achieve uniformity of the performance of a specific function." Every SOP will be composed in a consistent format, be easy to read, and easy to follow. Our SOPs will insure that each operation is completed consistently, and our companies standards are strictly adhered to. Additionally, they are designed to streamline individual training while maximize daily operational efficiency and increase productivity. Furthermore, each SOPs is specific to our organization and each SOP will serve as a historical and factual record of when our standards were established.

Keywords: Work Breakdown Structure (WBS), SOP Template.dotm, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Project, *Quality Control* (QC), Task(s), Publish, Educated.

[☆]   This document is a collaborative effort.

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[1]   SOPs should be written on process (e.g, correct way of answering the phone) not an employee
   position.

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1 **1. Introduction**

2   All new SOPs should be created using the template "SOP Template.dotm" which
3 is stored on the SigerTronic Systems Team Site (SOPs Directory | Original Docu-
4 ments subfolder).[2] Additionally, all SOPs should be considered living documents;
5 therefore, subject to change. The purpose of our SOPs can be stated as, a set of writ-
6 ten detailed instructions, or step-by-step instructions, on how to complete a single
7 business process. Our SOPs will standardize our business processes as well as pro-
8 vide us with a corporate *Quality Control* (Qc) mechanism while assuring consistency.
9 And they will facilitate communication between team members. Our SOPs will in-
10 sure that all team members are preforming the tasks in the same manner.

11 **2. Phase One**

12 *2.1. Activity One*

13   First we will identify key areas of our business that need attention first. Then
14 we should prioritize the development of our SOPs with a focus in these defined key
15 areas.

16 *2.2. Activity Two*

17   ✧ Specific and detailed information should be collected about each business pro-
18   cess. This will provided the author with a comprehensive understanding of each
19   process. Furthermore, this comprehensive understanding will insure that each
20   SOP is written with sufficient detail, so any team member can easily reproduce
21   the steps.
22   ✧ A to-do list should be composed and it should reflect a list of all SOPs that
23   will be written. This list should be reviewed by upper management, and then
24   an agreement should be reached, as to which SOPs – from the list – will be
25   written. Then the list can be expanded to include additional business processes.

26 *2.3. Activity Three*

27   ✧ Consult with individuals employee who perform these Task(s).
28   ✧ Prepare a to-do list, and then a rough draft of all SOPs that will be written.
29   Next, gain approval on the rough draft, before for final publishing.

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[2]   https://sigertronicsystems.sharepoint.com/SOPs/Original%20Documents/SOP%20Template.dotm

3. Phase Two

3.1. Activity Four

After a rough draft of an SOP is written it will need to be tested for validity. This process insure that the final draft that will be published is accurate and sufficient in detail.

Activity duration estimate. : April 2014 to July 2015

4. Phase Three

4.1. Activity Five

Information should be written comprehensively and systematically, then tested for adequacy and completeness prior to being published with our required template.[3] Each draft SOP should be reviewed by *management* for their approval. Once we have tested and reviewed our rough draft SOPs we will then approve it for final publishing.

5. Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

The WBS[4] is intended to function as a graphical representation of unique work elements to be *executed* for this project. The primary goal was to logically group the work into more manageable components. Consequently, this will help us accomplish the project objectives as well as communicate a vision of the end product. Ultimately, the WBS helped organize, and define, the total scope of the project.

6. Publishing Phases

Every SOP should go through the same sequential steps[5] before finally being approved and then published. These phases (*e.g., draft, approval, then publish*) should involve management or someone other than the author of the SOP. This will insure some relative level of QC.

6.1. Project Quality Management

"Are there quality requirements for this project?" **Yes. . .**

We need to establish a mechanism to test[6] the quality of each SOP prior to it being published. Figure A.2[7] is a diagram of the phases of development each SOP should travel. This diagram is intended to help visualize the total process.

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[3] Poorly written SOPs are in no one's best interest. They provided misinformation and are of limited value to any organization or company.

[4] See Figure A.1 *Work Breakdown Structure*, in Appendix

[5] See Figure A.2 *Phases of Development*, in Appendix

[6] It is crucially important that each SOP be tested for adequacy and completeness prior to being published.

[7] See Figure A.2 *Phases of Development*, in Appendix

6.1.1. Individual SOP Approval

- ✦ As an organization we must clearly define what the word *approval* actually means when used in this context.
- ✦ It is highly recommended that each SOP be approved by senior management, prior to being published.
- ✦ Each SOP should be tested for accuracy and completeness. These tests should be performed by someone other than the author, and then the SOP can be approved.

6.1.2. Establish Review System for the Entire SOP Library

Review System

In this phase we need to establish a system of regular and timely quality reviews (*e.g., … review all SPOs once a year?*). So, as business process advance, we can edit our SOPs and they will remain accurate and up-to-date. And as new business process arise new SOPs can be written. With required reviews we can prevent our SOPs from becoming out-of-date and assure that each SOP reflects the most current information about our operational procedures. A review committee could be established which would help facilitate the timely and orderly review of all SOPs.

6.1.3. Authoring Each SOP

In this phase close attention should be given to the scope and complexity of the SOP. The author should provide sufficient level of detail to accurately articulate the steps required to complete the business process. The SOP should not attempted to answer all the possible questions a team member may have. In contrast, the SOP should function as a complement to other employee training (*cross training*). Each SOP should be written in plain language, be easy to read, and easy to follow. The ultimate goal; however, is to provide sufficient amount of detail so that any team member can complete the process correctly and efficiently. Studies show that short form SOPs with no more than ten individual steps are more effective than long form SOPs.

When SOPs are being modified the changes should be made directly to the original document on the SigerTronic sharepoint directory. You are required to CHECK OUT the SOP before edits can be made. We will properly maintaining each subsequent revision of all our SOPs.

6.1.4. Employee Involvement

All employees should be educated about our SOP library. This will ensure that our SOPs are consistently followed over time. Whenever possible team members who

perform these task should be involved in the process of developing the SOP.

6.1.5. Include a Disclaimer

Each SOP should have a disclaimer at the foot of the title page.

Example Disclaimer: WHILE REFERRING TO THIS SOP PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE VERSION IS THE MOST CURRENT VERSION. YOU CAN CHECK THE VERSION NUMBER OR CONTACT THE AUTHOR TO CONFIRM. OUT-OF-DATE SOP COULD PROVIDE MIS-INFORMATION AND MUST NOT BE RELIED UPON.

> ◔ NOTE: ◑ I am seeking approval to add this disclaimer to our SOP template. I am open to suggestions regarding the specific language used in the disclaimer and the disclaimers applicability.

7. Milestone list

7.1. First Milestone

The first milestone in this project will occur when we have gained approval on some of the rough draft SOPs and we begin to publish final draft SOPs.

7.2. Second Milestone

Initially, we will focus on developing SOPs for lower level business processes, then as the project matures, we can begin developing SOPs for upper level business processes (*e.g., upper management tasks*). Therefore, the SECOND MILESTONE will be reached when sufficient numbers of lower level SOP have been developed, and the project focus can then shift to developing SOPs for upper level business processes.

8. Project Dates

The start and end dates[8] for this project are as follows: 12th November 2014 to TBD – 2015

> **Note**: This project will be considered complete when we have written all SOPs for all our business processes. This end date provided here is a tentative end date.

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8   See Figure 1, *Timeline 1:* for details.

TIMELINE 1: *Project Relative Dates*

November 2014 – Project start date

January 2015 – First milestone reached

June 2015 – Second milestone reached

TBD – 2015 – Project complete

Figure 1: Project Timeline
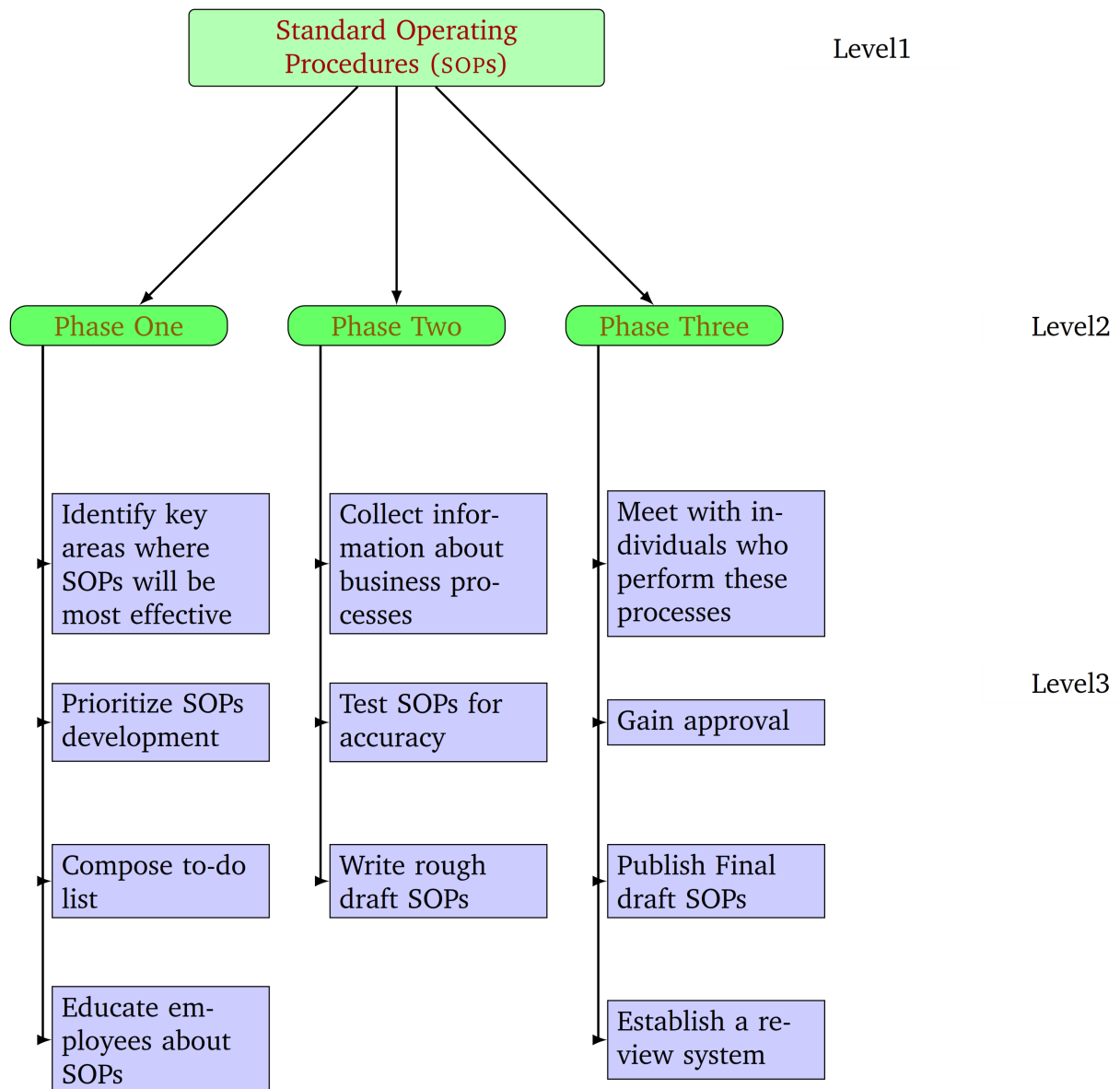
106   A. Appendix

Figure 1: Work Breakdown Structure
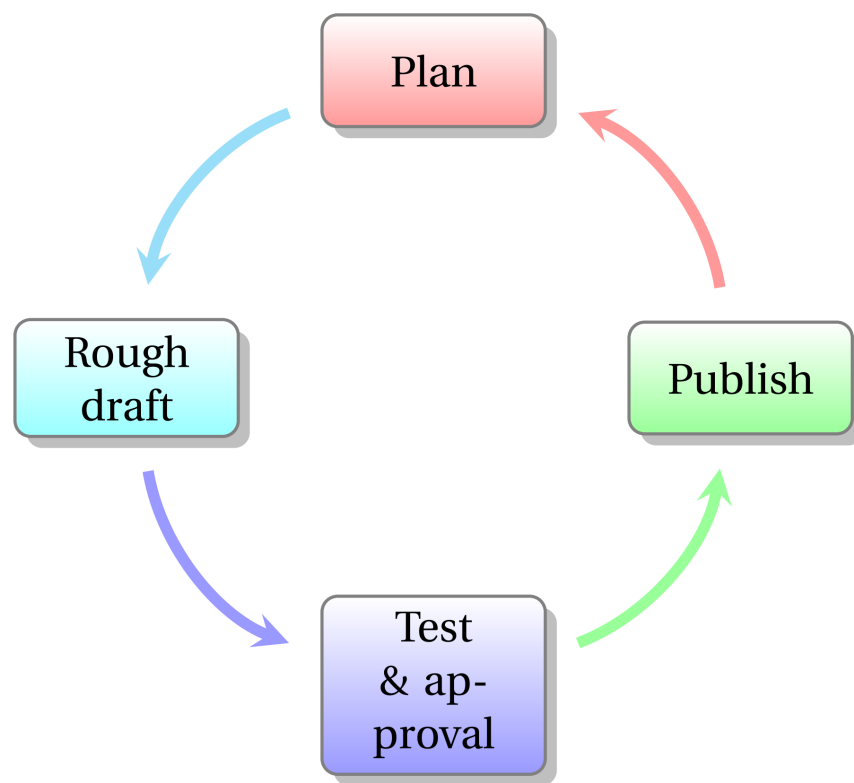
Figure A.1: Work Breakdown Structure

Figure A.2: Phases of Development

List of Terms

Activity an element of work performed during course of a project that includes a verb in its description signifying an action. An activity normally has an expected duration, expected cost, and expected resource requirements. Activities are often subdivided into tasks.

Phase (*Project Phase*) a collection of logical related project activities, usually culminating in the completion of a major deliverable. Project phases are mainly completed sequentially, but can overlap in some project situations. Phases can be subdivided into subphases and then components; this hierarchy, if the project or portions of the project are divided into phases, is contained in the *work breakdown structure*. A project phase is a component of a project life cycle.

Project a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.

SOP (*Standard Operating Proceduresare*) are sets of instructions having the force of a directive, covering those features of operations which lend themselves to a definite or standardized procedure without loss of effectiveness.

Task a generic term for work that is not included in the WBS, but potentially could be a further decomposition of work by the individuals responsible for that work. Also used to describe the lowest level of effort on a project.

Work Breakdown Structure a deliverable-oriented grouping of project elements that organizes and defines the total work scope of the project. Each descending level represents an increase detailed definitions of the project work.