

The approval took 11 days. 10 were waiting.

D8A.ACADEMY/RESOURCES/PROCESS-MAPPING

FIVE SYMBOLS

oval	start and end
box	a step someone does
diamond	a decision: yes or no
document	a form, a mail, a ticket
arrow	the handoff. waiting lives here

TWO CLOCKS

work time	hands on the step: 1 day in total
wait time	← 10 of the 11 days. fix this first

SWIMLANES

one lane per role	every arrow across a lane is a wait
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WORTH MEMORIZING

01 The approval, two clocks

Map the steps, then write both clocks next to every arrow. The map is done when the waits are on it.

STEP	LANE	WORK	WAIT BEFORE IT
request filed	requester	2 h	0
manager review	manager	1 h	3 days
budget check	finance	4 h	5 days
sign-off	director	1 h	2 days
total	4 lanes	1 day	10 days

→ Eleven days end to end. Making the budget check twice as fast saves two hours. Clearing the queue in front of it saves five days.

02 Trap: the map that fixes the wrong thing

Three ways a process map looks finished and changes nothing.

mapping the work only	People speed up the 4-hour budget check. The 5-day queue in front of it stays.
the happy path only	The diamond has a "no" branch. Rejections loop back to the requester: ask how often, and add that wait.
drawn from the desk	The official process and the real one differ. Walk it with one person from each lane.

→ The fix for a wait is rarely a faster person. It is a smaller batch, a clearer handoff, or one lane fewer.