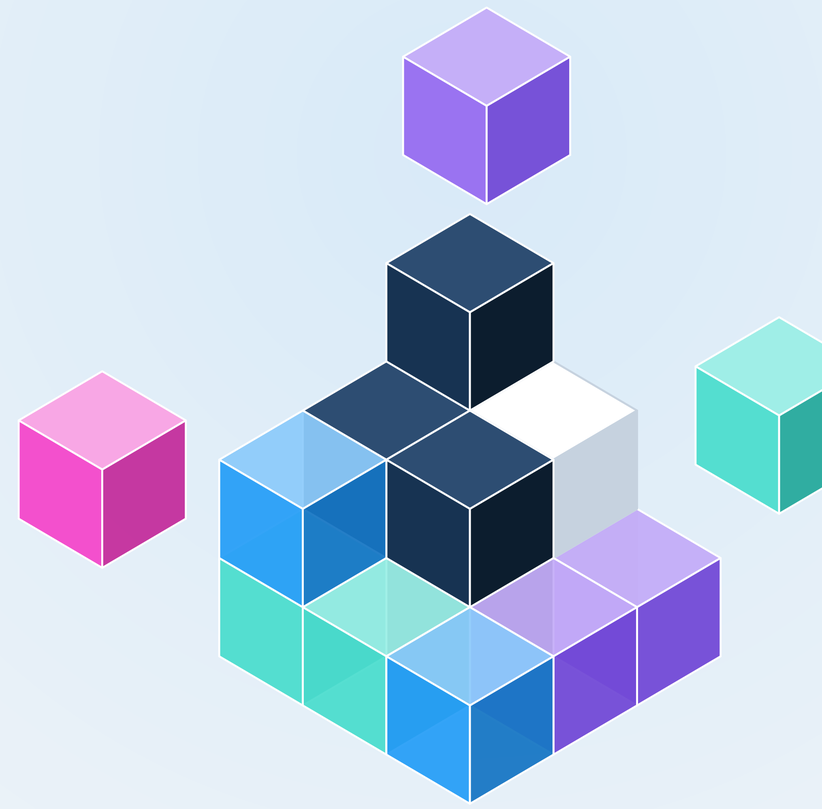
PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

Process Mining vs Process Mapping



Process mapping draws a process as people describe it. Process mining rebuilds it from time-stamped event logs in IT systems, showing how it actually runs.

01 THE CORE MODEL

PLANNED VS ACTUAL · SAME PROCESS, TWO VIEWS

Mapped
As designed in a workshop

Order received → Check → Approve → Ship → Invoice

One clean path
as people believe

Mined
As recorded in the event log

Order received → Check → Re-check → Approve → Price change → Re-approve → Ship → Invoice

Loops and rework
as it really runs

- **Process map**
  A drawing of how people believe the process runs, made in workshops.
- **Event log**
  Time-stamped records of each case and activity from IT systems.
- **Variant**
  One distinct path through the process found in the data.

02 COMBINING BOTH

Mining shows what happens; mapping and the gemba explain why.

MAPPING — MINING

PROCESS MAPPING

- \+ Captures tacit knowledge and context
- \+ Covers steps outside IT systems
- − Shows the ideal, misses variants

PROCESS MINING

- \+ Every case and variant, with times
- \+ Objective frequencies and delays
- − Blind to work not logged in systems

03 WORKED EXAMPLE

PURCHASE-TO-PAY PROCESS · ILLUSTRATIVE FINDINGS

MAP
One path
from the workshop

→

MINING
Many variants
from the ERP event log

→

FINDING
Price changes
after approval

→

ACTION
Fix master data
loop removed at source

04 MANAGEMENT TAKEAWAYS

01
Start with a clear question
Mine for a known pain point, not to explore everything.

02
Check data quality first
Missing timestamps and case IDs distort the model.

03
Validate findings at the gemba
Ask people why the loops in the data happen.

05 COMMON MISTAKE

LIMITATION
Trusting the map
Workshop maps often show the process as designed. Without data, the real loops stay hidden.