

COTS Tool Onboarding User Journey Map

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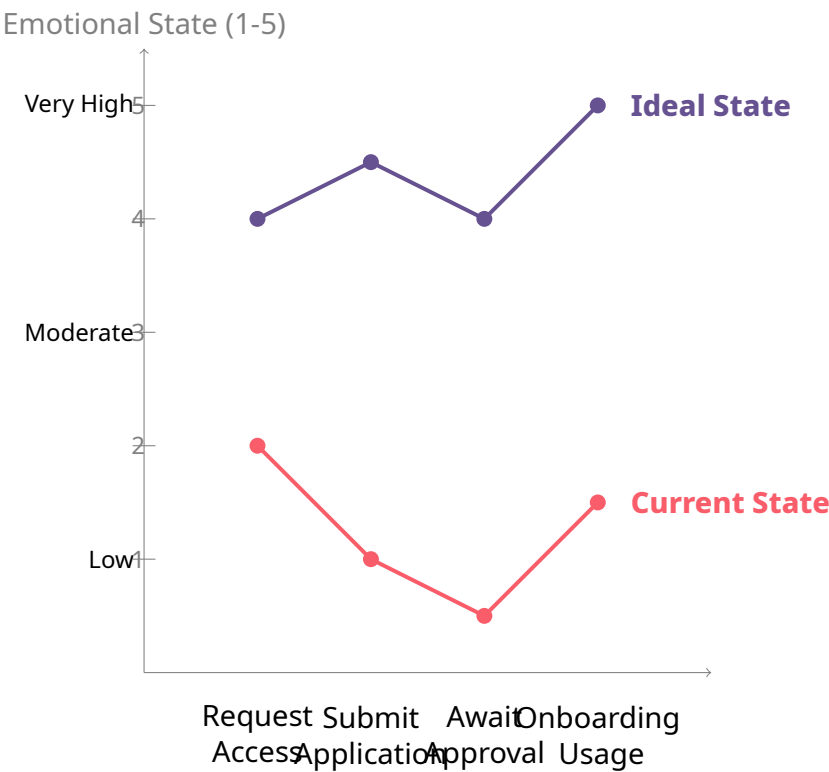
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Abstract

This document visualizes the Veteran/Staff COTS tool onboarding journey, contrasting the current state of high friction and low satisfaction with an ideal, streamlined process. The map highlights key emotional shifts, pain points, and quantifiable improvements achieved through a human-centered design approach.

Emotional Arc: Current vs. Ideal State

The chart below illustrates the shift in user sentiment across the four key stages of the onboarding process. The scale is based on user satisfaction (1 = Low, 5 = Very High).



Current State: A Path Fraught with Friction

- **Stage 1: Request Access**

- *Action:* User searches VA Intranet or asks colleagues for the access process.

- **Pain Point:** Unclear documentation, fragmented information, no central catalog.
- *Emotion:* Confused, Overwhelmed (Score: 2/5)

- **Stage 2: Submit Application**

- *Action:* User fills out legacy paper/PDF forms; repeats already known personnel information.
- **Pain Point:** Manual data entry, redundant information requests, high chance of submission errors.
- *Emotion:* Frustrated, Stressed (Score: 1/5)

- **Stage 3: Await Approval**

- *Action:* Request sits in ITO/ISSO queue; user receives no proactive status updates.
- **Pain Point:** Complete lack of transparency, long and unpredictable wait times (often weeks).
- *Emotion:* Anxious, Impatient (Score: 0.5/5)

- **Stage 4: Onboarding & Usage**

- *Action:* User eventually receives generic "access granted" email; no specific training provided.
 - **Pain Point:** Low initial productivity, inefficient tool usage due to lack of guidance.
 - *Emotion:* Uncertain, Disconnected (Score: 1.5/5)
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Ideal State: Seamless, Speedy, and Satisfying

- **Stage 1: Discover & Request**

- *Action:* User browses the Centralized Tool Catalog, sees clear requirements, and initiates a request.
- **Improvement:** **80% faster discovery time** due to clear, central catalog.
- *Emotion:* Confident, Informed (Score: 4/5)

- **Stage 2: Automated Submission**

- *Action:* Smart digital form pre-fills user profile data and automatically routes the request for approval.
- **Improvement:** **70% faster submission time** and near-zero data entry errors.
- *Emotion:* Effortless, Efficient (Score: 4.5/5)

- **Stage 3: Transparent Approval**

- *Action:* User views real-time status tracker in the portal and receives automated SMS/email updates.
- **Improvement:** **60% reduction in approval cycle time** through automated workflows.
- *Emotion:* Informed, Trusting (Score: 4/5)

- **Stage 4: Guided Onboarding**

- *Action:* Access is provisioned instantly upon approval; a personalized in-app tour or video is presented.
- **Improvement:** **50% faster time-to-productivity** through personalized onboarding.
- *Emotion:* Empowered, Productive (Score: 5/5)