Following the example from the last chapter, there are three process maps and now it is time to convene the team to discuss the differences between the three processes. Listen to your team and understand why they perform certain actions. It is always a best practice to remind all team members, including yourself, that this is a collaborative effort, and there will be times when we have to be flexible and go with what is determined best for the business and the customer. We do not want to spend hours debating how we feel. The objective is to get a consistent process in place that produces the desired outcome or output, and we will be reviewing the process for further improvements.

We have our three maps and either gain consensus as a team on the best order, or the Process Owner or Project Manager will make an executive decision on the best process flow.

A quick note: in some process improvement methodologies, one must wait until after testing before introducing any changes. With the ASI Process we want immediate results and if there is an obvious and simple improvement that can be made, and it makes sense, then trust your instinct, act, and implement it. For our tea example, you see that placing the mug on top of a white napkin is more aesthetically pleasing. It's a positive and simple change to implement so do it – communicate this with the staff and ensure understanding and document it in your process map.

We are now merging steps and deciding on the best order of steps in the process.

Metrics – Should we start doing metrics? It depends, but the likely answer is no. Trust your judgement and trust the judgement of your staff. We could measure the time to complete the process and see which is faster, but is this appropriate? As we are going to see later on, there are more factors we will get into, even in a process as simple as making a cup of tea and doing metrics now is not going to add much value. The time that would be spent on metrics will be better spent later on. The reason we're using the ASI Process is to get immediate and impactful results, and not spend countless hours going over every single detail at every step of the way. The time spent trying to dissect these elements can quickly add up and eliminate any potential savings.
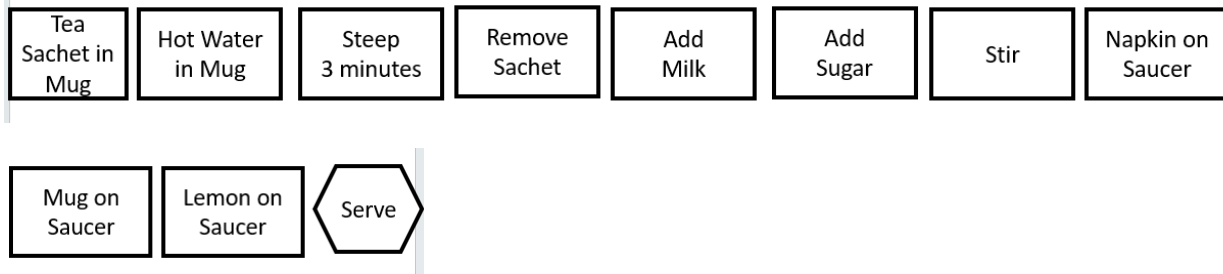
Once an order has been decided upon then a step-by-step walk-through or Process Guide needs to be prepared. This does not have to be overly complicated. Simple is better and the guide can be as short as one page with a process map and notes at the bottom. The optimal Process Guide will have written out steps, 1. 2. 3., etc., and a process map. Adding images or pictures to the document each step may help, which is often the case in more technical processes. Ultimately, simple, clean, and to the point is our objective.

Our new map and process – Cup of Tea:

Materials: Mug, Saucer, Tea Sachet, Hot water, Spoon, Milk, Sugar, Lemon Slice

1. Put tea sachet in mug
2. Pour hot water in mug
3. Let steep for three minutes
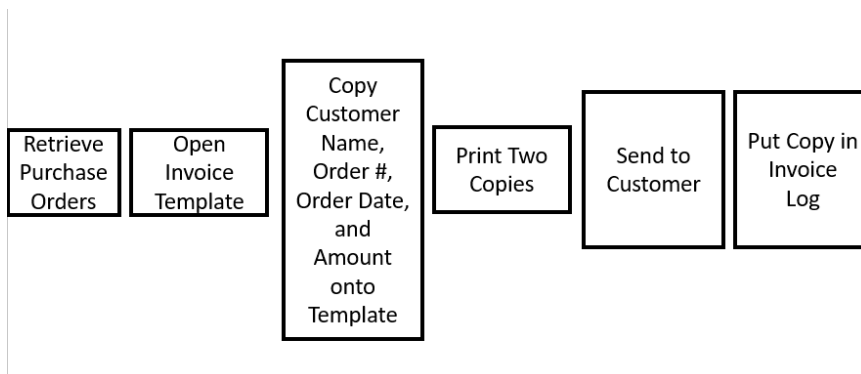4. Remove tea sachet
5. Add milk

6. Add sugar
7. Stir
8. Place white napkin on saucer
9. Place mug on saucer
10. Place lemon slice on saucer beside the mug
11. Serve to guest

Tea Sachet in Mug	Hot Water in Mug	Steep 3 minutes	Remove Sachet	Add Milk	Add Sugar	Stir	Napkin on Saucer

Mug on Saucer	Lemon on Saucer	Serve

For our readers who have more administrative organization here is a sample invoice process and map:

Prepare and Issue Invoices

1. Retrieve Purchase Orders for the Previous Month
2. Open the Invoice Template
3. Input the following data into the invoice
   a. Customer Name
   b. Order Number
   c. Order Date
   d. Amount Due
4. Print two copies
5. Send a copy to the customer using their preferred method
6. Put a copy in the invoice log

Retrieve Purchase Orders	Open Invoice Template	Copy Customer Name, Order #, Order Date, and Amount onto Template	Print Two Copies	Send to Customer	Put Copy in Invoice Log

Do not hesitate to take the initial versions or draft versions of the guide to the team members for feedback and input. As the guide nears completion, it is a good idea to have it reviewed by someone outside the project team. Is the process clear? Is it easy to follow? The most important questions are: Does it make sense, and will it get the job done? As mentioned before, do not have staff members

spend too much time creating or reviewing these maps. Remember, do not spend too much time on this step of the ASI Process. We want a complete and useful Process Guide, but we are going to be improving it so there will likely be some changes coming later on.

Once the Reference Guide is complete, review the standardized process with all of the appropriate staff members. Even though it is complete and has been reviewed by members of the team (and hopefully an outsider), there is always the chance something was missed. Solicit feedback in an open atmosphere. If new questions or concerns arise, immediately ask for solutions, or work with the team to resolve them as quickly as possible.

After the final review prepare a Binder which will serve as a repository and manual for all staff. This can be a physical binder with printed copies, or an electronic version stored on a network that is accessible to the appropriate staff members. If possible and practical, it is advisable to have both physical and electronic versions.

Screen shot of Reference Guide – 1-10 steps, map, pictures

A few more considerations – Now that a standard and stable process is in place, metrics may be considered (but are not necessary). Common types of metrics are the number of occurrences, or the time to complete a process or each step in a process. Starting now you may create a baseline to measure future improvements. Is it necessary? Not at all, and do not spend too much time on this.

Depending on your specific situation and circumstances, you can either continue with the standardized process to begin working on improvements, or now that the process is stabilized, you can go back and get other processes documented. You will be the best one to judge what to do next, but collaborate with your Project Manager, Team, and staff. If you have the resources, then further improvements are the path to take. But if your business is still small or young, or resources are tight, then getting the foundational processes in place may be the best path forward. Either way – do not stop. Keep yourself and your team active and engaged.