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**ITB12459**

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This chapter appears in the book, *Business Processes: Operational Solutions for SAP Implementation*  
by **Victor Portugal** © 2006, Idea Group Inc.

## **Chapter II**

# **Business Processes: Modelling, Analysis, and Implementation**

## **Introduction**

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In the previous chapter, we introduced a useful process management life cycle, and we explored the first step of the same. In this chapter, we delve into detail of the other steps of the life cycle: modelling, analysis, and implementation, and we conclude the chapter by looking at a topic that has not had sufficient exposure in literature, namely mal-processes.

## **Process Modelling**

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Once we have identified the process, the next step is to model the process as it exists in the organisation. How do we go about modelling the process? A very useful heuristic proposed by stalwarts in the field is *staple yourself to an*

*order*. Essentially what this means is attaching oneself to the business process, attaching oneself to the business object under consideration: it could be an order, it could be a customer, it could be a student, it could be an employee, it could be a manager, it could be a raw material, or it could be an enquiry from a customer. The heuristic suggests that you follow the business object or the person as they interact with the system, and you study the whole system by stapling yourself to the business object. You travel through the organisation, work in the different roles within the organisation, talk to the different people as they interact with the business object that you are considering. And as you do this, you model the process by which the business object is transformed: you model the process by which the value gets added to the product or service that the organisation is delivering. As you model, remember to keep in mind William of Occam's razor. Occam's razor states that as you model the real world, as you try to abstract the essentials of the real world that are of relevance, you need to be reasonably ruthless. Apply Occam's razor, and see to it that nothing inessential shall pass by it, but as you abide by this dictum, be careful that you do not omit the essentials.

Quite often when you are modelling the current way something is being done, people in organisations might suggest, "Why do we want to bother with the current way we do things, we know that it needs to be improved, so why don't we just model what we want to do and go ahead and implement that model?" Their argument for this is that the results of modelling the current way something is being done become obsolete the moment the to-be processes are designed and implemented. Another important point put forward is that it can be quite time consuming, as well as cost consuming. A third objection which has quite a bit of merit is that as you model the current processes, the analyst could become brainwashed into thinking that the current way something is being done is the best way. Or the analyst could become so narrowly focused, thinking only in the terms of current constraints, that he or she is not able to break out of the bounds of the current problems and constraints. This could result in to-be solutions that are very much like the as-is solutions, hence leading to very minimal improvements. While these objections all have certain merit, the advantages of modelling the current process far outweigh the disadvantages. One of the key advantages is that everybody gets to have a uniform understanding of the problem because it has been modeled, and this model can be shared with various people in the organisation, and you can understand, as an organisation how we are doing and what are the problems with what we are doing. It enables us to have the same terminology, and it also helps in convincing

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