

## PROCESS OWNER ALIGNMENT

Successful organizations use frameworks like APQC’s Process Classification Framework (PCF)® to simplify management and reduce complexity of a variety of tasks. The PCF is widely used and acknowledged as the de-facto process framework. But why do process owners love it so much? One reason: it creates a common language, and that enables every part of the organization to begin to align.

### WHAT IS A COMMON LANGUAGE?

In organizational terms, it is creating a common way to talk about concepts that may have different interpretations due to context or historical use.

The common language that the PCF establishes is based on a simple structured English, consisting of a set simple phrases that are broken down into successively greater detail. This means that at the highest level the concepts are very broad, and at the lowest level the concepts are very narrow. The concepts that the PCF defines are typically considered to be business processes.

Consider the “payroll” business process – when one is talking about payroll, are they talking about the act of collecting timesheet data and distributing paychecks? Or are they talking about calculating paycheck amounts and garnishments? Or are they talking about integrating with 3rd party payroll processors and maintaining master data? Depending on the context, payroll could mean any of these things. Correcting this imprecision in language is where the PCF becomes very valuable to organizations. Using the PCF as the basis of a discussion allows process owners to quickly ensure that all parties are not only hearing the same thing, but also clearly understanding the same concepts. Attempting to manage any process in the absence of a common language can result in wasted effort, rework, and missed deadlines.

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### PROCESS OWNERS BENEFIT FROM COMMON LANGUAGE

Process owners are like chief operating officers for tiny slices of an enterprise. Process owner responsibilities vary from organization to organization, but typically include: process definition, system implementation and suitability, tools to bridge gaps, people to execute processes, specific outcomes, and more.

With such broad responsibilities, it’s clear that a process owner will at some point interact with other people within an organization. Typical organizations include function-level management in the shape of IT and finance managers among others, as well as other process owners. Each process owner therefore interfaces with not only the individuals involved directly in their process, but also with upstream, downstream, and functional leadership.

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With so many interdependent parties, a common language is critical to keeping everyone operating consistently. Common languages serve process owners by creating a shared understanding of the concepts at hand. When process owners insist on using the common language to discuss the parts of the organization under their control, they create alignment with the different parts of the organization that they integrate with.

## COMMON LANGUAGE LEADS TO ALIGNMENT

Organizational alignment is a beautiful thing. When every part of the organization clearly understands the components that make up the organization and how they interrelate, the organization has established a foundation for alignment. The vision for alignment is one where everyone operates from the same shared understanding of people, process, technology, and strategy. Decisions can be made quickly, and with full insight into the parts of the organization that are involved.

Adopting a process framework – even in just a single domain or by a single process owner – can help achieve alignment because it creates a common language that everyone can quickly understand.

## GET STARTED TODAY

Process alignment won't happen on its own, and it won't happen overnight. Rely on APQC's [MosaiQ®](#) to get you started. MosaiQ is a cloud-based solution designed to simplify business process management for organizations of all sizes. Use MosaiQ to create a common language and align your processes so you can move past defining what the business does and get to how the work is done.

## ABOUT APQC

APQC helps organizations work smarter, faster, and with greater confidence. It is the world's foremost authority in benchmarking, best practices, process and performance improvement, and knowledge management. APQC's unique structure as a member-based nonprofit makes it a differentiator in the marketplace. APQC partners with more than 500 member organizations worldwide in all industries. With more than 40 years of experience, APQC remains the world's leader in transforming organizations. Visit us at [www.apqc.org](http://www.apqc.org), and learn how you can make best practices your practices.