Process Maps vs Flow Charts

Process maps provide more comprehensive documentation than flowcharts.

Flowcharts:
- Illustrate process steps sequentially
- Useful for basic visualization
- Don't show contextual details

Process Maps:
- Flowchart with contextual elements
- Show roles, systems, cycle times
- Visualize decision points and hand-offs

Elements of Process Maps:
- Swimlanes for each role
- Decision diamonds to show conditionals
- Parallel process flows
- Hand-off points between roles
- Cycle time data for each step
- Systems associated with steps
- Linkages to procedures and templates

Benefits of Process Maps:
- Holistic visualization of end-to-end process
- Identify non-value adding steps and delays
- Enable fact based analysis of root causes
- Standardize processes across regions and business units
- Simplify training of new team members
- Facilitate identification of automation opportunities

Process maps provide a systematic way to deeply understand workflow, stakeholders, and risks. This drives improvement.