The Process Cycle:
High Leverage Planning and Execution

What

The Process Cycle is a simple but potent process analysis & design tool, and an important mental framework for guiding process execution. When skillfully applied, it can lead to step-change improvements in processes or tasks of any type or scope, on or off the job. It can also be extremely useful in defining and developing alignment on the role or charter of any individual, unit, or task force.

The Process Cycle gains much of its power by causing you to stop and think about, and be clear about the essential elements that determine performance in any given situation.

The elements are:

Purpose: the reason for doing the task in terms of value to the "customer" or "client"

Intended Results: the desired outcomes, including both tangible and intangible "products"

Process: the sequence of actions necessary to produce the results

Capabilities: the knowledge, skills, type of thinking, tools, resources and preparedness required to execute the process steps

Feedback: the feedback/learning loop, consisting of:
- Sensing (actual vs. intended results),
- Analyzing (why the deviation) and
- Acting (so what do we do about it?)
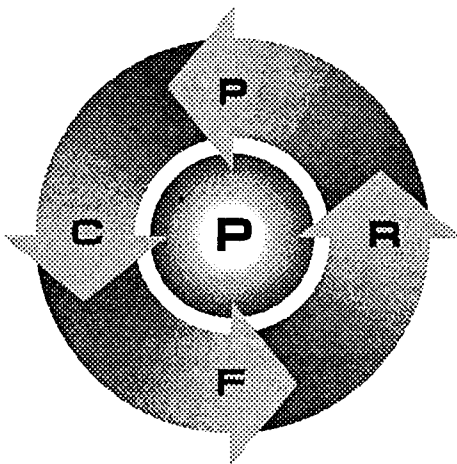
Why

Effective and pervasive use of the Process Cycle as an analysis, design and execution tool can increase performance by helping to ensure:
- Increased order and clarity in thinking and communication
- All tasks and processes are customer-oriented and value-adding
- Alignment with and ownership of all tasks and processes by those responsible for them
- Greater task and process efficiency and effectiveness.

How

When using the Process Cycle for planning, follow this sequence:
1. Identify the **task** to be done.
2. Define the **Purpose** of the task.
3. Spell out the **intended Results** of the task.
4. Design the **Process** required to achieve the intended results.
5. Identify the **Capabilities** needed to execute the process successfully.
6. Design a **Feedback** loop to ensure the intended results are produced.

Process Cycle
Worksheet

P: Purpose
R: Results
P: Process
C: Capabilities
F: Feedback
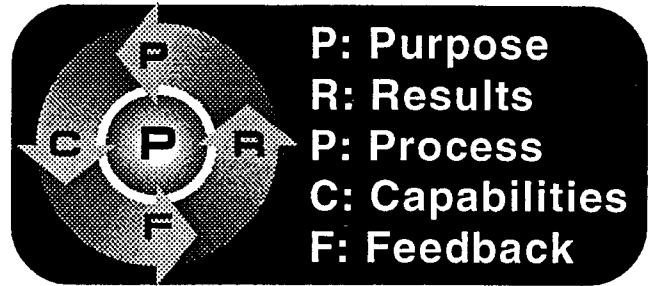
The work to be done:

The **Purpose** (value added/benefit) of doing the work:

The **Intended Results**:

The **Process** steps necessary to achieve the results:

The **Capabilities** required to execute the process:

The **Feedback** needed to measure the acutal vs. expected results: