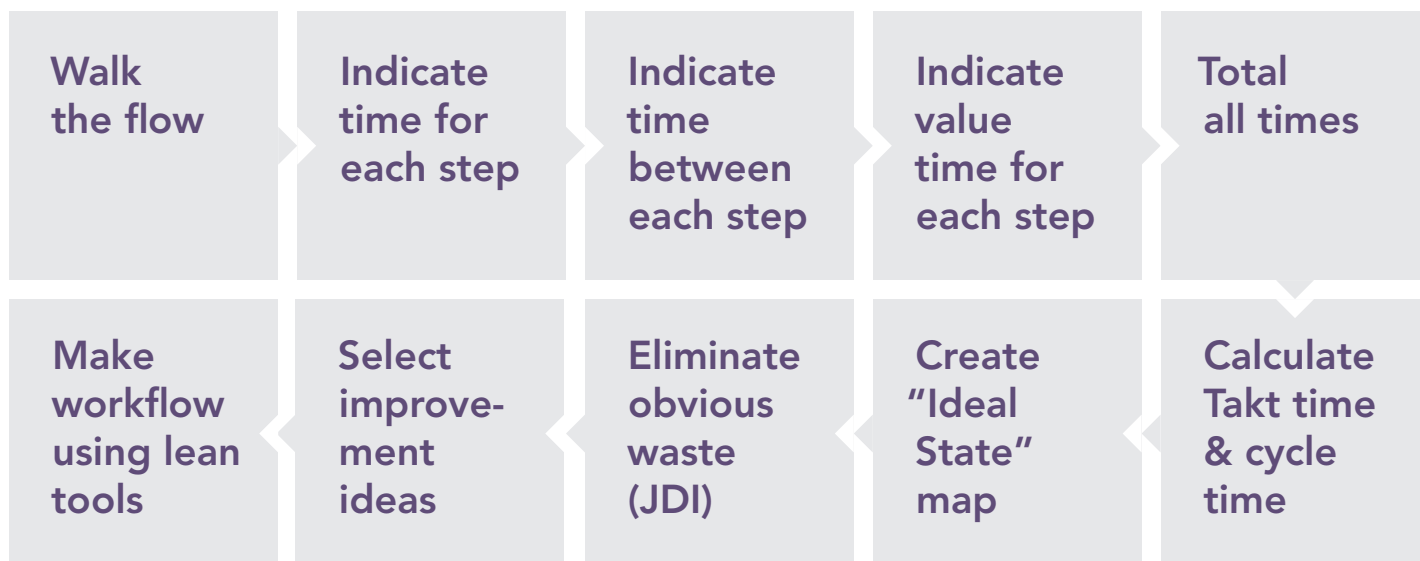# How to Create a Value Stream Map

What is a Value Stream Map? Simply, it's the flow of information and materials that produce the services and goods your customer's value. It includes both value and non-value activities.

It's a powerful tool that helps you visualize all of the actions and steps in a value stream. It also helps you better understand the current state of your process and identify opportunities to eliminate waste.
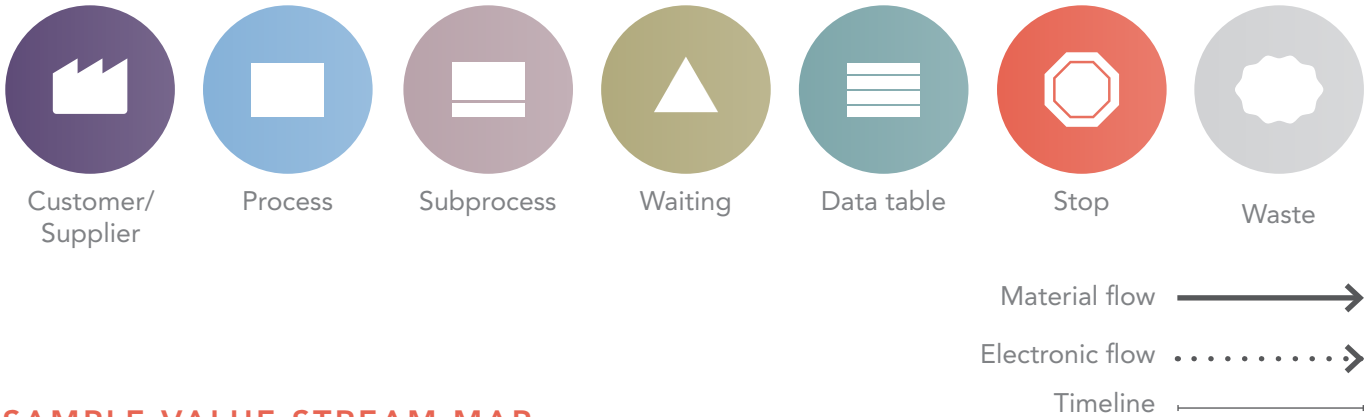
WHAT ARE THE STEPS?

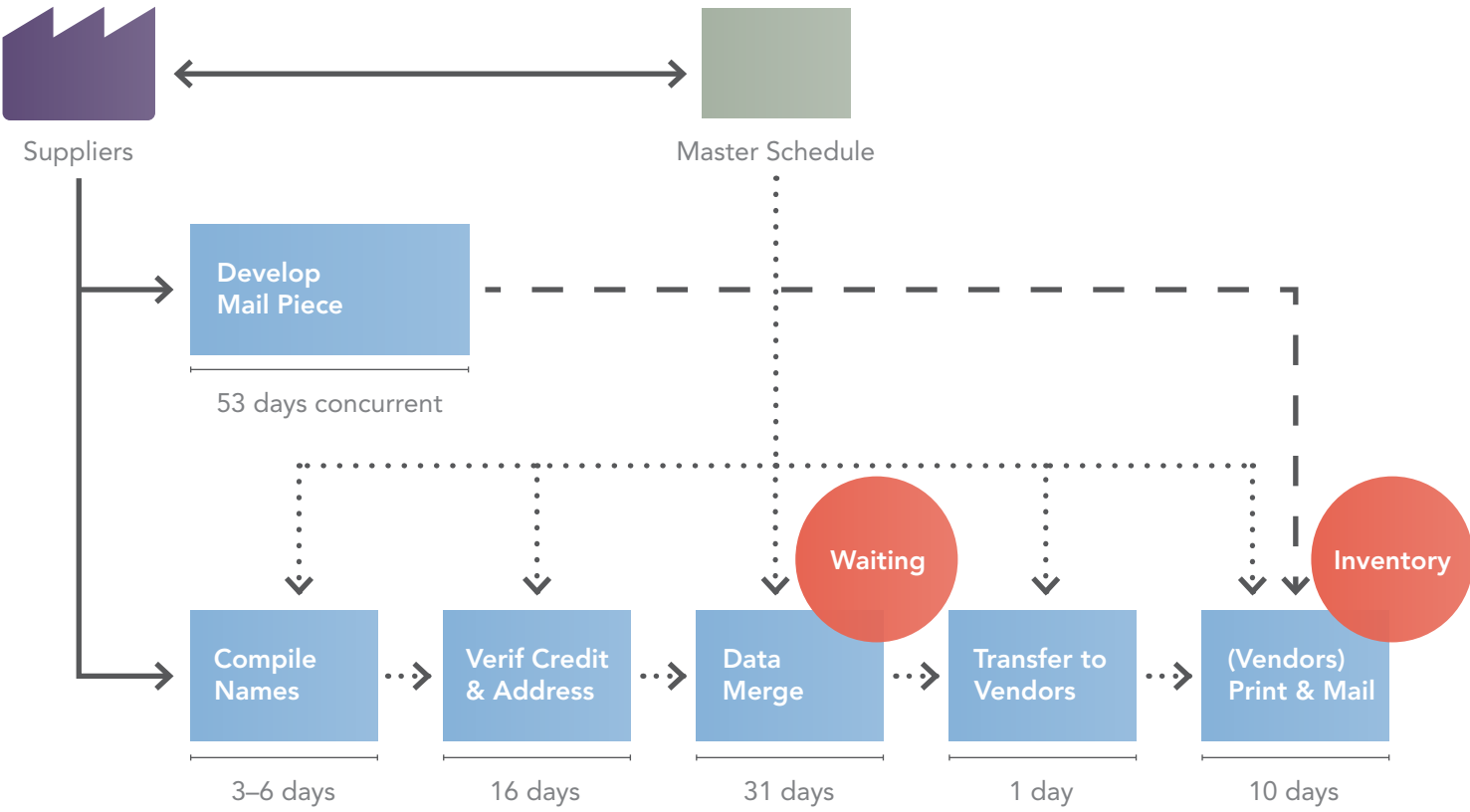| Walk the flow	Indicate time for each step	Indicate time between each step	Indicate value time for each step	Total all times
Make workflow using lean tools	Select improvement ideas	Eliminate obvious waste (JDI)	Create "Ideal State" map	Calculate Takt time & cycle time

ACTIVITIES IN EACH STEP:

1. ASK: who is the customer? What are the customer's requirements? Would my customer be willing to pay for the time/materials associated with each action in my current process?

2. For each step, note the materials involved, the information exchanged, the time required, and if the step provides value.

3. ASK: are there waiting times or overproduction efforts that can be eliminated? Is there excess inventory or over-processing that can be eliminated?

4. Draw a future-state map as it would look if you eliminated/changed all starbursts.

5. ASK: what is holding you back from transitioning to the future state? Itemize anything holding you back from the perfect state on an action register.

6. Using a priority action matrix, prioritize the actionable items based on immediate need and available resources. The action register should outline who does what by when.

WHAT ARE THE MAPPING SYMBOLS?

Customer/Supplier	Process	Subprocess	Waiting	Data table	Stop	Waste

Material flow ⟶

Electronic flow ┈┈┈┈>

Timeline ├──────┤

SAMPLE VALUE STREAM MAP

Suppliers ⟷ Master Schedule

Develop Mail Piece

53 days concurrent

Compile Names	Verif Credit & Address	Data Merge	**Waiting**	Transfer to Vendors	(Vendors) Print & Mail	**Inventory**
3–6 days	16 days	31 days		1 day	10 days	

RULES TO FOLLOW:

Collect the information yourself. Don't rely on second-hand reports or maps. The best way to learn about the complete process is to observe it first-hand.

Walk the flow. Go to where the process is happening. If the process moves among three departments, walk to those departments in the order the process takes. You will see steps (and waste) that aren't apparent in reports or maps.

Map with pencil and paper. This will allow you to make quick and easy changes to the map. Remember, it's not about the map or the way it looks, it's about seeing and knowing the facts.

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