

Do workflow-based systems satisfy the demands of the agile enterprise of the future?

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Short presentation at ACM 2012 workshop:
<http://acm2012.blogs.dsv.su.se/>
1st workshop on ACM and other non-workflow approaches to BPM



Motivation

- ACM & non-workflow is relatively small movement
- In the sea of mainstream BPM that sees BP as a standardized flow of operations
- How to defend the movement against “We can do the same and even better”, “We have all the same features”, etc.



Why WF is a mainstream

- Widespread understanding that BP is about optimizing the usage of enterprise resources, e.g., minimizing the waste – Lean, 6 sigma, etc.
- Standards, UML, BPMN that promote operational view
- Tool vendors that implements standards



How to meet the challenge

- Expand in some areas: traditionally working in a case-based manner - law (enforcement), healthcare, government
- Show examples where the workflow-paradigm has failed
- Agree that WF thinking is very good right now, but ... it might not be so in the nearest future ...



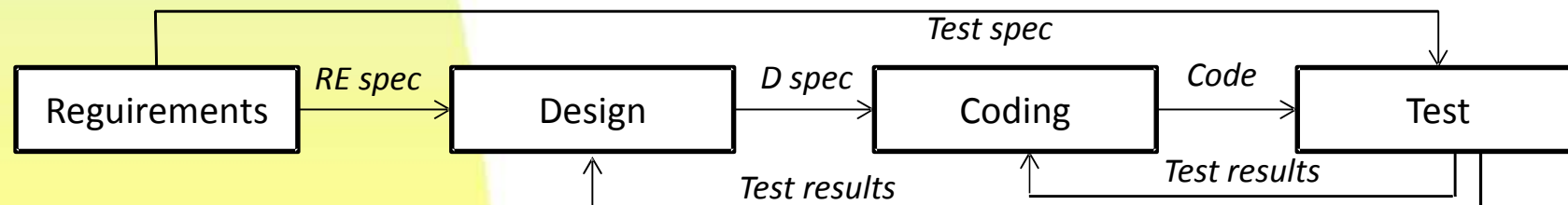
Plan

1. Investigate what is required to design a workflowable process
2. Investigate :
 - Whether it make sense to do so in the highly dynamic world
 - Whether a process will be “optimal” in such a world
 - Whether making all processes optimized do any good to the enterprise as a whole

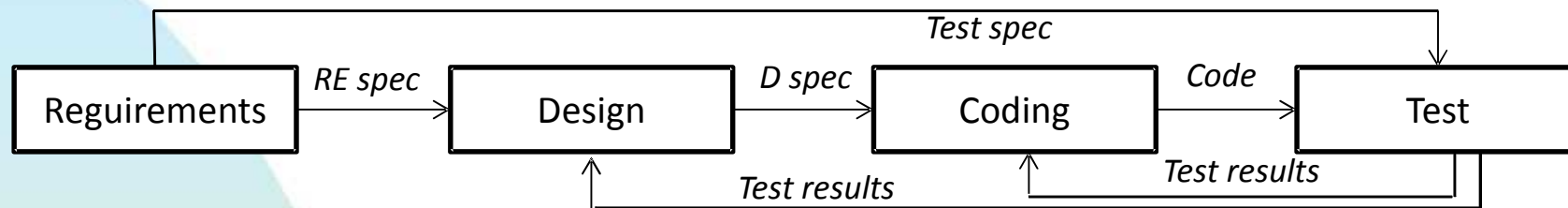


Workflowable process

1. The process can be split into well-defined steps/operations
2. For each step, inputs and outputs are fully formalized
3. It is fully determined what outputs serve as inputs for other steps



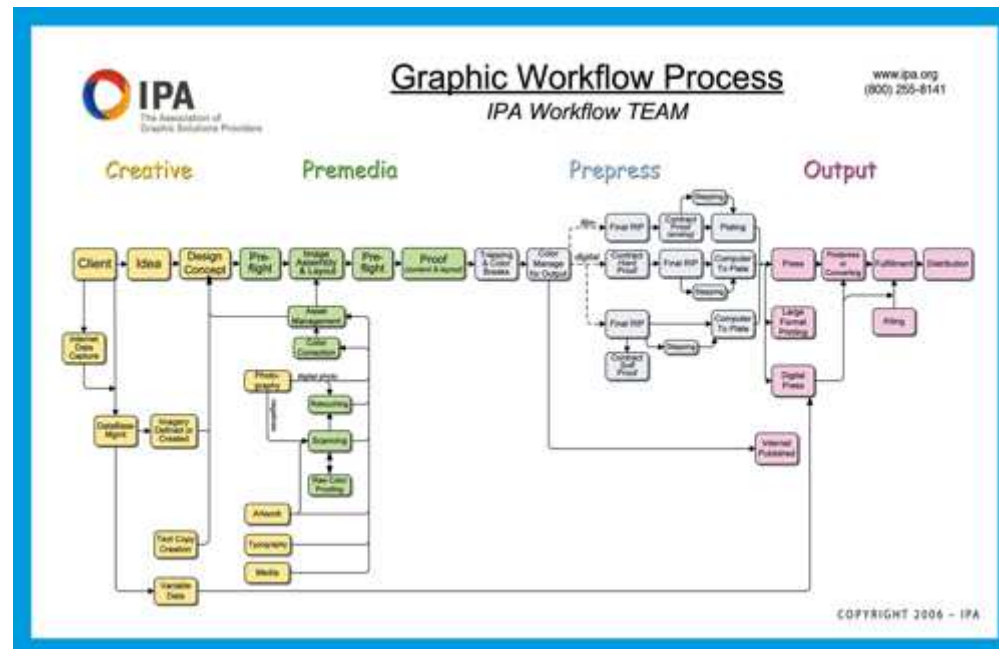
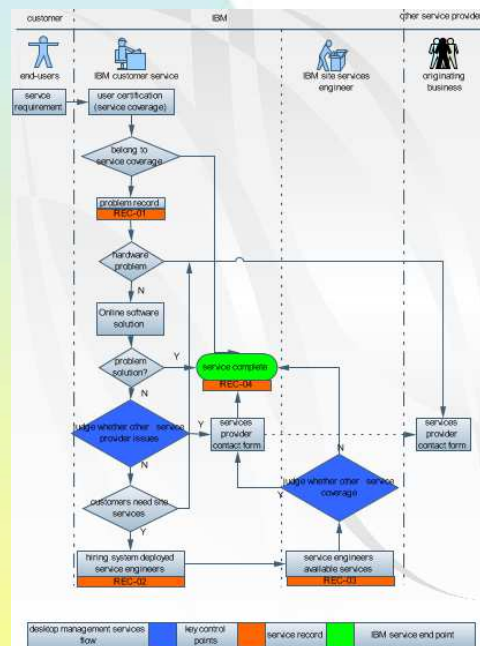
Workflowable process



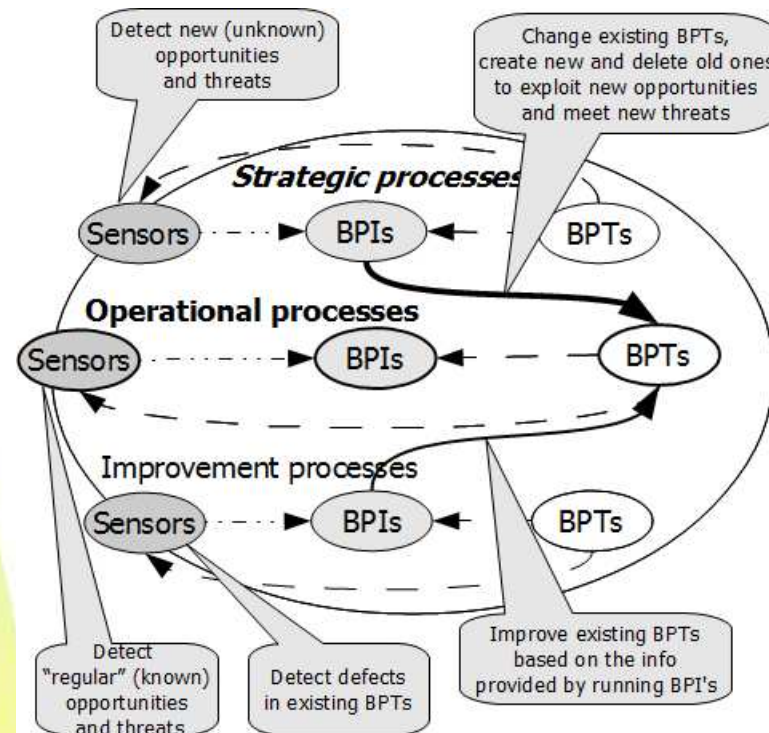
3. Execution of each step requires only its formalized inputs
4. Two steps are not allowed to be executed simultaneously (in parallel) if outputs from one of them serve as inputs for another
5. Each step is executed by a special group or one person specialization



1. Do we have time to design workflowable processes



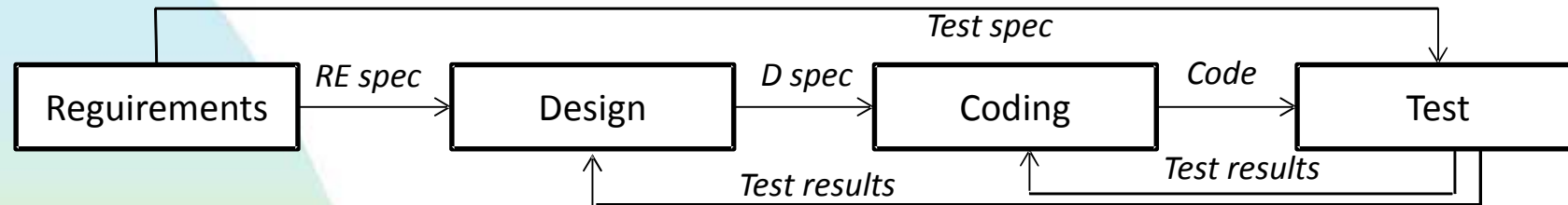
Do we have time to design ...



We might not have it



2. Is Workflowable process really optimal?



3. Execution of each step requires only its formalized inputs
4. Two steps are not allowed to be executed simultaneously (in parallel) if outputs from one of them serve as inputs for another

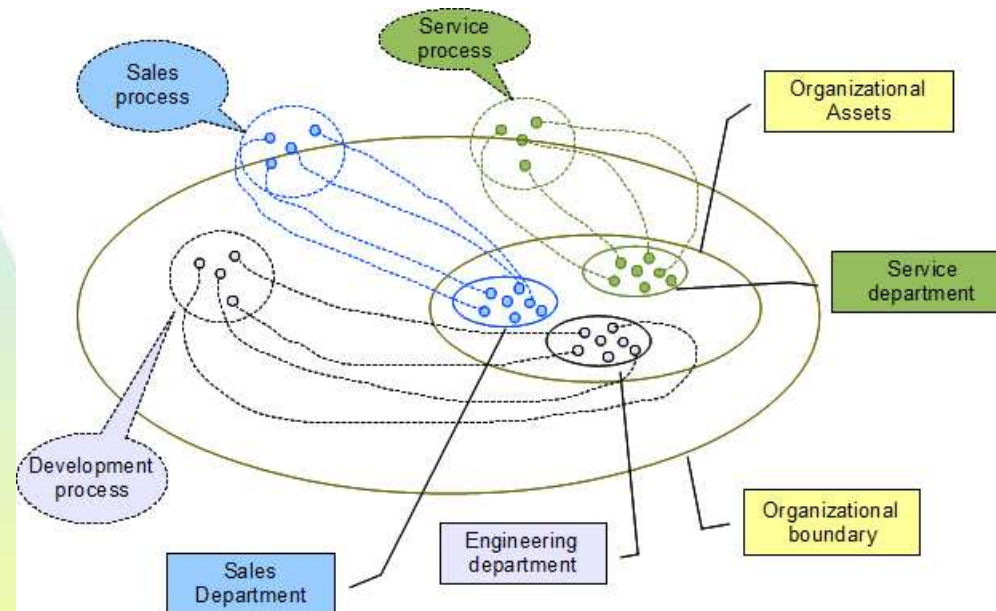


3. Is optimization of processes good for the enterprise as a whole ?

Is specialization harmless?



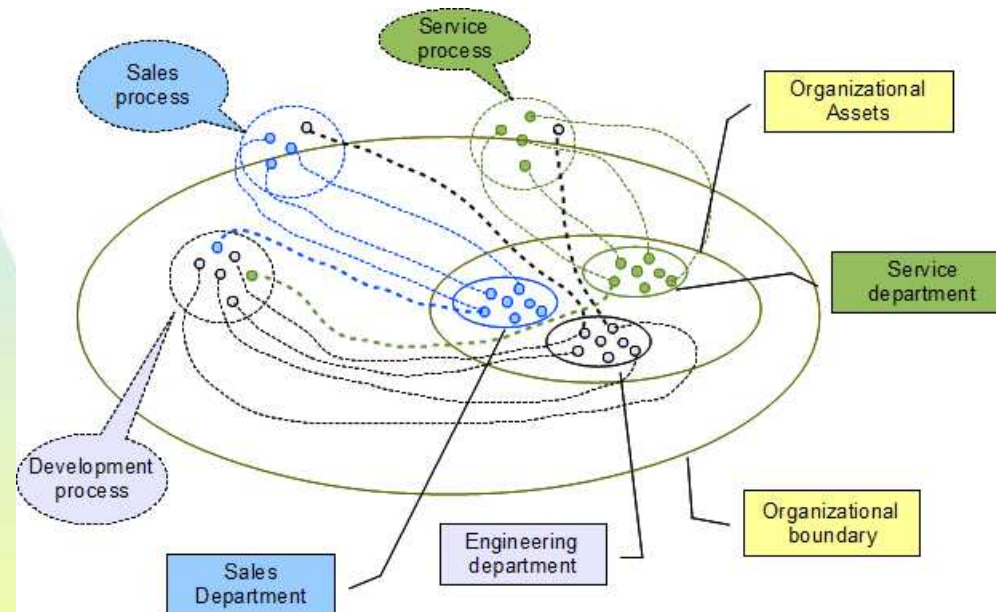
Manning of business processes - traditional style



- ▶ Knowledge on current needs/problems can be obtained by participants of the boundary processes who not normally participate in the development process
- ▶ Shall we arrange additional processes for the to transfer knowledge?



Manning of business processes - cross-manning



Main characteristics

- ◆ Multiple goals
- ◆ Heterogeneous teams



Additional reading

- Process thinking for business agility: <http://bit.ly/Nouub3>
- Bider I., Perjons E. Preparing for the era of cloud computing: Towards a framework for selecting business process support services. *Proceedings of BPMDS 2012*. <http://bit.ly/O8KrgQ>
- Bider I., Bellinger G., Perjons E. Modeling an Agile Enterprise: Reconciling Systems and Process Thinking. *Proceedings of PoEM 2011*, LNBIP 92, Springer, 2011: <http://bit.ly/wZBOwApp>.





Thank you for your attention!

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